

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 30 November 2018 by video-conference

PRESENT

Professor P Bartholomew (Chair), Dr D Barr, Ms V Davies (for Professor D Hazlett), Ms M Downey, Professor H Farley, Mr C Keenan, Dr M Keenan, Professor A McKillop, Dr A Moore, Professor B Murphy, Mrs M Paris, Ms C Reid

APOLOGIES

Professor R Fee, Professor M Giles, Professor D Hazlett, Ms A Honan

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs J Alleyne (for mins 18.124 - 18.125), Mr A G Faulkner, Mr G Kendall, Dr A Hunter (for min 18.129-130), Professor C Turner (for min 18.126)

UNRESERVED

18.109 MINUTES

The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2018 were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

18.110 Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) Guidance (Mins 17.42, 18.48 and 18.80)

It was noted that the CMA Compliance Group, chaired by Professor Murphy, had held its first meeting earlier in the week. Professor Murphy reported that the establishment of the Group addressed a recommendation regarding institutional oversight from a KPMG internal audit. The Group had considered the other issues identified by the audit and had reviewed any action undertaken since the last status report submitted to the Senior Leadership Team in 2016. He reported that concerns remained in relation to a number of matters. It was anticipated that the Group would meet again in February.

Professor Bartholomew advised that he believed that the risk associated with this area of University business warranted continuing scrutiny and asked Dr Moore to arrange for the internal audit of CMA compliance to be ongoing.

- 18.111 Annual Report on Appeals and Cheating in Examinations (Mins 18.65 and 18.82)

The Committee noted that the report for 2017/18 would be received at the March meeting as some appeals were not yet complete.

- 18.112 Minimum and Maximum Cohort Sizes (Min 18.89)

The Committee had previously approved policy statements subject to amendment of Policy II (for external provision). Professor Murphy reported that he had reviewed the wording and sent revised text to Professor Bartholomew for approval.

- 18.113 Module Feedback Survey (Min 18.101)

The Committee has asked Faculties to advise Quality Enhancement of targets for participation and it was noted that the Ulster University Business School had confirmed its participation target of 25% and identified the measures that it would take to support its achievement. The information had been passed to Ms Clements.

#### CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 18.114 Degree Classification: Transparent, Consistent and Fair Academic Standards

Universities UK had published (28.11.18) a report which investigated the reasons behind the increase in the proportion of graduates receiving first and upper-second class degrees (<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/degree-classification.aspx>).

The key findings showed that a wide range of factors could have been driving the increase in upper degrees, including additional investment in teaching and learning and heightened student motivation. The report identified a risk that a continued increase in the number of top degrees might undermine confidence in the value of a degree from a UK university, making the classification system less useful for employers and students. The report made a number of recommendations for action.

The consultation on the report was to close in February 2019. It was being undertaken on behalf of the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA), which has oversight of UK-wide arrangements with membership drawn from providers, student representatives, the four UK funding/regulatory bodies, sector bodies and regulatory partners.

Professor Bartholomew noted that an extensive range of reference points for standards existed for UKHE, which provided a robust framework and context for universities. He commented that he had reservations about some of the recommendations in the report given the learning-outcomes based model in operation in the UK and his expectation that the wide range of improvements in

pedagogy would prove effective in supporting students to demonstrate a high standard of achievement.

18.115 Collaborative Provision – Adherence to University Admission Regulations

Professor Bartholomew briefed the Committee on serious issues identified during an audit of 2018 admissions in collaborative partners in Northern Ireland (minute 18.99 (item 5) refers). It was evident that, despite clear advice and guidance from the Collaborative Partnership Forum, Faculty Partnership Managers and bespoke training for College HE Co-ordinators, colleges had not adhered to University admission standards particularly in terms of GCSE English and Mathematics requirements. The scale of the problem was large with 367 students identified as either not holding or not having provided evidence of the requisite qualifications for entry to their course. Professor Bartholomew advised that the problem was worse in some colleges than others. The Department for the Economy (DfE) had been advised and he had written to the HE Co-ordinators and directors about the matter. A solution-focussed meeting with the colleges would be held.

The Committee noted that the investigation had revealed the scale of the problem by weeks 4/5 but it was considered that, as it was now week 9 of teaching, suspension or refusal to confirm the affected students' registration as Associate Students of the University would be an unfair sanction on the students. The University's approach to resolving the matter would focus primarily on the colleges and not disadvantage the students, and would take account of the colleges' obligations to students under consumer protection law.

Professor Bartholomew also considered that the matter raised concerns about the robustness of the University's oversight of admissions by the colleges to courses leading to University awards and had implications for subsequent progression by such students through articulation routes to higher-level courses at the University. He opined that a trusted partnership model might need to change to a risk-based one.

Dr Moore advised that the pilot roll-out of the University online application system for the transfer of data for students of partner colleges had been suspended on account of staff illness but would be restarted. She confirmed that the system would include a document upload process.

COURSE APPROVAL

18.116 Academic Planning Advisory Group

Professor Murphy presented the report from the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 13 November 2018 (Paper No ASQEC/18/35a).

### Course Planning (item 1)

The Committee received four recommendations for new course proposals to proceed to planning and evaluation, or to be approved without evaluation where appropriate, and three recommendations for changes of course title, and a recommendation for a January intake for an existing course, as summarised in Appendix 1.

The Committee noted that the Group had considered three MSc degrees which proposed September and January intakes. It had discussed the comparable student experience for January cohorts and noted that on one proposed MSc it was intended to teach full-time students in the evening alongside part-time students.

It noted course suspensions and withdrawals (Appendix 1) and that the proposed start date for the degree in Medicine had been deferred to September 2020 (with evaluation in spring 2020).

AGREED: that the recommendations for approval from the Academic Planning Advisory Group as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

### 18.117 Course Approvals

The Committee noted that the Panel Chair of revalidation panel 19Aii, Journalism, had confirmed that conditions and recommendations had been satisfactorily addressed (Paper No ASQEC/18/35b).

