

ULSTER UNIVERSITY
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FORUM
18 April 2018

Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2018 at Jordanstown Campus.

Present: Dr P Brogan, Mr S Ferguson, Mrs L Lavery, Mr J Marley, Mrs T Millar, Mrs H Miller, Mr G Moffett (for Mr D McDowell), Mrs P Morrison (for Mrs D McElwee), Mr S McAllister, Mrs S McCall, Mr H McCloy (for Ms C Davison), Mrs M Paris (Chair), Ms C Reid, Mrs M Sowney.

Apologies: Mrs J Alleyne, Professor P Bartholomew, Mr J Curran, Mr L Curran, Mrs C Davison, Mr D McDowell, Mrs D McElwee.

In Attendance: Mr H Deighan, Mrs C McIntyre.

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Dr P Brogan and Mr S McAllister to their first meeting of the Collaborative Partnership Forum.

MINUTES

18.24 The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 were approved subject to the inclusion of Mr H McCloy as being present.

MATTERS ARISING

18.25 Audit of GCSE Evidence (Min 18.14)

The Chair noted that minor revisions will be made to the guidance notes and verification rubric after which the information papers will be made available to the Quality Enhancement (formerly the Quality Management and Audit Unit) website.

18.26 Progression from Foundation Degrees (Min 18.22)

The Chair reminded those SPMs who have not already done so to provide the Student Recruitment Unit with at least one progression route for each Foundation degree using the template supplied.

18.27 New Degree Algorithm for Foundation Degrees (Min 18.23)

At the last meeting of the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (ASQEC) it was confirmed that the proposed new degree algorithm is only being considered for Honours degrees and that this would have no impact on

the calculation of the classification of Foundation degrees and Access courses offered in the Colleges.

Students progressing from a Foundation degree into Level 5 at Ulster would have their degree classification defined by the Levels 5 and 6 credit undertaken at the University and for those Foundation programmes articulating to Level 6 study at Ulster, the marks available for their previous studies at Level 5 could be taken into consideration as part of the new degree algorithm. Articulation agreements might need to be put in place for those entering Level 6 directly on a course-by-course basis, which would require consideration by the Committee.

AGREED: that in those Faculties where students enter Ulster at level 6 directly the Associate Deans (Education) and SPMs meet to agree arrangements or progression.

CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair provided members with an update from the last meeting of ASQEC.

18.28 Attrition, Progression and Success Data

Committee endorsed the recommendation from the Forum for the following benchmarks for Success 2:

- HE Provision : 75% in Year 1 and 80% in Year 2;
- Access provision : 70%

It was also agreed that for courses not achieving the benchmarks the College must submit an action plan for consideration and follow up by the Faculty. If necessary support from CHERP might be considered.

18.29 2Y3S Attrition, Progression and Success Data

Committee noted with concern the high number of early leavers and poor success rates on a significant number of 2Y3S programmes, which were used as the knowledge component of HLAs. In light of this, Committee agreed that as this mode of delivery did not work in practice it be phased out by Faculties.

HE Co-ordinators were concerned that by extending the period of study i.e. using the normal part-time mode, employers may not release their employees, or they may go elsewhere to undertake the knowledge component of the HLA. They asked that the University consider other modes for delivering the academic component of the HLA.

Members were informed that the University is represented on the DfE HLA Working Group.

18.30 Minimum and Maximum Cohort Sizes

Committee discussed arrangements to deal with over-recruitment of students in partner institutions and considered minimum and maximum cohort sizes.

In future, evaluation and revalidation panels for partner institutions should consider proposed minimum student cohort sizes for each programme (as well as the maximum number currently considered), and make recommendations to ASQEC in this regard. These recommendations would be based on the minimum number of students required to ensure course viability and a quality student learning experience, with the maximum cohort size being based on the physical and human resources available to deliver the programme.

Colleges wishing to recruit more students would be required to submit a CA3 request with appropriate evidence of the additional resources available to support the provision. Such requests should be reviewed by the relevant Subject Partnership Manager if applicable and the Associate Dean (Education) prior to being forwarded to Academic Planning Advisory Group (APAG).

Another issue with regard to over-recruitment which members were asked to consider was whether if a course over-recruited in one year, then the intake in the next year should be reduced by the corresponding figure. This might result in very low cohort numbers in the following year, which would affect the student experience.

