

ULSTER UNIVERSITY
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FORUM
23 January 2018

Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2018 at Coleraine Campus.

Present: Ms N Cameron, Mr N Campbell (for Mrs H Miller), Mr J Curran, Mr L Curran, Mr S Ferguson, Mrs L Lavery, Mrs T Millar, Mrs P Morrison (for Mrs D McElwee), Mr M McCamley (for Miss C McKeown), Mr Henry McCloy (for Ms C Davison), Mr D McDowell, Mrs M Paris (Chair), Ms C Reid, Mrs M Sowney.

Apologies: Mrs J Alleyne, Professor P Bartholomew, Mr J Marley, Dr A Moorhead, Dr B Murphy, Mrs S McCall, Mrs D McElwee.

In Attendance: Ms B Burns (min 18.14), Mr H Deighan, Mrs C McIntyre.

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Mr S Ferguson to his first meeting of the Collaborative Partnership Forum.

MINUTES

18.01 The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2017 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

18.02 The Chair confirmed that matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting would be addressed through agenda papers.

CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

18.03 Membership of the Forum

Miss C McKeown, Marketing and Publications Manager, will be replacing Mr P Quinn on the Forum. The Chair thanked Mr Quinn for the excellent work in joint marketing activity with partner institutions.

18.04 Communications from the Forum

Following on from the meeting between College Principals and the Vice-Chancellor and PVC (Education), it was agreed that in future all correspondence relating to the Forum will be cc'd to the Director of Curriculum within the College.

18.05 SPM Annual Report

A revised SPM annual report is now available on the Quality Management and Audit Unit (QMAU) website. The report will focus more on enrolments, attrition and success data and less on the External Examiner report.

18.06 Feedback from the annual staff development event at CAFRE

The Chair noted that almost 160 delegates attended the 14th annual staff development event at CAFRE. The feedback was on the whole very positive with delegates praising particularly the sessions on approaches to curriculum design and improving student attendance and retention. The sessions were relevant and respondents referred to a well organised event in an excellent setting.

A number of themes were suggested for inclusion in next year's event which will be held once again on the Greenmount Campus at CAFRE on Friday 19 October 2018.

18.07 Online Admissions (OLA) Pilot

Mrs Cameron provided an update on the OLA pilot at NWRC. There were some delays in getting the lists of students who had registered on each course to the CCU. Clarification was provided by Mrs Cameron that the OLA system does not allow for evidence of GCSE qualifications to be attached with the initial application. This year the CCU accepted applications from all students who registered an interest in the course. After having received legal advice this practice will cease and from next academic year the CCU will only be allowed to accept the official class list sent by the Course Director and copied to the SPM. Class lists must be forwarded to the CCU in a timely manner to allow for registering of students and the issuing of student cards.

Members were informed that the OLA pilot will be rolled out to all new students at BMC and NRC from September 2018. Training will be provided.

18.08 National Student Survey (NSS)

Final year Foundation degree students will be included in the NSS for the first time this year. In future annual course review will ask for the data from the NSS, and the actions taken to address concerns identified.

18.09 Revalidation Training

The University's Staff Development Unit are planning to provide a half-day revalidation briefing event this semester for course teams undergoing revalidation within the next 2 years.

AGREED that QMAU write to partner institutions to establish how many staff would be interested in attending this event, to assist in planning.

18.10 Admissions Training

A recommendation arising from the 2016/17 annual course review is that training be provided for staff in partner institutions who are involved in admissions. This could be either course directors, centralised admissions staff or both.

An outcome from the event will be the development of an admissions policy document which will detail the University's expectations and procedures regarding admission. The training will also cover APEL applications.

18.11 Chairing of Boards of Examiners

The annual event for new chairs of Examination Boards will be held on Thursday 3 May 2018.

APEL SUBMISSIONS PROFORMA

- 18.12 Members received an annual statement of APEL admissions proforma which should be completed by the College Quality Manager, or nominated member of the senior management team, and forwarded to the SPM.

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF COURSE DELIVERY TEAM

- 18.13 Members received a proforma to be used on an annual basis by each Course Director to notify the SPM of the course team delivering a validated programme approved by Ulster University.

AUDIT OF GCSE EVIDENCE FOR 2017 ENROLMENT

- 18.14 Members considered paper CPF/18/03, a summary of a sample audit of enrolment forms received by the CCU. No students are registered by CCU without some form of GCSE evidence attached to the enrolment form. The audit was undertaken by SPMs to establish the authority and appropriateness of the evidence submitted.

