

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

Paper No ASQEC/19/9

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

13 March 2019

Agenda Item 13

THE ADEQUACY OF FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2017/18 ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW

COVER SHEET

To receive a report on the adequacy of follow-up to the review findings.

THE ADEQUACY OF FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2017/18 ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

The Sub-Group of the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (ASQEC) established to conduct the 2017/18 annual course review of collaborative courses met on 6 November 2018. A report from the meeting was approved by Committee at its meeting on 30 November 2018 (Minute 18.131 refers). Issues identified for further action were forwarded to Faculties, partner institutions and the Collaborative Partnerships Forum (CPF). Partner institutions were also informed of areas of good practice.

The Sub-Group met again on 31 January 2019 to consider a follow-up report on the adequacy and appropriateness of responses received. This report summarises the conclusions of the Sub-Group.

2. ISSUES REFERRED TO FACULTIES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Sub-Group had referred the following issues to Faculties for consideration:

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences		
	Recommendation	Action taken or Planned
1.	Comment on the remark made by the External Examiner and FPM that the level 4 Certificate in Custody Prison Officer Practice might actually be closer to a Level 5 award.	<p>The Faculty had the programme accredited at level 4 and internal and external panel members approved this. The Faculty would not agree that the work is above level 4 as the course is not of the same standard as the PSNI programmes at level 5. There would need to be a redesign of assessments and teaching in order to meet level 5 standards. This is something the Prison Service could work towards with support from the Faculty.</p> <p>The FPM has had several discussions with the prison training team and managers and whereas this is something they would be keen to pursue in the future, it is not currently a priority for them. They are currently embarking upon a heavy recruitment phase and do not have the capacity to completely review the curriculum, structure and associated assessments which would be required to meet</p>

		<p>the level 5 benchmarks. The programme was recently revalidated in August 2018 it is current and meets the needs of the employers, candidates and the profession.</p> <p>The level 5 enhancement remains an aspirational development for the future but not something Ulster will pursue in the short term. There is an internal review of all training within NIPS ongoing currently and we will await the findings from that to see if there are any recommendations for, or impact on, the programme. The training team are also reviewing the future of this programme and their training structures; they may consider extending it to a 10-week initial phase as opposed to the current 9-week phase and build from that.</p>
<p><i>The Sub-Group were satisfied with the response provided.</i></p>		
2.	<p>Comment on the External Examiner remark that the work students are doing on the Postgraduate Diploma in Health and Social Care Management at the Health Trusts 'exceeds what is expected nationally and internationally'.</p>	<p>This programme was revalidated and internal and external panel members agreed that the assessment and standards were appropriate. The course is closely aligned to the MPA and the assessment regime is similar in design and content. The course is also designed to meet the professional requirements of health and social care leadership in Northern Ireland. The Faculty, and the HSCLC, does not agree with the assessment of the External on this occasion.</p>
<p><i>The Sub-Group were satisfied with the response provided.</i></p>		
3	<p>Ensure that students are made aware of progression routes when there are changes to linked Ulster University provision ie Fd Arts Digital Arts and Technology and Fd Arts Design (Product and Graphic).</p>	<p>The FPM has confirmed that Course Directors and students at SWC have been made aware of alternative progression routes for both courses after the closure of several Ulster courses.</p>
<p><i>The Sub-Group were satisfied with the response provided.</i></p>		
<p>Ulster University Business School</p>		
	Recommendation	Action taken or Planned
1.	<p>Ensure Finance module reviewed as part of the network evaluation for Hospitality related programmes.</p>	<p>This module is being reviewed as part of a proposed evaluation event in May 2019, subject to acceptance and approval of CA2 to be submitted to APAG in January 2019. Planning meeting to discuss modules is taking place on 21st January 2019.</p>

<i>The Sub-Group were satisfied with the response provided.</i>	
2.	<p>Ensure an annual course review submission is provided by HTMi.</p> <p>Annual course submission was provided on 30 November 2018.</p> <p>FPM reports that UUBS continue to work closely with the new management team at HTMi to ensure that there are improvements following the challenges which have emerged in the period since the previous Academic Dean left HTMi.</p>
<i>The Sub-Group noted that a submission was provided and a decision taken that the programme be classified as 'Amber' and HTMi asked to provide an action plan to address concerns raised.</i>	

3. ISSUES REFERRED TO THE CPF FOR CONSIDERATION

The Sub-Group were satisfied with the actions taken or proposed by the Collaborative Partnerships Forum (CPF). These actions are detailed below.

