

## UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

### TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 2 February 2011 at the Magee campus

#### PRESENT

Professor D A McAlister (Chair), Professor A Adair, Ms S Alexander, Dr G Armstrong, Dr D Barr, Professor P Carmichael, Miss C Cochrane, Professor C Curran, Dr D Gray, Professor K Greenan, Ms A Honan, Mr N Macauley, Professor N McClenaghan, Professor M McColgan, Mr L McCurry, Mr D McGivern, Professor M McHugh, Mr M McKinney, Professor R J Millar, Professor I Montgomery, Professor P Ó Dochartaigh, Dr I Taylor

#### APOLOGIES

Professor J Allen, Professor R R Barnett, Professor N D Black, Professor T Cook, Dr T Irwin, Professor H McKenna, Mr C Nelson

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs C G Avery, Mr A G Faulkner

#### UNRESERVED BUSINESS

##### 11.1 MINUTES

Subject to correction of 'peer monitoring' to 'peer mentoring' in minute 10.195, the confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2010 were signed by the Chair.

#### MATTERS ARISING

##### 11.2 Copyright Compliance for Online Materials (Min 10.176)

The Committee, at its December meeting, had asked the Copyright Management Group to provide a timetable for a self-audit of compliance in respect of online materials and to consider using in due course the services of the University's internal auditors to investigate the effectiveness of processes.

The Committee received a proposed timetable (Paper No TLC/11/1) which aligned and integrated the process into existing work flows for the VLE migration (min 10.210 refers). It was noted that ADL would be rolling out a series of training and awareness-raising programmes to all Schools/Faculties about the VLE upgrade to April 2011. As well as providing an opportunity to review and enhance existing module material, the process would require staff to remove any non-compliant copyright items or to obtain the necessary authorisation.

Concern was expressed by members that the proposal assumed full and active participation by all staff. It did not identify a monitoring arrangement to alert Heads of School and Deans to a lack of engagement by individual module co-

ordinators. Given the high dependency of modules on online resources and the tight timeframe, the Committee considered that a systematic approach to reporting progress would be essential to give confidence that all material would be fully compliant for copyright as well as migrated to Bb Learn in accordance with the transition timeframe.

The Committee noted the Sub-Group's proposal to conduct a series of random spot-checks on module materials in Semester 1, 2011/12 and, if necessary, to engage a specialist service such as JISC, in preference to using the University's Internal Auditors for future review. In view of the limited resources available, the Committee did not support this approach.

AGREED that:

- i) the Copyright Management Group provide the Committee with a re-worked time-line to include monitoring progress in the 'signing-off' of material in terms of its copyright compliance and the associated trigger points and reporting mechanisms to Deans and Heads of School;
- ii) Faculty Boards consider inviting ADL to give a presentation on the VLE migration to include copyright compliance, if they had not already done so;
- iii) the University's Internal Auditors, rather than an external service, should review the effectiveness of the compliance process in due course.

### 11.3 Teaching and Learning Strategy: Action Plan (Min 10.195)

The Committee noted that the Director of Physical Resources had notified the Academic Office of activity undertaken outside the Teaching and Learning Strategy action plans and had advised that the Estates Strategy and associated plans were in harmony with the Teaching and Learning Strategy's general Cross-Cutting Supporting Aim 'To enhance the quality of the physical and learning environments for students and staff'.

While a number of the activities identified were operational in nature, it was recognised that strategic matters had been identified in the Greater Belfast and North West Development Plans, which the Teaching and Learning Strategy pre-dated. The action plan for 2011/12 would include reference to the Estates Strategy and both development plans.

The Committee noted that an area of the Jordanstown Mall had recently been fitted out to provide a social learning space and that there were plans to extend it into adjacent areas before the next academic year. Members welcomed this development and recognised the need to encourage both students and staff to make use of such spaces. The type of furniture and the environment created would be key factors in uptake. It was suggested that whiteboards would add value and that these areas should be signposted to clarify their intended use. The Committee noted that the provision of social learning spaces was being considered by the design team for the Greater Belfast campus.

AGREED: that Deans encourage staff and students to make use of the new social learning spaces.

11.4 Responses from Campus Co-ordinating Groups (Min 10.207)

The Committee noted that a courtesy response to the Chief External Examiner's report for the Jordanstown campus had been received.

11.5 VLE Upgrade Implementation Group (Min 10.210)

The Committee noted that Dr Jacqueline O'Connor had agreed to chair the VLE Upgrade Implementation Group and that the first meeting had been held.

CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

11.6 Working Group on Guiding and Developing Assessment for Learning and Feedback Practices

The Chair reported that CHEP had established a Working Group to develop a set of Principles, which would establish expected practice in relation to assessment and feedback within the University, and to provide guidance for staff. Draft Principles would be submitted to the March meeting of the Committee with the final Principles and Implementation Plan following in June.

11.7 National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (Hunt Report)

The Chair reported that the Irish Department of Education and Science had released its strategy document on the future of Higher Education. Many of the recommendations contained in the Strategy mirrored changes in the sector in the UK. The summary report was available at [http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/he\\_national\\_strategy\\_2030\\_summary.pdf](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/he_national_strategy_2030_summary.pdf)

11.8 Consultation on the Development of a Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland (Davies Review)

The Committee noted that the University would be responding to the DEL consultation ([www.delni.gov.uk/hestrategy](http://www.delni.gov.uk/hestrategy)) by the mid-February deadline. It was expected that the Strategy would be published after the Assembly elections.

11.9 Embedding Graduate Attributes and PDP

The Chair reported that the PDP Forum had been successful in its bid to run an HEA seminar in the NI series on 3 May 2011 entitled 'Embedding Graduate Attributes and PDP in Teaching and Learning: Key Reasons for Student and Graduate Employability'.

Deans were asked to encourage staff to attend the event in view of the significance of the topics to be covered.

11.10 Placement Employer of the Year Awards

The Committee noted that there had been an impressive response to the 2011 competition with over 190 nominations received. Appreciation was extended to the Faculties for their engagement and support. The awards ceremony would be held on 5 May 2011 at the Jordanstown campus.

## COURSE APPROVAL

### 11.11 Course Approval Sub-Committee

Professor McAlister presented the report of the meeting held on 13 January 2011 (Paper No TLC/11/2).

The Committee noted the outcomes of 12 evaluation and revalidation events and the revisions approved by Faculties and course withdrawals.

The Chair reported that the Faculty of Art, Design and the Built Environment had clarified articulation between the AB Fine and Applied Arts at North West Regional College (Limavady) to the University's BA Hons Fine and Applied Arts. It was noted that a summer bridging module was now being developed to be offered from 2012 to allow progression directly to final level of the honours degree programme. Part-time degrees were also being proposed at the Belfast campus.

The Chair highlighted the following new course proposals which had been successfully evaluated:

BA Hons Drama and English (Single Honours) (FT/PT) ME  
PgDip/MA Irish and Scottish Studies (PT) DL  
MSc Clinical Visual Science (PT) DL  
PgCert in Systems Biology (PT) CE (replacing PgDip/MSc Bioinformatics)  
FdSc Counselling at SWC (Omagh) (PT)  
FdSc Leadership and Management at SERC (Bangor) (PT)

The Committee noted that the Academic Planning Sub-Committee had asked the Faculty of Arts to revisit its proposal to withdraw the Certificate in Foundation Studies in Music. Professor Ó Dochartaigh reported that this was under review but the Faculty would be challenged to provide sufficient human resources to sustain both the Certificate and its MMus programme, owing to the intensive tutor support required.

The Committee noted that the course team for PgDip/MSc Professional Practice (previously 'Industrial Practice') had been encouraged to develop a generic framework model, working with Access and Distributed Learning and the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences in particular.

The Committee noted that in relation to the revalidation of BSc Hons Optometry the Faculty had been asked to confirm whether a 25% contribution from Level 5 to the final award was a professional/regulatory body requirement. If not, a case would need to be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

The Committee noted that the revalidation panel for the MSc Human Resource Management had required further consideration of the structure of the programme with the view to making provision for a Postgraduate Diploma exit award for students who did not complete successfully the MSc dissertation stage.

AGREED that:

- i) the course provision be approved and re-approved as set out in the Appendix;
- ii) the following recommendations for extensions to periods of approval be made to Senate:

CertHE Combined Social and Behavioural Sciences at BMC (one year extension to include the 2011 intake);

Access Diploma in Science and Technology at BMC (one year extension to include the 2011 intake);

Advanced Diploma in Civic Leadership and Community Planning (JN) (three year extension to include the 2011 – 13 intakes).

#### 11.12 Submission of Final Documents

The Chair thanked Faculties for the good progress made in the signing off of validation documents relating to the 2009/10 academic year.

#### 11.13 PSRB Accreditation

The Committee noted that Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI) had provisionally recognised the BSc Hons Accounting and Managerial Finance programme as providing exemption from its CAP1 examination and congratulated the staff involved.

#### 11.14 CLASSIFICATION BOUNDARIES AND BORDERLINE CANDIDATES

The Committee noted that the 2009/10 overview of the reports of external examiners had noted that one external had invited the University to review the sensitivity of degree classification boundaries to individual marks, and another to divorce classification from strict percentage mapping. The practice of other institutions was to be explored (min 10.205 refers).