AGREED: that the recommendations of the panel for approval be endorsed (Appendix 2).

### 18.118 Outstanding final evaluation and revalidation documents from 2017/18

The Committee received a statement on progress made in relation to the submission of outstanding final evaluation/revalidation documentation from four events in 2017/18 comprising 12 courses (Paper No ASQEC/18/35c):

BA Hons and MA Product Design (Unit 2K)  
MSc Fashion and Textile Retail Management (Evaluation)  
History (Unit 14)  
Computing (Magee) (Unit 16D) and new BEng Hons Artificial Intelligence

It was noted that the Chair had written to the Panel Chair for the Fashion event to request that its sign-off be processed promptly [Secretary's note: now completed]. It was also noted that revisions to the documentation for unit 16D had been progressed since the paper had been prepared. Compared to the position in the previous year the number of outstanding documents was much reduced and it was anticipated that the new shorter timeframe allowed for revisions would lead to further improvement this year, with completion of final approval before students were admitted to their course.

18.119 Extensions of Approval: Unit 22C

Professor McKillop presented a proposal for one-year extensions of approval and consequent deferral of revalidation to 2019/20 (Paper No ASQEC/18/35d) in respect of courses within unit 22C:

PgCert/PgDip/MSc Nursing (with Advanced Nursing Practice pathways (Children's Nursing / Emergency Care / Primary Care / Adult Medicine and Older People Care) and PgCert/PgDip/MSc Health Promotion and Public Health.

The case was made on the basis of shared modules with courses scheduled for 2019/20 revalidation, the fact that cohorts on new pathways had not yet completed, which would allow a comprehensive review, engagement of staff in the strategic Transformation programme within the Health Service with new and potential development of short course and professional development programmes, as well as a scoping exercise for the international market. It was confirmed that no concerns were identified with regard to standards and quality.

AGREED: that the request for one-year extensions be approved.

18.120 Revisions to the revalidation schedule 2018/19

The Committee noted that the revalidation year for provision within the following units, which had been brought forward to 2018/19, had been returned to their original year, 2019/20:

Unit 10A1: Engineering (BEng/MEng)  
Unit 10A2: Engineering (UG) (JN)  
Unit 10A3: Engineering (PG) (JN)  
Unit 16E: Engineering (ME)

Revalidation for all Engineering provision had been scheduled early as a consequence of Special Measures in 2017/18 which had identified problems with failure and retention rates, particularly in Semester 1 at Jordanstown. The Faculty was undertaking a range of enhancement measures and had also recognised the need to tackle poor attendance. Consequently, the original revalidation schedule had been reinstated. Professor Bartholomew commented that faculties should note this possible outcome.

18.121 Course Revisions and New Short-Course Modules

The Committee noted revisions and new modules approved by faculties and ADDL since the last meeting (Paper No ASQEC/18/35e) (Appendix 3).

18.122 Departures and Variations from the University's Regulatory Framework

The Committee considered the proposed variation for BSc Hons Biomedical Science and BSc Hons Biomedical Science (with DPP/DIAS). Approval was

sought to use the title 'Biomedical Studies' in respect of the CertHE and AB exit awards (Paper No ASQEC/18/35f).

AGREED: that the variation be approved.

#### 18.123 Learning Outcomes for Exit Awards

Professor Bartholomew initiated a discussion on expectations for the learning outcomes of exit awards. It was noted that there was a current requirement for all exit awards to have a set of learning outcomes. Where the exit award was at a different qualification level (e.g. CertHE) from the main award (Hons degree), these were typically presented as a discrete set with the wording varied to reflect the level of the qualification, and often with fewer outcomes. Where the exit award was at the same level (e.g. PgCert or PgDip), the outcomes were typically a sub-set of the main award's. Where the exit award was at a different level, its outcomes were usually subsumed within the higher order expression of the final award's outcomes. Professor Bartholomew considered that the current way of specifying learning outcomes was cumbersome and proposed that, with careful design, a single curriculum map of learning outcomes could show the accumulated learning outcomes from all the awards within the programme and with exit-award outcomes 'nested' therein. This proposed approach would adhere to the UK Quality Code as there would still be distinct, qualification-level learning outcomes for each award.

Mr Faulkner confirmed that, as there was generally no difference in the expression of the intellectual challenge of final and exit awards in Level 7 postgraduate qualifications, the proposal in effect reflecting existing practice in Master's degrees. He affirmed the UK Quality Code requirement in respect of separate statements of outcomes for exit awards and that these were expected to function as worthwhile qualifications in their own right. They should be identifiable for recording in the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) for students leaving with an exit award. He advised that the CMS could accommodate both models. He was however concerned that without careful review of the number of learning outcomes, the 'nested' model could lead to an aggregation of substantially more learning outcomes, repetitive in their wording, at the final level than at present, which would be unhelpful in terms of a concise, holistic statement of outcomes.

The Associate Deans (Education) expressed interest in the model. It was noted that CHERP would need to build this development into their work with teams as they recast their curricula reviewed programme learning outcomes.

AGREED: that migration to the 'nested' approach for learning outcomes be supported with implementation being incrementally achieved through the University's normal standard assurance processes.

## 18.124 INSTITUTIONAL RE-APPROVAL

Mrs Alleyne presented two reports regarding the re-approval of two Recognised Institutions. HSC Leadership Centre and Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT) Papers No ASQEC/18/36a and 36b.

Both had been assessed as low risk and the recommendations for continuing approval were based upon the findings of desk-based reviews by Quality Enhancement and were supported by the Faculty Partnership Manager.

AGREED: that the reports be endorsed and that it be recommended to Senate that both institutions be granted continuing approval as Recognised Institutions of the University under Ordinance XXVIII, for a further period of five years: 2019/20 to 2023/24.

## 18.125 APPROVAL OF NEW OUTCENTRES AND USE OF RECOGNISED TEACHERS

Mrs Alleyne presented Paper No ASQEC/18/37 which noted the range and extent of existing outcentres and reviewed current approval arrangements and proposed some changes. The paper also considered the question of the use of staff in outcentres in teaching and assessment, about which the June 2018 meeting had asked Quality Enhancement to advise (min 18.49 refers).