The University publishes a list of English and mathematics qualifications which are accepted as evidence of competence, and align with a grade C in GCSE. All candidates must present GCSE English grade C minimum (or University-approved equivalent), and many candidates must present GCSE mathematics, with a minimum of grades C or B depending on the course.

Many candidates presented scanned Certificates or Certifying Statements of Results where the College had verified their authenticity. This is acceptable and the best form of evidence. One College used highlighting to identify where the maths and English requirements were met. This is good practice as the evidence presented was frequently confusing. One College also verified statements from Schools.

However, in the main, at least one quarter of the forms audited were problematic in terms of evidence, and would not have been accepted by the University. Provisional

statements of results; letters from school secretaries/ college administrators; SIMS print outs; candidate statements of results; AQA reviews of marking; illegible scans; notifications of performance; college results letters for Ulster-validated courses were all accepted from candidates but were deemed inappropriate as evidence by the reviewers. Many enrolment forms were ticked by presumed Course Directors as having documentary GCSE evidence attached, but were not signed or dated. In some cases grades were manually changed on printouts.

The best evidence is the actual completion certificates (or Certifying Statements) of a learner's achievements. Where this cannot be provided the minimum data fields required are:

- Full name of the learner
- Qualification name
- Level/Grade achieved
- Date of achievement/award
- Awarding Organisation identified (i.e. local/web address)

If candidates wish to use evidence from SIMS, or similar based on ULLs/ ULNs, then, as a minimum, the following information will need to be clearly displayed on any evidence submitted:

- Learner's full name
- Qualification name
- Examination Board name
- Status of achievement i.e. certificate or unit
- Grade/Result
- Date of achievement/award date

In addition, SIMS reports/prints or candidate statements of results must be signed and dated by an appropriate representative from the school, such as an Examinations Officer or Head Teacher and have either the school stamp/logo included or be on school headed paper. If the evidence is missing for any of these requirements then the enrolment form will not be accepted.

Any evidence must be of good quality with all data fields clearly visible. Any form of evidence that states it as provisional will not be accepted.

Ms Burns informed members that a significant number of enrolment forms were received in the CCU without any form of GCSE evidence. This creates additional work for CCU staff as the forms have to be returned to course directors. Currently 20 students are still not registered as no evidence has been provided.

AGREED: that minor revisions be made to the guidance notes and verification rubric.

ATTRITION, PROGRESSION AND SUCCESS DATA 2016/17

18.15 Members considered paper CPF/18/04 on attrition progression and success data for 2016/17 following the summer resit Boards.

At the meeting of the Forum on 21 September 2016 members agreed a benchmark of 10% attrition for Foundation degree programmes and 20% for Access to HE Diploma (min 16.60 refers).

With regard to full-time provision only CAFRE met the benchmark for both Years 1 and 2. For part-time provision only CAFRE met the benchmark for Year 1 students with SWC the only college meeting the benchmark for Year 2. In year 3 BMC, SRC and SWC met the agreed benchmark.

As for Access provision, only SWC met the benchmark for its part-time courses. It was disappointing to note that in some Colleges the attrition rate was over 30%.

The Forum had not set a benchmark for Success. The Chair noted that at the last meeting of ASQEC, the PVC (Education) stated that the only measurement the University is interested in is Success 2. Success 2 is (Proceed + Award)/Total and is a measurement of the success of all students, regardless of whether they engaged.

For Foundation degrees in Year 1 Success 2 figures ranged from 69% to 80% and in Year 2 the range was 75% to 88%. For part-time provision the range was 50% to 87% in Year 1, 62% to 79% in Year 2 and 49% to 88% in Year 3.

The Success 2 data for full-time Access courses in 2016/17 ranged from 47% to 58% in Year 1 and from 50% to 68% for part-time provision. Members agreed that while there are additional challenges teaching and supporting Access students the success rates were poor.

- AGREED:
- i) that for HE provision a benchmark for Success 2 be set at 75% in Year 1 and 80% in Year 2;
 - ii) that for Access provision a benchmark for Success 2 be set at 70%;
 - iii) that HE Co-ordinators report back to the next meeting of the Forum on their analysis of the 2016/17 data and action taken to address problems identified.

2Y3S ATTRITION, PROGRESSION AND SUCCESS DATA 2016/17

- 18.16 Members considered paper CPF/18/05 on 2Y3S attrition, progression and success data for 2016/17.

2Y3S refers to part-time Foundation degree provision delivered in two year, three semester mode. This mode of study is aimed at high achieving students who are capable of managing working full-time while undertaking full-time higher education study. The data provided was that following the Board of Examiners in September 2017. There is no supplementary examination period for 2Y3S students.