Professor McAlister presented Paper No TLC/11/3 which set out University regulations with regard to classification boundaries and reviewed practice elsewhere in the sector in the context of the expectations of the QAA Code of Practice and the findings of the Burgess Review Group on the future of the classified Honours degree (2004).

The Committee noted that in 2002 the University had clarified regulations for degree classification in order to ensure consistency and equity. The University requires the final classification of degree and the overall average mark to accord. It was noted that the moderation process ensured appropriate scrutiny of borderline candidates with adjustment of marks, should a higher class be warranted. Practice at Ulster was in line with that of a number of other institutions. In those which did allow discretion for borderline candidates there appeared to be considerable variety in the approaches taken and the guidance offered to Boards of Examiners.

The Committee confirmed the appropriateness of the University's clear rules in this matter and noted that the practice of identifying borderline candidates at preliminary Boards allowed time for external examiners to be involved.

The Committee recognised the implications of the close timing of Subject and Progress and Award Board of Examiners' meetings for modular degrees. The Chair reported that a forthcoming review of the academic calendar, in particular the start of Semester 2, might help alleviate pressure. It was noted that the themed audit undertaken on the experience of combined degree students and subsequent reports from campus co-ordinating groups had not provided any evidence to suggest that they were being disadvantaged.

AGREED: that the University's regulations on degree classification remain unchanged.

#### 11.15 PROPOSAL FOR REVIEW OF RECOGNISED TEACHER REGULATION

Professors Curran and McColgan presented a paper outlining a proposal to revise the Regulation on Recognised Teachers (Paper No TLC/11/4), arising from discussion of this topic in October (min 10.168 refers).

The Committee noted that the title 'Recognised Teacher' was an honorary status, which was expected to be conferred on persons who, not being members of Academic Staff of the University, engage in the teaching, supervision, assessment and examination of registered students on University courses (notably those which involve an element of practice placement as part of a professional qualification). It recognised an important contribution to the assessment of candidates for University awards by individuals who were not employees and the close working of University staff and professionals from external agencies in coterminous awards. Senate had delegated its responsibility for this matter to the Committee in 2007.

The Faculties of Life and Health Sciences and Social Sciences reported that they had not applied the regulation in respect of practice placement supervisors/mentors involved in the assessment of students in clinical practice settings in Nursing, Allied Health Professions, and Social Work courses. The Committee noted that the two Faculties had confirmed that all practice teachers held relevant qualifications and received appropriate training. Standards were quality-assured by the relevant statutory organisations and formal processes were in place for the approval of individuals. Records of those involved were maintained.

The Chair reported that a recent external examiner's report had identified a number of issues of concern about mentorship arrangements for a particular degree programme. While the application of the Regulation might not have obviated the shortcomings, it might have encouraged a clearer view of the mentors' relationship with the University and their responsibilities to the University and students.

In view of the hundreds of individuals involved and the high turnover each semester/year, the Faculties considered that it would be impractical to apply the process to allow the timely conferment of the status. Furthermore in certain cases, those involved were not qualified to the same level as academic staff

teaching on the course, as the Code of Practice for Recognised Teachers currently expected.

The Committee noted the difficulties which the two Faculties would experience in applying the Regulation and their view that its wider application could devalue the title for other holders. The Committee supported the proposal to confine the title to those who were involved in classroom-type activities.

The Committee noted that the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences considered that Recognised Teacher status should still be conferred on staff of hospital trusts who were involved in the teaching and assessment of work-based professional development programmes such as the PgDip/MSc Developing Practice in Health Care. The Faculties would, therefore, need to be clear about the exact circumstances to be covered in order to ensure consistency.

AGREED that:

- i) it be recommended to Senate that the Regulation on Recognised Teachers be amended to exclude practice teachers as follows:

*“The term ‘Recognised Teacher’ will apply to persons who, not being members of the Academic staff of the University, engage in the teaching, supervision, assessment and examination of Registered Students of the University. The status shall not be conferred on persons involved in the supervision and assessment of clinical or social work practice placement or industrial placement.*

Proposals from Faculties for the designation of Recognised Teacher status together with their duties and responsibilities shall be considered by the Teaching and Learning Committee on behalf of the Senate which may make recommendations to the Council.”

- ii) subject to Senate’s approval of i), the Faculties of Life and Health Sciences and Social Sciences review the Code of Practice for Recognised Teachers to ensure clarity in the wording of clauses relating to the nomination of recognised teachers in workplace settings;
- iii) Faculties continue to ensure that robust quality assurance processes oversee the selection, training, support, and monitoring of mentors and practice supervisors.