### Outcentre Approval

The current process required the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the University's risk committee, to approve new outcentre locations for the delivery of courses to University students. The proposed changes to the process would require completion of a short questionnaire by the sponsoring Faculty for consideration by the Academic Planning Advisory Group (APAG), rather than a due diligence report to SLT, and subsequent recommendation for approval to Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee. If the Faculty or APAG had concerns, Quality Enhancement would undertake a due diligence exercise for report to SLT.

If the proposed outcentre was in a country where the University had no previous partnerships a commentary would be provided to SLT as part of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)'s report and SLT would be invited to consider whether the University should proceed to establish an outcentre in that region.

A new outcentre proposal would be submitted to APAG through the existing course revision (new location) CA3 process, accompanied by course costing and the new questionnaire. This would ensure explicit information was provided on the facilities and resources of the proposed outcentre to ensure that University staff and students, and the University's reputation, were adequately safeguarded. The extent of investigation of proposals referred for a report to SLT would be determined on a case-by-case basis in proportion to the perceived risk.

## Recognised Teachers

Mrs Alleyne stated that the paper did not propose a figure for an acceptable proportion of outcentre staff who might be nominated as recognised teachers. Instead, it provided guidance to faculties on the use of outcentre staff in this role, including that:

- the Course Director should be a member of University staff;
- consideration should always be given to the security of overall course organisation, management, delivery and assessment;
- if a large proportion of the course was to be delivered and assessed by recognised teachers, a greater level of oversight would be necessary from the home course team to ensure maintenance and comparability of standards. This should include both a review of student performance and involvement in moderation of assessments;
- external examiner moderation should include sampling of work from students at the outcentre for comparability.

Professor Bartholomew noted that the University would investigate the involvement of recognised teachers if there were concerns about a programme.

AGREED that:

- (i) the revised arrangements for the approval of new outcentres be approved;
- (ii) the guidance on the use of outcentre staff in teaching be endorsed and commended to faculties.

## 18.126 CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Chair noted that CMS was a standing agenda item and invited Faculty representatives to raise matters.

Dr Keenan mentioned that Associate Deans (Education) had identified a need in faculties for hands-on training in the CMS as well as on quality and standards matters. Dr Barr confirmed that such training requirements had been identified in his faculty and that he had provided training for some business support staff in his School. Dr Keenan reported that, following the restructuring of professional services, many faculty staff were new and that many experienced staff had moved and were no longer available to her colleagues.

Professor Turner reported that he had been unable to participate in the previous meeting's discussion of CMS when training and championing had been raised (min 18.98 refers) owing to the failure in video-conferencing. He mentioned that he had considerable knowledge and experience of previous training through his involvement in the developmental roll-out of the CMS. He explained that, following its launch in 2013 and the phased withdrawal of paper-based processes, the initial approach had been to 'train the trainers' and to encourage championing within faculties, supported by detailed user guidance

documentation. A User Forum had fulfilled a technical rather than training purpose and had been a vehicle to gather information on system development needs. Professor Turner advised that the Office for Digital Learning had used screen-capture technology to develop a video briefing on the context of the CMS and its benefits. Feedback on this had suggested that staff would prefer a task-based video. He suggested that training could be provided through a two-phase course on Blackboard Learn, addressing Contextual Training and Transactional Training.

Professor Bartholomew identified a number of issues arising from the Committee's discussion, including a requirement to identify who needs training, who might deliver it, what resource was available to deliver it, and whether currently available training resources were being fully utilised.

He suggested campus training events should be contextual and holistic and that further training should be managed locally by faculties. One-to-one guidance would continue to be available from the Academic Office, as at present. Dr Keenan reiterated that the issue for faculties was that they did not all have staff at faculty level with knowledge of CMS and that the request was for hands-on training. Professor Turner was of the view that such training would need to focus on a core sub-set of the system rather than its entire functionality, in order to be manageable.

In regard to another proposed development, it was noted that hyperlinks between modules and programme had already been provided (min 18.98 refers). Professor McKillop also proposed that it would be useful to receive, with the email for a submission returned by the Academic Office, the supplementary documentation provided by the faculty.

AGREED that:

- (i) Professor Bartholomew commission a training needs analysis and delivery plan for CMS, including costings;
- (ii) Associate Deans (Education), Professor Turner and Academic Office representatives meet to identify a priority sub-set of CMS functionality for a possible hands-on training session.

## EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

### 18.127 External Examiners' Reports 2017/18

Professor Bartholomew presented the annual overview report on external examiner reports for the 2017/18 academic year (Paper No ASQEC/18/38a).

He commended the report as a valuable resource. He noted that the vast majority of external examiners had reported that standards were appropriate and many positive points had been made, while course-specific critical comments did not reflect any fundamental risk to standards. He noted that he

would use the report as a reference resource in monthly meetings with Associate Deans (Education), in regard to the deficiencies in a small number of programmes.

Individual reports and course committee responses were used in the Continuous Assurance of Enhancement Cycle.

While the overwhelming majority of external examiners commented positively in relation to assessment and feedback, the main concern, as in previous years, was over instances of over-assessment although these were reducing. There continued to be a small number of concerns expressed by students relating to the assessment of groupwork. The report also identified a small but significant number of reports where the adequacy or consistency of student feedback were issues. Generally marking standards were noted as robust with rigorous moderation but the use of the range of marks remained the most frequently occurring issue where this was raised. A small number of programmes were criticised for over-generous marking.

Professor Bartholomew advised that comments on over-generous marking, anonymous marking, differential marking between locations and variable cohort performance were best addressed by ensuring the use of robust marking rubrics, while noting that standards of teaching may be a factor in the latter.