HE Co-ordinators were against this proposal as the Department sometimes, at very short notice, allocates them additional MaSN. If they were unable to take up their allocation due to restrictions placed on them by the University, then this additional MaSN would be taken away from them. There was also concern that the number of students registered on a programme at the start of the academic year may be significantly higher than the number who actually continue with their studies.

With regard to under-recruitment the University is considering a minimum number of year 1 enrolment of 15. HE Co-ordinators were concerned that for new programmes it takes time to build up demand. Some programmes, for example in Hospitality, while providing a quality student learning experience, would not be in a position to recruit 15 students.

AGREED:

- i) that where an additional cohort is planned late in the cycle, a CA3 Form must be submitted to the Faculty before 30 August;
- ii) that where a course is going to over-recruit and the request comes from anyone other than the HE Coordinator, the SPM will inform the HE Co-ordinator before taking the proposal further;
- iii) that the Forum would not support the 'clawback' proposal as a means to manage over-recruitment, since it would have an impact on the student experience of the subsequent intake.

18.31 Annual Course Review

Those programmes flagged for action which have not provided detailed action plans to address the issues identified will have future intakes suspended until the University is satisfied that measures are in place to resolve all matters of concern.

18.32 Pre-requisites

A prerequisite module is one which must be studied, but not necessarily passed, for progression to another. Currently, in pre-final years of Honours degree, Integrated Master's degree, Foundation degree, Associate Bachelor's degree and Access

Diplomas, course teams were permitted to identify in course regulations particular prerequisite modules, which must be passed in order for a student to be allowed to progress to the next year. For courses in which such modules are identified, if the pass standard is not achieved by the resit attempt in August, the failed student is not allowed to proceed carrying that failure.

Committee agreed that the concept of 'prerequisite' be retained but the pass standard for progression should only be specified in course regulations where a PSRB explicitly required it.

- AGREED:
- i) that Quality Enhancement forward the schedule of approved programmes to HE Co-ordinators for colleges to identify prerequisites at the course level;
 - ii) that course teams review course regulations to remove reference to prerequisite modules which must be *passed* as a condition of progression to the next year of study, unless this is a PSRB requirement, and process course revision forms (CA3s) where appropriate;
 - iii) that where there is a PSRB requirement provide evidence of same to the SPM.

18.33 Penalties for Exceeding Word Limits and Guidance on Workload Equivalence

The University has agreed a set of word limit principles and penalties for exceeding word count or other requirement in relation to the length of a piece of assessment work.

The penalties are as follows:

+10%	-	no penalty
+>10	-	20%-5% penalty
+>20%	-	30%-10% penalty
+>30%	-	40%-15% penalty
+>40%	-	50%-20% penalty
+>50%	-	maximum mark of 40% UG/50% PG

The Guide included examples of word count equivalency for commonly used assessment methods and proposed notional assessment work hours/preparation as a proportion of the notional learning hours for the module. Where there is more than one item of assessment per module, the assessment workload should be divided between items and where there is more than one component of assessment within a single assessment item, the assessment workload should be divided across them.

AGREED: that the word limit principles and penalties be made available on the Quality Enhancement website.

Chair's Communications also included:

18.34 Completion of External Examiner Reports

The Chair reminded SPMs that they are required to complete the first section of the External Examiner report before forwarding it to the External Examiner.

ATTRITION, PROGRESSION AND SUCCESS DATA 2016/17

- 18.35 HE Co-ordinators provided information in their report on the analysis of attrition, progression and success data for 2016/17 and the action taken to address issues identified.

The Chair thanked them for the detailed reviews undertaken and the actions taken or proposed to ensure they meet the agreed benchmarks. These include:

- i) Attendance monitoring and early identification of students at risk;
- ii) Monthly performance reviews;
- iii) Enhanced pre-entry advice and guidance;
- iv) Review of assessments;
- v) Enhancing entry requirements;
- vi) The implementation of a retention toolkit.

REFINED ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES FOR PROGRESSING STUDENTS

- 18.36 Members received paper CPF/18/10 setting out the key dates for examination related activity in the 2017/18 academic year. The Chair informed members that the University now operates a centralised admissions service.

For year 2 entry for Foundation degree students, normal procedures will apply at College level, but in addition, SPMs will have a list of CF/CI applicants at the Boards in June, and will be able to confirm eligibility for entry for those candidates who have met their conditional Ulster offer. Applicants who have passed their Foundation degrees but have not met the asking grades will be put on a waiting list at that stage. Drop stages may apply before the supplementary boards.