## 11.16 STUDENT REPRESENTATION SYSTEM

Ms Honan presented a paper on the student representation system which outlined measures to improve engagement with student representatives on courses (Paper No TLC/11/5).

The Committee noted that where possible the election of class representatives for returning students should take place before the end of Semester 2 rather than at the start of Semester 1. This change had been agreed by Academic Development and Enhancement Committee in April 2010. Promotional material

on the role of Class Representatives was available from the Students' Union and their Officers were willing to speak to student groups to foster interest in the role.

Faculties were encouraged to avail of the resources which the Students' Union offered to support student representation and to return forms in a timely fashion so that class representatives could benefit from the training offered.

It was noted that the University was supporting the Students' Union efforts to develop the role of class representative by funding two placement students in the Students' Union. The involvement of Students' Union Officers as revalidation panel members in the current pilot also reflected the increasing level of student engagement in standards and quality matters at the University, which was in line with the national emphasis on student opinion.

#### 11.17 NEW PRIZE

The Committee received Paper No TLC/11/6 which proposed one new prize in the Faculty of Social Sciences – the LISC (NI) Dissertation Prize.

AGREED: that it be recommended to Council through Communications and External Affairs Committee that the new prize be approved.

Duration 1 hour 30 minutes

9 February 2011

AGF/CA/lh

**COURSE APPROVAL**

FACULTY	COURSE TITLE	MODE		INTAKES	CAMPUS	MAX COHORT SIZE (Partner)	
		FT	PT			FT	PT
Arts	BA Hons Drama and English	✓	✓	2011 - 2013	ME		
	PgDip/MA Irish and Scottish Studies		✓	2011 - 2013	DL		
Life and Health Sciences	MSc Clinical Visual Science (with Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma exit awards)		✓	2011 - 2015	DL		
	Postgraduate Certificate in Systems Biology		✓	2011 - 2015	DL		
Social Sciences	FdSc Counselling (with CertHE in Counselling and CertHE in Counselling Studies exit awards)		✓	2010 - 2013	South West College (Omagh campus)		20
Ulster Business School	FdSc Leadership and Management		✓	2011 - 2014	South Eastern Regional College (Bangor campus)		25

**COURSE RE-APPROVAL**

FACULTY	REVAL UNIT	COURSE TITLE	MODE		INTAKES	CAMPUS	MAX COHORT SIZE (Partner)	
			FT	PT			FT	PT
Arts	21A	BMus (Single Hons/Major/Minor)	✓	✓	2011 - 2015	ME		
		Master of Music (MMus)	✓	✓	2011 - 2015	ME		
Computing and Engineering	10A4	PgDip/MSc Professional Practice (with PgCert exit award)		✓	2011 - 2015	BT/CE/JN/ME		
		PgDip/MSc Professional Practice (International Real Estate) (with PgCert exit award)		✓	2011 - 2015	JN		

FACULTY	REVAL UNIT	COURSE TITLE	MODE		INTAKES	CAMPUS	MAX COHORT SIZE (Partner)	
			FT	PT			FT	PT
Life and Health Sciences	25A1	Undergraduate Hons Subject: Psychology (Single Hons/Minor) (with/without DIS)	✓	✓	2011 - 2015	CE		
		Undergraduate Hons Subject: Psychology (Single Hons/Minor)	✓	✓	2011 - 2015	ME		
		BSc Hons Social Psychology (with/without DIS)	✓	✓	2011 - 2015	CE		
	28D	BSc Hons Optometry	✓		2011 - 2015	CE		
Ulster Business School	1C	BSc Hons Accounting (Levels 4 & 5) (with AB exit award)		✓	2011 - 2014	Southern Regional College (Newry campus)		Faculty to advise
	5F2	MSc Human Resource Management (with PgDip exit award)		✓	2011 - 2015	JN		

### COURSE WITHDRAWALS

FACULTY	COURSE	LOCATION
Arts	Undergraduate Hons Subject: American Studies [last intake: 2009/10]	CE
Life and Health Sciences	CertHE in Combined Social and Behavioural Sciences (FT/PT) [no intakes]	Southern Regional College (Portadown campus)
Social Sciences	BSc Hons Professional Development in Social Work [last intake: 2009/10]	JN
	MSc Advanced Social Work [last intake: 2007/08]	JN
Ulster Business School	Advanced Diploma in Social Enterprise [last intake: 2011/12]	JN
	MSc Executive Leadership (FT mode only) [last intake: 2007/08]	JN and Outcentres