The report stated that six external examiners had raised concern about the marks uplift algorithm applied to mitigate the effect of last year's UCU strike. The Chair reminded the Committee that the adoption of the algorithm and process for the implementation of the marks uplift had been a decision taken by Senate but accepted that there had been late communication to externals about the scheme. He had briefed new externals at their induction this year on the policy to address this and other extraordinary circumstances. The Committee noted that the implementation of the policy had only affected the classification results of 1.5% of students.

Members reported on the question of delays in the payment of external examiners, in particular their expenses. It was noted that these might have arisen in the process for verification of the right to work in the UK, and/or subsequent payment through the Subsidiary Payroll.

AGREED that:

- (i) Faculties ensure that issues identified by external examiners had been addressed satisfactorily;
- (ii) Associate Deans (Education) provide specific examples of delays in payment of external examiners to Professor Bartholomew for follow-up with People and Culture and/or Finance.

## 18.128 Code of Practice on Tutoring and Demonstrating by Postgraduate Students

Ms Davies presented Papers No ASQEC/18/38b-d on the University's Code of Practice on Tutoring and Demonstrating by Postgraduate Students, discussion of which had been deferred from the October meeting (min 18.78 refers).

The Committee had previously referred the topic of the involvement of PhD students in the assessment of modules contributing to final classification to Learning and Teaching Committee (mins 18.6ii and 18.42 refer), as it had noted that the new Honours degree algorithm including Level 5 results had implications for the current Code of Practice (2002), which debarred postgraduate students from undertaking summative assessment in modules contributing to the final award and its classification.

The papers included a review of the Code and proposed revisions following consultation with the Doctoral College and faculties. It provided an updated context on the expectations for PhD students employed as teaching assistants and demonstrators in accordance with the three Categories of activity drawn up by the Doctoral College and approved by Senate, together with training and development requirements.

It was proposed that postgraduate researchers who were to be involved in summative assessment (Category 3B) be required to complete the 'First Steps to Teaching and Learning in HE' (FST) programme which led to Associate Fellowship of the HEA. This training would remain optional for postgraduate teaching assistants (pgTAs) not involved in summative assessment. The Doctoral College would monitor completion of the FST course, which CHERP planned to develop into a credit-bearing module.

The paper posed questions on whether any pgTA involved in assessment, regardless of whether it was summative or not, should be required to complete the FST course; and whether pgTAs should be explicitly allowed to assess at Level 7. There was general support for the former, but not for the latter.

There was some discussion on the hourly rates of pay and the multiplier for each Category and it was noted that the pay rates had been determined following consultation between the Doctoral College and the Union.

The report also noted comments from faculties on the implications for training and development provided for Recognised Teachers and part-time sessional staff, although it was recognised that this was a separate matter from this Code of Practice for postgraduates.

AGREED that:

- (i) PgTAs who undertake any assessment should be required to complete the FST programme;
- (ii) PgTAs should not normally be involved in assessment at Level 7;

(iii) the revised Code of Practice on Tutoring and Demonstrating by Postgraduate Researchers be approved (Appendix 4).

#### COMBINED STUDIES PROGRAMME

18.129 Annual Report on the Operation and Management of Undergraduate Combined Subjects: 2017/18

Dr Aideen Hunter, Chair, Coleraine Campus Co-ordinating Group, presented the consolidated review report from the three Directors of Combined Studies (Paper No ASQEC/18/39a).

The report indicated that the total enrolment of 1139 reflected the gradual decline in numbers at Coleraine and Magee where many combinations were being taught out as a consequence of the closure/relocation of subject provision from 2015/16. Enrolment at Jordanstown was comparatively stable.

Dr Hunter reported that the campus co-ordinating groups were keen to promote further the educational benefits of Combined Studies and its interdisciplinary ethos. The Chair acknowledged that graduates were often assessed at interview by employers for their transferrable skills and noted the University's support for cross-faculty interdisciplinarity.

18.130 Annual Reports from the Chief External Examiners and Responses from the Campus Co-ordinating Groups 2017/18

Dr Hunter presented the Chief External Examiner reports for Coleraine, Jordanstown and Magee campuses (Paper No ASQEC/18/39b).

Each of the reports was very supportive of the subject combination framework and praised its operation and oversight. The Committee noted that all three reports were very positive, and that a copy of one formal response was awaited.

The Coleraine Chief External had questioned the higher proportion of first class awards on some combination courses and the apparent skewing of an overall result due to a high level of performance in factual subjects. Dr Hunter explained that the comment had been intended to encourage consideration of the use of the higher end of the marking scale by the more discursive subjects and was not an indication of any issue around over-generous marking.

18.131 ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW: COLLABORATIVE COURSES 2017/18

Dr Keenan presented the Annual Course Review Report for 2017/18 (Paper No ASQEC/18/40).

## Review method

Dr Keenan noted that the Sub-Group's review process had been altered so that it considered self-evaluation reports, institutional overview reports, external examiner reports and Partnership Manager reports. Course committee and Staff-Student Consultative Committee minutes were no longer part of the review.

All collaborative partners had provided documentation except HTMi, Switzerland, and University of Hong Kong SPACE (the latter was working to a different timetable). HTMi had subsequently submitted material and the review for both institutions would be completed in January.

## Update from 2016/17 and Sub-Group Review 2017/18

The Sub-Group had been satisfied that all matters from the previous review had been addressed. The report provided reviews for 2017/18 by institution identifying institution-wide issues and areas of good practice, together with specific comments on particular courses. The review used RAG 'Red', 'Amber', 'Green' classification and all courses were classified Green. It also identified matters to be addressed by two faculties and noted nine areas of good practice.

## Recommendations

The report made five recommendations for the Committee's consideration, one for action by the Committee and four by the Collaborative Partnerships Forum or Faculty Partnership Managers (FPMs), supported by Quality Enhancement.

The Sub-Group recommended that the Committee establish a task-and-finish group to draw up a protocol to safeguard the quality of the student experience when a course was being taught out. The Committee noted that the University had considerable recent experience of teaching out courses and their monitoring, with Faculty action plans and regular reporting to Senate. Consequently, a summary collation of the identified good practice should obviate the need for a working group.