Four Colleges currently offer 2Y3S programmes, with NRC withdrawing this mode of course delivery. The aggregate data for 2016/17 shows a total of 256 students studying in 2Y3S mode with 13% early leavers and a Success 2 rate of 68%.

As this mode of delivery should only be considered for high achievers, members were disappointed with the high number of early leavers and the poor success rate of those enrolled on this mode. In theory, these students should be more successful than normal part-time students.

All 2Y3S programmes should also be offered in normal part-time mode of delivery and members were reminded that where a student is struggling in the 2Y3S route they should be moved onto the normal part-time mode. This should not affect their HLA funding, since DfE had agreed to support durations of up to 36 months for HLAs.

AGREED: i) that a benchmark of 10% attrition be set for 2Y3S provision;
 ii) that a benchmark of 85% Success 2 be set for 2Y3S provision;
 iii) that where a student is identified as struggling on the 2Y3S programmes they be moved at the earliest opportunity onto the normal part-time mode of delivery.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HE CO-ORDINATORS

18.17 Members considered paper CPF/18/06, a draft of the main responsibilities of the HE Co-ordinator on the Collaborative Partnerships Forum.

The role of the HE Co-ordinator is essentially to act as a single point of contact between the University and the partner institution. The HE Co-ordinator is the representative of the partner institution for the University. The main aim of the role is to ensure effective channels of communication between the University, the College's leadership team, and the College's course directors and academic staff.

AGREED: i) that the responsibilities of the HE Co-ordinator be approved subject to a revision to the role with regard to APEL submissions;
 ii) that the responsibilities be made available on the QMAU website.

ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW

18.18 Members received paper CPF/18/07 a summary of the outcomes from the 2016/17 annual course review. The report from the Sub-Group reviewing the annual course review submissions from partner institutions was approved by ASQEC at its meeting on 4 December 2017.

The Sub-Group will meet again on 30 January 2018 to review the adequacy of the responses to issues raised.

The following matters were referred to the Forum for action:

	Recommendation	AGREED ACTION
1.	That Subject Partnership Managers closely monitor actual intake against projected intake to	On-going monitoring through the SPM Annual Report.

	ensure resources are adequate to meet the learning needs of students.	
2.	That, in light of the Competitions and Marketing Authority (CMA) requirements, that further consideration be given to the operational aspects of WBL.	HE Co-ordinators were reminded that extensions for the WBL component of Fds can only be granted through the extenuating circumstances procedures and those circumstances which may apply were clarified.
3.	That staff in partner institutions be reminded of the need to track and record non-returners and implement strategies to encourage the return of these students.	HE Co-ordinators were reminded of the need to encourage students to return, or to cleanse the data.
4.	That consideration be given to the variances in data provided by partners on retention and success with University generated figures.	Training on the data produced by the University will be provided by QMAU.
5.	That senior managers be reminded of the University's expectations of staff teaching on Ulster University approved programmes.	HE Co-ordinators were provided with a paper on the expectations of staff teaching on Ulster University approved programmes, aligned to the Quality Code and QAA expectations.
6.	That, where appropriate, teaching staff be encouraged to use Turnitin or similar for the electronic submission of coursework.	HE Co-ordinators were asked to encourage course teams to use Turnitin or other software for the electronic submission of coursework.
7.	That clarity be provided on the naming of staff and students in the minutes of meetings.	HE Co-ordinators were provided with a paper on conventions for the naming of staff and students in minutes of meetings.

Members were also advised of a number of areas of good practice including students actively engaging with Professional Bodies, students chairing SSCC meetings and course teams undertaking a detailed analysis of the geographical location of students.

UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF TEACHING ON UU APPROVED HE PROGRAMMES

18.20 Members considered paper CPF/18/08 on Ulster University's expectations of staff teaching on higher education programmes.

The University is guided by Charter B10 of the Quality Code: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others in particular Indicators 6 and 13.

The University's relevant specifications for staff teaching on higher education programmes are as follows:

Educational and Professional Qualifications	<i>Essential</i>	Degree in relevant area.
	<i>Desirable</i>	PGCHE or equivalent and/or fellowship/associate fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA).
Previous Experience/Training	<i>Essential</i>	Experience of teaching and assessing the subject within an HE environment using a range of teaching and assessment methods.

HE Co-ordinators expressed concern that while newly appointed staff would have the educational qualifications specified, and many would have extensive relevant industrial experience, some would not have previous experience of teaching and assessing within an HE environment.