Recommendation	Action Taken or Planned
That consideration be given to establishing a Task and Finish Group to look at a framework of key matters to ensure the safeguarding of the quality of the student experience where a course is being taught-out.	At its meeting on 30 November 2018 ASQEC noted that the University had considerable experience of teaching out courses with Faculty action plans and regular reporting. A summary collation of good practice should obviate the need for a Working Group (Min 18.131 refers).
That partner institutions provide a named contact who will be responsible for forwarding all Course Committee (CC) and Staff/Student Consultative Committee (SSCC) minutes within their institutions to Faculty Partnership Managers (FPMs) on an ongoing basis at agreed junctures.	At the meeting of the CPF on 23 January 2019 it was agreed that each partner institution would provide a named contact who would be responsible for forwarding minutes of CC and SSCC meetings to FPM.
That the FPM Annual Report be amended to take account of College specific issues within a subject network.	The Chair of the CPF will amend the FPM annual report.
That HE Co-ordinators ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Directors notify the University immediately of early leavers; • Staff development be provided by HE Co-ordinators for all Course Directors and key staff on the completion of statistical data on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER); 	At the meeting of the CPF on 23 January 2019 HE Co-ordinators were reminded that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Directors must notify the University of early leavers; • Partner institutions must provide training for course directors on the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Teams be encouraged to use the University templates for CC and SSCC meetings; <p>Course Teams track and record non-returners and implement strategies to encourage the return of these students.</p>	<p>completion of statistical data on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Teams should be encouraged to use the University templates for CC and SSCC meetings; <p>Course Teams must track and record non-returners and implement strategies to encourage the return of these students.</p>
<p>That only staff of an appropriate level, who have been trained by the University, Chair Boards of Examiners.</p>	<p>At the meeting of the CPF on 23 January 2019 HE Co-ordinators were reminded that only staff at the appropriate level, who have been trained by the University, Chair Boards of Examiners.</p>

4. ISSUES REFERRED TO PARTNER INSTITUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Sub-Group agreed that the actions taken or proposed by partner institutions at both institutional and programme level were on the whole timely and appropriate. Areas not fully addressed would be followed up by the Faculty Partnership Manager (FPM). All outstanding matters will be picked up as part of the 2018/19 review. A copy of the responses from partner institutions on programme-specific issues will be provided to the FPM for information and further action.

The annual course review submission from HTMi was not received in time to be reviewed by the Sub-Group when they met on 6 November 2018. A submission was subsequently received on 30 November 2018 and reviewed by a member of the Sub-Group. Two main areas of concern were noted:

- i) Quality Assurance: there are a number of QA matters raised by the External Examiner and FPM which are significant. It is noted that the Faculty is working actively with colleagues at HTMi and an action plan to address these matters has been developed. That said, it is important that this plan is monitored for implementation.
- ii) Staffing Resources: staff resources have been raised in the documentation which are significant and need to be resolved. These link back into quality assurance matters as staff assigned to the programme must be trained and well versed in both the UK Quality Code and Ulster University quality assurance policies.

The Chair of the Sub-Group deemed the concerns to be of a serious nature and classified the programme as 'Amber'. This recommendation was endorsed by the Chair of Committee. HTMi will be required to provide a detailed action plan to address the issues raised.

The annual course review submission from HKU SPACE was received within the agreed timeframe. No major areas of concern were identified.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As the awarding body, Ulster University has ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of the student learning opportunities. The Sub-Group were reassured that there were no significant standards management or quality assurance issues outstanding from the 2017/18 review. They were confident that the procedures and processes for ensuring the academic standards of awards and the quality of the learning opportunities were in place. They were satisfied that the detailed and action-orientated responses provided by partner institutions and the CPF addressed the issues identified.

Committee is asked to endorse the findings of the Sub-Group.