It was noted that the four recommendations for action by the Collaborative Courses Forum and FPMs related to improving adherence to established protocols by partner institutions, timely maintenance of student records and improving accuracy of statistical returns for the Annual Course Review process. It was proposed that the Forum be asked to ensure that each partner institution identified a named contact to provide minutes of course and staff-student consultative committees to Faculty Partnership Managers at agreed junctures and that these followed the University template, to amend the FPM annual report form to take account of college-specific issues in subject networks, to ensure that HE Co-ordinators provided staff development to course directors to achieve immediate notification of early leavers to the University and on the completion of data sections on the annual course review form, in order to

resolve discrepancies, and to implement strategies to encourage the return of students who did not re-enrol.

The Sub-Group also recommended that the Forum ensure that only those individuals in partner institutions who had completed training by the University chair Boards of Examiners, in accordance with the agreed protocol.

### Work Based Learning

Professor Bartholomew noted that the topic of over-generous marking by industrial partners had been raised and that the report indicated that issues were being addressed. He asked that information on the measures taken should be included in the report in order to provide evidence of action on a potential concern around standards.

Minor corrections should also be made to some academic years and in the references to 'Course Directors' chairing Boards of Examiners at Section C5 and Recommendation 5.

Dr Keenan noted that the annual review of collaborative provision was a large, complex and resource-intensive exercise and acknowledged the work of members of the Sub-Group, Faculty Partnership Managers and in particular Mr Hugh Deighan and Mrs Cathy McIntyre from Quality Enhancement. Professor Bartholomew echoed these thanks and extended them to her as Chair of the Sub-Group.

AGREED that:

- (i) Quality Enhancement review past action plans and develop a checklist for supporting students during the teach-out of courses;
- (ii) the recommendations for the Collaborative Partnerships Forum and Faculty Partnership Managers be endorsed.

Duration 2 hours 50 minutes

13 December 2018

GK/AGF/lv

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

ACADEMIC PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP (13.11.18)

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO ASQEC FOR APPROVAL**

**NEW COURSE PROPOSALS TO BE APPROVED WITHOUT EVALUATION**

**JANUARY 2019 START**

Ulster University Business School

Proposed MSc Professional Services Operational Delivery (PT) (JN).

**SEPTEMBER 2019 START**

Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

Proposed MSc Mechanical Engineering (FT/PT) (JN).

**NEW COURSE PROPOSALS TO BE APPROVED TO PROCEED TO PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

**SEPTEMBER 2019 START**

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Proposed BA Hons Screen Production (FT/PT) (BT).

Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

Proposed MSc Artificial Intelligence (FT/PT) (JN).

**PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE A JANUARY INTAKE FROM 2019**

Faculty of Life and Health Sciences

MSc Stratified Medicine (ME).

**PROPOSALS FOR TITLE CHANGE**

Access, Digital and Distributed Learning

From: Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice

To: Postgraduate Certificate in Graduate Leadership [effective from 2019/20].

### Faculty of Life and Health Sciences

From: BSc Hons Biomedical Science (with DPP (Pathology))

To: BSc Hons Applied Biomedical Science (with DPP (Pathology)) [effective from 2019/20].

### Ulster University Business School

From: FdSc Business Services Management (South West College)

To: FdSc Business Management [effective from 2019/20, **subject to approval by the revalidation panel**].

## **WITHDRAWN PROPOSALS**

### Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Proposed MSc Games Design (FT) (BT/DL).

**FOR INFORMATION: PROGRAMME SUSPENSIONS** [noted by the Academic Planning Advisory Group]

### Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

#### No intake 2018/19

Access Diploma in Computing at South West College (Cookstown (FT/PT), Dungannon (FT), Enniskillen (FT/PT) and Omagh (FT/PT) campuses);

FdSc Architectural Technology (FT) at South West College (Omagh campus).

### Faculty of Life and Health Sciences

#### No intake 2018/19

FdSc Applied and Medical Sciences (FT) at Southern Regional College (Newry campus);

FdSc Applied and Medical Sciences (FT/PT) at South Eastern Regional College (Downpatrick campus).

### Ulster University Business School

#### No intake 2018/19

FdSc International Hospitality and Tourism Management (PT) at South West College (Newry campus);

FdSc Tourism, Hospitality and Events at South Eastern Regional College (Bangor (FT/PT), Downpatrick (FT/PT) and Lisburn (FT) campuses).

**FOR INFORMATION: PROGRAMME WITHDRAWALS** [noted by the Academic Planning Advisory Group]

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Last intake 2016/17

MSc Restorative Practice (JN).

Last intake 2017/18

Certificate in Restorative Practice (JN).

Last intake 2018/19

BA Hons Ceramics, Jewellery and Silversmithing (BT);

BA Hons Media Studies and Production (CE);

Undergraduate Hons Subject: Media (CE).

Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

Last intake 2014/15

BSc Hons Building Engineering and Materials (JN).

No intake

FdEng Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering at South Eastern Regional College (Bangor campus).

Faculty of Life and Health Sciences

Last intake 2017/18

BSc Hons Biotechnology (CE).

Last intake 2018/19

BSc Hons Applied Biosciences (DL).

Ulster University Business School

Last intake 2017/18

Undergraduate Hons Subject: Business Economics (JN) [replaced with Single Hons only];

Undergraduate Hons Subject: Economics (JN) [replaced with Single Hons only].