They said that the University's specification for previous experience in HE will severely impact on their ability to recruit staff to teach on programmes.

HE Co-ordinators were reminded that previous training would count as experience as would demonstrating or other forms of interactions with HE students.

While HE Co-ordinators said the specifications are challenging they will work with their HR Department to meet the University's expectations.

CONVENTIONS FOR THE NAMING OF STAFF AND STUDENTS IN MINUTES

18.21 Members considered paper CPF/18/09 on conventions for the identification and naming of staff and students in the minutes of meetings.

All committees are subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act.

Committees may have unreserved and reserved business. Unreserved business relates to agenda items which lead to discussion in the minutes which would not be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. Reserved business relates to agenda items which lead to discussion in the minutes which would be exempt from disclosure if requested under the Act.

Committee members serve on a committee in an official capacity. Membership on a committee, committee members' views and options expressed at meetings and actions upon them should not be withheld as personal data.

Members were provided with examples of reserved and unreserved business and the types of information about third parties which can be dealt with under open/unreserved business and published in open minutes.

MARKETING ACTIVITY

18.22 Mr McCamley, Student Recruitment Marketing Officer, provided members with an update on current marketing activity undertaken by the University. Student recruitment falls within the Marketing and Communication portfolio. The University is holding 3 open day events on 4-6 September 2018 at Jordanstown, 22 September 2018 in Coleraine and 29 September 2018 in Magee.

A number of subject specific information events are being planned and HE Co-ordinators were asked to encourage students to attend these events. These events are detailed on the web at www.ulster.ac.uk/events.

Staff from the Student Recruitment Unit attend various careers events in Colleges and are happy to provide presentations to students if requested.

AGREED: that SPMs provide the Student Recruitment Unit with at least one progression route for each Foundation degree.

MATTERS ARISING FROM INFORMATION PAPERS

18.23 Members received information papers from SPMs and HE Co-ordinators on matters relating to collaborative activity.

The following matters were discussed:

New degree algorithm for Fds and Access Diplomas

Clarification was sought regarding the new degree algorithm and how it will apply to Fds and Access Diplomas. Members were unsure of when it will be introduced, or if there will be a pilot phase. There may also need to be a review of the University's equivalence table for offers.

AGREED: that this matter be referred to ASQEC for clarification.

NCFE Qualifications

Clarification was sought on the NCFE Level 3 qualifications which are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications and are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). HE Co-ordinators would like this award to be added to the University's list of approved qualifications.

Members were informed that alignment on the RQF does not imply recognition for Ulster University entry. Awards can only be added to the list of University recognised qualifications if they are approved by Senate. The list of recognised qualifications is reviewed regularly by the University but at this stage there is no intention to include NCFE on the list.

The University's approved list of qualifications will be discussed at the training event which will be provided to admissions staff in partner institutions.

Duration: 2 hr 30 mins

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 23 JANUARY 2018

ACTION SHEET

	MINUTE	ACTION	ACTION BY	DEADLINE
1	18.09	QMAU write to partner institutions to establish how many staff would be interested in attending the revalidation training event.	QMAU	25/1/18
2	18.14	that minor revisions be made to the guidance notes for GCSE evidence and to the verification rubric.	Chair	28/2/18
3	18.15	i) for HE provision a benchmark for Success 2 be set at 75% in Year 1 and 80% in Year 2;	HE Co-ordinators	Ongoing
		ii) for Access provision a benchmark for Success 2 be set at 70%;	HE Co-ordinators	Ongoing
		iii) HE Co-ordinators report back to the next meeting of the Forum on their analysis of the 2016/17 data and action taken to address problems identified.	HE Co-ordinators	Next meeting of Forum
4	18.16	i) a benchmark of 10% attrition be set for 2Y3S provision;	HE Co-ordinators	Ongoing
		ii) a benchmark of 85% Success 2 be set for 2Y3S provision;	HE Co-ordinators	Ongoing
		iii) where a student is identified as struggling on the 2Y3S programmes they be moved onto the normal part-time mode of delivery.	HE Co-ordinators	Ongoing
5	18.17	i) the responsibilities of the HE Co-ordinator be approved subject to a revision to the role with regard to APEL submissions;	Chair	28/10/18
		ii) the responsibilities be made available on the QMAU website.	QMAU	28/2/18
6	18.22	SPMs provide the Student Recruitment Unit with at least one progression route for each Foundation degrees.	SPMs	28/2/18

7	18.23	the matter regarding the new degree algorithm be referred to ASQEC for clarification.	Chair	19/2/18
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