The meetings of Boards of Examiners for supplementary examinations will be held between Monday 20th August – Friday 24th August.

All confirmed marks must be returned to the Collaborative Courses Unit by close of business on Tuesday 28th August 2018, in order to meet the UCAS closing deadline in time. Marks should be moderated and pre-approved by the External Examiner(s) in advance of the Board, so that the marks may be noted as confirmed. Drop stages may apply.

The 2Y3S Boards of Examiners meeting will be held between Monday 10th September – Friday 14th September.

2Y3S has one Board of Examiners, which normally occurs after the UCAS reject-by-default deadline. Marks must be moderated by the External Examiner, who is expected to attend this formal board. The expectation is that these part-time students will progress to part-time articulation routes, and the University will accommodate this. Where an applicant has applied for full-time progression, the duration of their studies breaches the UCAS deadline, so part-time 2Y3S students who have applied for full-time courses may have to wait a year until September 2019, alternatively they may take up part-time study in September 2018.

APEL/ ADMISSIONS AUDIT

- 18.37 Members received paper CPF/18/11 a template to be used for the APEL/Admissions audit in 2017/18.

The template will be populated with the course title, the student name and Student ID. Course teams should input the qualifications provided by the student to meet the entry requirements for the programme.

It was agreed that partner institutions would have three weeks to complete the template and return to Quality Enhancement.

ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW 2017/18

- 18.38 Members considered paper CPF/18/12 a draft SER to be completed by course teams as part of the 2017/18 annual course review.

The Chair informed members that the main amendments to the SER include:

- i) The removal of Annex 1 which related exclusively to IQRS requirements; however, should partner institutions wish to use this for their own internal quality assurance process, it will still be available on the Quality Enhancement website;
- ii) Course teams no longer have to provide minutes of SSCC and CC meetings. Minutes should be forwarded directly to the SPM after each meeting so that any issues can be identified and resolved in a timely manner. SPMs will report on matters arising from the meetings or the non-receipt of minutes, in their annual report;
- iii) The removal of section A2 where course teams were asked to comment on actions taken to address matters identified through the College internal quality reviews;
- iv) The inclusion of a section requiring data on Attrition and Success following the June Boards of Examiners and an analysis of the data.

HE Co-ordinators were reminded that if Course Directors had not received the External Examiner reports within six weeks of the Boards of Examiners, they should contact the SPM.

SPMs should have their annual reports completed and forwarded to partner institutions by 3rd August 2018 at the latest.

Completed SERs, with supporting documentation, should be lodged with Quality Enhancement by 28th September 2018 at the latest.

REVALIDATION/EVALUATION EVENT FOR HE IN FE: THE INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

- 18.39 Members received paper CPF/18/13 on feedback from the revalidation event held by CHERP on 22nd March 2018.

This was a very successful event with almost 170 staff from partner institutions attending. The feedback showed that the two most useful aspects of the event were the opportunity to have time to work together and being able to work as a team.

It was intimated that this may turn into an annual event.

WORK-BASED LEARNING (WBL) EXTENSIONS

18.40 Members considered paper CPF/18/14 on guidance for WBL and the application of extenuating circumstances. The issue of WBL extensions had been identified through the 2016/17 annual course review.

Most courses undertake work-based learning (WBL) in semester two or over both semesters, with the Board of Examiners in June. The module is normally 40 credits at level 5.

There is a requirement for students to complete a total number of hours on placement, as specified in the module description. Colleges should calculate a date beyond which it would not be possible to complete the required number of specified hours, and inform students of this date.

CMA requirements apply in terms of published information for start and end dates of courses. Where students need to extend WBL over the summer, they will need to be able to support themselves financially for longer than initially expected. In addition, their marks will not be considered until the supplementary boards, which will affect any students holding offers for articulation routes.

Particular examples of acceptable extenuating circumstances for WBL modules were identified and discussed.

Where WBL is a semester 1 module and the student has not completed the placement by the end of the semester, or submitted work for assessment, a non-submission should be recorded and the student should be offered a resubmission opportunity in August. The expectation is that the missing hours will be made up over the summer.