## COURSE APPROVALS

**1 Recommendation**

The Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee under delegated authority from Senate is asked to endorse the recommendations for approval as indicated:

**COURSE APPROVAL**

| FACULTY                              | REVAL UNIT | COURSE TITLE   | MODE |    | INTAKES (Years) | LOCATION | INTAKE           |       |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--|------|----|-----------------|----------|------------------|-------|
|                                      |            |  | FT   | PT |                 |          | FT               | PT    |
| ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES | 19Aii      | BA Hons Journalism (FT/PT) (with CertHE and AB exit awards) (with optional DIAS (FT only)) | ✓    | ✓  | 2018 – 2022     | CE       | Max 40<br>Min 15 | Max 5 |

**COURSE RE-APPROVAL**

| FACULTY                              | REVAL UNIT | COURSE TITLE  | MODE |    | INTAKES (Years) | LOCATION | INTAKE           |       |
|--------------------------------------|------------|---|------|----|-----------------|----------|------------------|-------|
|                                      |            |   | FT   | PT |                 |          | FT               | PT    |
| ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES | 19Aii      | Undergraduate Honours Subject: Journalism (Major) (FT/PT) (with CertHE and AB exit awards) (with optional DIAS (FT only)) | ✓    | ✓  | 2018 – 2022     | CE       | Max 25<br>Min 15 | Max 5 |

## 1 COURSE REVISIONS AND NEW SHORT COURSE MODULES 2018/19

Authority for approval of course revisions, except for course titles, locations and modes of attendance, and short-course modules is delegated by Senate to Faculties and Access, Digital and Distributed Learning.

The following revisions have been approved by them since 22 October 2018.

**ACCESS, DIGITAL AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING****Credit-bearing Short Courses****Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Development Framework**

To add to the framework modules BMG735 and BMG907.

**ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES****Course Revisions****Undergraduate Hons Subject: Criminology and Criminal Justice (Single Hons/Minor)**

To add a new optional Level 6 module, PUP547, 'Drugs and Crime';

**Undergraduate Hons Subject: Social Policy****BSc Hons Health and Social Care Policy**

To add an optional placement year leading to the award of DPP / (International) from 2018/19, through new module SOP340;

**BMus Hons**

To revise the assessment strategy in module MUS504;

**PgDip/MSc English Language and Linguistics**

To add a new optional module, CMM762, 'Introduction to TESOL for Linguists' from 2018/19; to make CMM750 optional;

**LLM Access to Justice**

To add as an optional module, LAW727; to change the status of LAW728 to optional.

## **COMPUTING, ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

### **Course Revisions**

**BSc Hons Computing Science**  
**BSc Hons Computer Technologies**  
**BSc Hons Interactive Computing**  
**BSc Hons Software Engineering**

To update the accreditation status of the courses with the British Computer Society;

**BEng/MEng Hons Energy and Building Services Engineering**

To withdraw and permanently archive modules ENE102 and 512.

## **LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

### **Course Revisions**

**FdSc Health and Social Care at BMC, NRC, NWRC, SRC, SERC, SWC**

To revise the assessment strategy in modules NUS308, 309 and 312;

**BSc Hons Applied Medical Sciences**  
**BSc Hons Biomedical Sciences (Life Sciences)**  
**BSc Hons Biomedical and Bio-industrial Sciences**

To revise learning outcomes in all modules and assessment strategy in some, in line with Curriculum Design Principles and conditions set by the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) for accreditation for BMS524 and 537; to retitle BMS502; to revise regulations and programme specifications accordingly; to record the accreditation of the BSc Hons Biomedical Sciences (Life Sciences) by the IBMS;

**BSc Hons Dietetics**  
**BSc Hons Human Nutrition**

To revise the assessment strategy in module NUT315;

**BSc Hons Optometry / MOptom Hons**

To revise learning outcomes in all modules and assessment strategy in most, in line with the Curriculum Design Principles; to revise assessment strategy in OPT703 to Pass/Fail; to revise OPT708 and 709 (including titles, content and assessment strategies);

**PgCert/PgDip/MSc Nursing**

To add a long-thin instance (Semester 2 and 3) of module NUR836 (full-time mode) at Jordanstown; to revise the summary description of modules: NUR758, 775, 785, 823, 866, 867, 871, 872 and 873;

**PgDip/MSc Geographic Information Systems**

To revise content of module EGM717.

## **ULSTER UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL**

### **Course Revisions**

#### **Undergraduate Hons Subject: Advertising**

To revise the curriculum following revalidation of other courses in the School; to replace MKT326 with MKT351, BMG617 with BMG627, and BMG508 with MKT504; to change the degree algorithm to include a possible Level 5 contribution; to revise regulations accordingly;

#### **Undergraduate Hons Subject: Human Resource Management (Main/Minor)**

To replace BMG423 with LAW309, and BMG547 and 616 with BMG618 and 628; to add the option of degree classification including a Level 5 contribution;

#### **BSc Hons International Hospitality Management at HTMi**

To revise assessment strategy in module HTM548;

#### **BSc Hons Marketing**

To amend regulations to introduce a Level 5 contribution to the Honours degree classification;

#### **MSc International Business**

To add information on accreditation by the Institute of Export and International Trade (IOE);

### **Credit-bearing Short Courses**

#### **Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Development**

To add to the framework modules BMG856 and MKT729.

**Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PgTAs)**

**Code of Practice on Tutoring and Demonstrating by Postgraduate Researchers**

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**Code of Practice on Tutoring and Demonstrating by Postgraduate Researchers**

**CONTEXT:** *The invaluable contribution made by postgraduate researchers working as teaching assistants and demonstrators is recognised in Schools and Faculties of the University. This contribution is valued by undergraduate students and academic staff, for its contribution to the quality of learning and teaching, and by the teaching assistants and demonstrators themselves in terms both of experience and of income.*

**PURPOSE:** *The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure a broad common understanding across the University of the roles and responsibilities of postgraduate teaching assistants and demonstrators (PgTAs), and of the academic staff with and for whom they work.*

*It is offered as guidance to Faculties and Schools in establishing good practice, recognising that the exact nature of the roles and responsibilities assigned to postgraduate teaching assistants and demonstrators will vary from School to School and from one course to another.*

**1. Terms and Conditions**

- 1.1. Explicit information should be provided regarding the nature of the work and the number of hours, which should not normally exceed six per week. All postgraduate researchers **MUST** obtain permission from their supervisors before agreeing to carry out any teaching or demonstrating duties. (NB some funding bodies do not allow postgraduate researchers to be in paid employment, and in other cases there are limits on the number of hours worked or total amount of income earned.)
- 1.2. PgTAs should be provided with the name and contact details of the relevant Module Co-ordinator(s), in advance of the commencement of their duties.
- 1.3. The review of PgTA remuneration rates carried out in 2018 stipulates the following three categories of payment, for which, in some of the categories, a multiplier will be applied to compensate for preparation time. Table 1 overleaf includes details of the three categories, the rate of pay and the multiplier that will be applied. PgTAs will be required to undertake mandatory training and development corresponding to the role in which they are employed, outlined in **Section 2** below.

Table 1

| <b>PgTA payment schedule 2018-19</b> |  |                    |                   |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|
|                                      | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Hourly Rate</b> | <b>Multiplier</b> |
| <b>Category 1</b>                    | To facilitate student learning, typically in a seminar or tutorial setting, under the supervision of a member of academic staff <b>(includes the development of teaching materials).</b> | £12.57             | 2                 |
| <b>Category 2</b>                    | To facilitate student learning, typically in a seminar or tutorial setting, under the supervision of a member of academic staff <b>using existing teaching materials.</b>                | £12.57             | 1.5               |
| <b>Category 3</b>                    | <b>A:</b> To facilitate laboratory, workshop or fieldwork setting, under the supervision of a senior academic colleague.<br><b>and/or</b><br><b>B:</b> To mark and assess scripts.       | £12.57             | No Multiplier     |

- 1.4. PgTAs should be informed in advance of the applicable hourly rate of pay, and arrangements for claiming this.
- 1.5. Any additional duties which PgTAs are asked to undertake at a later date will be subject to further payment at the relevant rate.

## **2 Development and Support**

- 2.1 Prior to undertaking any teaching or demonstration duties, all potential PgTAs are required to attend the one-day course: *Introduction to Teaching and Learning for Post-Graduate Teaching Assistants* or its equivalent. This course is provided annually by the Centre for Higher Education Research and Practice (CHERP). Records of completion will be maintained by the Doctoral College.
- 2.2 If a Faculty wishes PgTAs to carry out summative assessment of student work (Category 3B), then those identified are required to enrol on and complete the First Steps programme to ensure that they receive appropriate training and development. The programme includes two opportunities for observation of practice, one relating to teaching and the other related to assessment and feedback: both observations should be successfully completed and submitted to the FST programme team within the first

semester of the PgTA undertaking any teaching duties. The remainder of the assessment requirements for the programme will be submitted at one of the three submission points over the year, but final submission should not exceed 18 months from enrolment on the programme itself.

This non-credit bearing course is accredited by Advance HE as leading to HEA Associate Fellowship (Descriptor 1) aligned to the following Areas of Activity as defined by the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)<sup>1</sup>:

- A2: Teach and/or support learning
- A3: Assess and give feedback to learners

2.3 For Category 3B PgTAs who already hold AFHEA, their need to complete FST will depend on the Areas of Activity they have already evidenced for D1.

- Where neither A2 nor A3 have been previously evidenced, FST would have to complete the full FST;
- Where only one of the prescribed Areas of Activity has previously been evidenced, they would have to:
  - provide recent evidence for APEL of this Area of Activity;
  - complete the FST assessment requirements pertaining to the other Area of Activity.

A summary of PgTA learning and teaching training and development requirements is outlined in the Appendix 2.

2.4 All PgTAs must also undertake such health and safety training as is required in relation to the laboratories or teaching rooms in which they will be working, and should be familiar with the responsibilities of employees under current legislation and policy, especially in the areas of Health and Safety at Work and Equality and Diversity.

2.5 It is the responsibility of the **Module Co-ordinator** (or other nominated member of academic staff) to:

- 2.5.1 provide PgTAs with an overview of the Course and the Module outline (usually in Course/Module Handbook);
- 2.5.2 explain the purpose of the practicals or teaching within the framework of the overall teaching of the Module, including Lecture programme;

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/uk\\_professional\\_standards\\_framework.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/uk_professional_standards_framework.pdf)

- 2.5.3 explain how the students are expected to be taught, and the role of the PgTA in this;
- 2.5.4 explain how the Module is administered and how PgTAs should interact with the Module co-ordinator;
- 2.5.5 discuss how assessment (if undertaken) should be carried out, provide copies of assessment tasks, marking criteria and guidance, and explain arrangements for moderation of any marking;
- 2.5.6 provide information about the provision of feedback to students about their work;
- 2.5.7 inform PgTAs about any feedback they will be expected to provide to the Module co-ordinator about the teaching of the Module (for Module evaluation purposes);
- 2.5.8 inform PgTAs which member of staff is the Course Director and advise them of the dates when course committee meetings are planned.

### **3 Resources and materials**

- 3.1 The Module co-ordinator (or other nominated academic member of staff) will provide copies of appropriate course handouts and reading lists.
- 3.2 PgTAs should be provided with a means of communicating with students in their teaching groups, and, where appropriate, provided with access to the module Blackboard Learn area
- 3.3 PgTAs should be provided with a list of students in their teaching groups, together with information about the timing and location of the session. A record of attendance should be kept at each session, and passed on to the Module Co-ordinator.

### **4 Assessment of student work**

- 4.1 If PgTAs are carrying out formal assessment of students' work, they must be given explicit assessment criteria together with guidance on how these criteria are to be applied in marking and grading the work.
- 4.2 No PgTA should summatively assess the work of students in modules which contribute to a final award and related classification, unless they are employed as a Category 3B PgTA and fulfil the mandatory training and development requirements.

- 4.3 Information should be provided regarding the deadlines for completion of assessment and the procedures for providing assessment information to the Module Co-ordinator (or other nominated person).
- 4.4 All assessment carried out by PgTAs will be subject to moderation by the Module Co-ordinator (or another nominated member of academic staff), who will be responsible for the recording and issuing of marks or grades.

## **5 Recruitment and selection**

- 5.1 Tutoring and demonstrating can provide valuable experience for postgraduate researchers, and opportunities to undertake such duties should be widely publicised within the University.
- 5.2 Faculties and Schools should have clearly defined procedures for the recruitment of PgTAs, which ensure that selection is fair and non-discriminatory in accordance with current University Policy.
- 5.3 Each Faculty (or School) should appoint a named person, or persons, who will take overall responsibility for the employment, development and support of PgTAs. Where a Faculty of School has a base on more than one campus, there should be a named individual holding this responsibility on each campus.
- 5.4 The nominated member(s) of staff in the Faculty should ensure that all teaching assistants and demonstrators appointed are appropriately qualified and trained for the teaching which they are about to undertake. (Information should be held about each applicant's higher education qualifications, current research and name of supervisor, and a record kept of attendance at required central and local development and training.)

## **6 Quality assurance and monitoring**

- 6.1 The quality of learner support provided by PgTAs will be assured through careful recruitment and selection and adequate preparation, development and support of each individual for the role undertaken.
- 6.2 PgTAs will take part in appropriate aspects of University of Ulster quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

## APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

|                   | <b>Role &amp; responsibilities</b>  |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Category 1</b> | To facilitate student learning, typically in a seminar or tutorial setting, under the supervision of a member of academic staff <b>(includes the development of teaching materials)</b> . |
| <b>Category 2</b> | To facilitate student learning, typically in a seminar or tutorial setting, under the supervision of a member of academic staff <b>using existing teaching materials</b> .                |
| <b>Category 3</b> | A: To facilitate laboratory, workshop or fieldwork setting, under the supervision of a senior academic colleague.<br>and/or<br>B: To mark and assess scripts.                             |

Demonstration and teaching duties may include:

- Demonstration and assistance with practical classes
- Delivery and co-ordination of small group activities, e.g. tutorials
- Participation in student-led activities
- Participation in student-led seminars
- Assessment of coursework

Responsibilities of the Module Co-ordinator (or other nominated member of academic staff)

*Before any teaching session the Module Co-ordinator will:*

- Explain the aims and learning outcomes of each teaching session to the assistant and how these are to be achieved
- Identify how the aims and learning outcomes of the teaching session facilitate the achievement of the overall module aims and learning outcomes
- Provide assistants with all the relevant documentation and safety information
- Ensure that each assistant has the necessary skills for the teaching session
- Brief the assistant on current state of knowledge and progress of the student group and highlight areas of possible learning difficulties
- Explain to the PgTA how they are intended to facilitate the learning and teaching of students during the teaching session
- Ensure that the relevant Course Director(s) are informed of the PgTA's contact details so that he or she can be invited to meetings of the course committee(s)

*During the teaching session, the Module Co-ordinator will:*

- Introduce the PgTA(s) to the students and explain their role
- Monitor the effectiveness of the PgTA(s) and provide constructive feedback.

*At the end of the module, the Module Co-ordinator will:*

- Complete a brief report on the PgTA(s) performance.

### **Responsibilities of the PgTA**

*Before the teaching session, the PgTA(s) will:*

- Have attended relevant training courses
- Be familiar with the aims and learning outcomes of the teaching session and how they are to be achieved
- Be familiar with the overall aims and learning outcomes of the module
- Be familiar with and understand all documentation associated with the teaching session
- Have working knowledge of hardware, software and/or other equipment to be employed during the teaching session (where applicable)

*During the teaching session, the PgTA(s) will:*

- Arrive before the students
- Attend all sessions, or exceptionally, and with sufficient notice, advise academic staff of any need to arrange a suitable replacement
- Identify students in need of assistance and assist as appropriate
- Modify own performance in response to helpful, constructive feedback from academic staff.

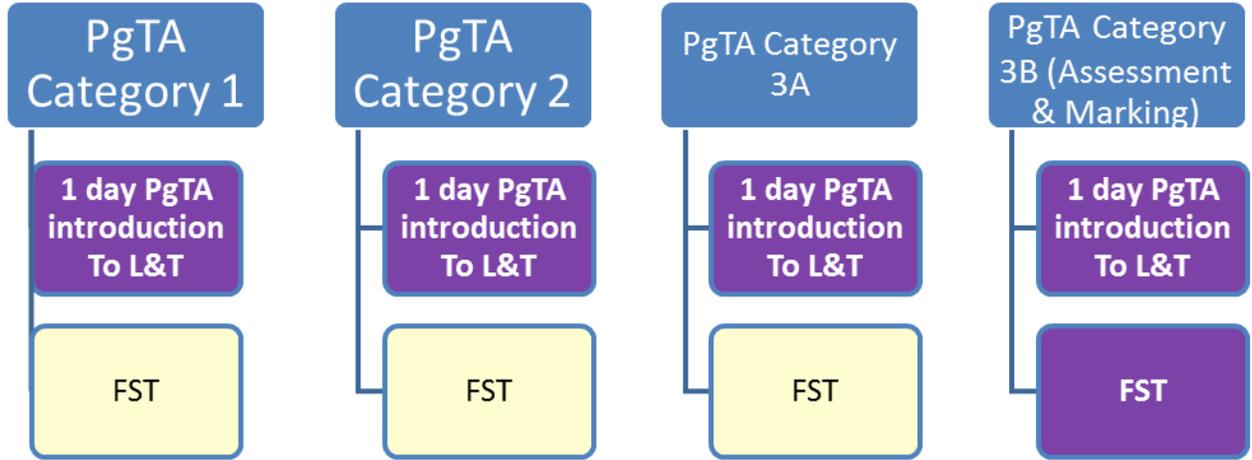
*When assessing student work, the PgTA(s) will:*

- Have attended relevant training course(s)
- Adhere to the marking criteria supplied by the academic member of staff
- Adhere to the Faculty's Code of Practice on Assessment
- Declare any professional conflict of interests, e.g. a student is a relative, and refer that work to the academic member of staff for assessment.

*At the end of the Module, the PgTA(s) will:*

- Complete a brief report on demonstrations / teachings and how they might be improved, which will form part of the module evaluation data.

**APPENDIX 2: PgTA TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT**



**KEY**

|           |
|-----------|
| Mandatory |
| Optional  |