Where WBL is a semester 1 module, and the student has not submitted work for assessment, but presents acceptable extenuating circumstances, due to the exceptional nature of the module, the following guidance applies:

- i) For WBL first sits from semester 1, where the period to be completed is no more than 10 working days students may make these hours up during the two-week Easter break and the revision week before the examination period. Alternatively, students may defer to August without penalty.
- ii) For WBL first sits from semester 1, where the period to be completed is more than 10 working days, students must defer the first sit to the summer period and present their submission for the first time in August.

There is an expectation that WBL will normally occur towards the end of the Foundation degree, ideally in the second semester of final year, thereby enabling

students to apply their level 5 skills and knowledge to the level 5 WBL module. Students who have only completed 120 credits at level 4 would be ill equipped to undertake WBL in semester one of year two, especially where the other 80 level 5 credits would cover skills and knowledge, which would apply in the work situation.

Members were advised that on some programmes the time served on WBL is assessed by the Works Supervisor and Linked Tutor and graded as pass/fail. In some cases, it is categorised as a hidden fail and has to be retaken.

AGREED: that Colleges provide clarity in the module handbook in terms of timelines for students to complete the requisite number of hours.

FITNESS TO PRACTISE PROTOCOL

18.41 At a previous meeting of this Forum, members confirmed that they all have a Fitness to Practise Protocol in place (Minute 15.38 refers).

There was discussion on the mechanisms in place in circumstances where an Access NI check comes back with situations which need to be considered. The School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences has procedures in place to deal with such circumstances, which they will share with Colleges.

AGREED: i) that HE Co-ordinators confirm in writing that the Fitness to Practise Protocol is being fully implemented in their College;
ii) that HE Co-ordinators forward to Quality Enhancement their procedures for dealing with circumstances where the Access NI check discovers situations requiring further consideration.

PRINCIPLES FOR COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

18.42 Members received paper CPF/18/15 the draft Principles for Collaborative Partnerships, which will form part of the University's Strategy for Collaborative Activity.

It is anticipated that the new Strategy will be operational from the 2018/19 academic year.

MARKETING ACTIVITY

18.43 The Market Engagement Team are currently setting up a centralised 'Contact Centre' to field inbound enquiries and co-ordinate outbound recruitment activity for all markets. The objective of the Centre is to provide a one point-of-contact, which will benefit students from FE sector in providing relevant advice and guidance on course provision and progression.

All colleges will be sent and included in communications regarding Open Days across campuses.

Dates are as follows:

- Jordanstown: Tuesday 4 – Thursday 6 September, 2018
- Coleraine: Saturday 22 September, 2018
- Magee: Saturday 29 September, 2018

Requests for presentations to both 1st and 2nd year students are welcomed by the Student Recruitment Team. These are generally delivered at the beginning of semester 1 to promote the progression to University and the key factors these students need to consider.

MATTERS ARISING FROM INFORMATION PAPERS

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

Now that BTEC level 3 awards in Computing/ IT no longer offer a discrete mathematics unit, clarification was sought on whether the University would still accept the old unit as an equivalent qualification to GCSE maths. The Chair confirmed that the University will continue to accept it until the unit expires, which is likely to be in 2020.

Clarification was also provided that HNCs only allow entry onto Year 1.

Duration 2 hours 30 minutes

ULSTER UNIVERSITY
 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FORUM
 3 May 2018

ACTION SHEET

	MINUTE	ACTION	ACTION BY	DEADLINE
1	18.27	in those Faculties where students enter Ulster at level 6 directly the Associate Deans (Education) and SPMs meet to agree arrangements for progression.	SPMs	30/4/18
2	18.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) that where an additional cohort is planned late in the cycle, a CA3 Form must be submitted to the Faculty before 30 August; ii) that where a course is going to over-recruit and the request comes from anyone other than the HE Co-ordinator, the SPM will inform the HE Co-ordinator before taking the proposal further; iii) that the Forum would not support the 'clawback' proposal as a means to manage over-recruitment, since it would have an impact on the student experience of the subsequent intake. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HE Co-ordinators SPM Chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing 29/6/18
3	18.32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) that Quality Enhancement forward the schedule of approved programmes to HE Co-ordinators for colleges to identify pre-requisites at the course level; ii) that course teams review course regulations to remove reference to prerequisite modules which must be passed as a condition of progression to the next year of study, unless this is a PSRB requirement, and process course revision forms (CA3s) where appropriate; iii) where there is a PSRB requirement provide evidence of same to the SPM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QE HE Co-ordinators SPMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30/4/18 31/5/18 31/5/18

4	18.33	that the word limit principles and penalties be made available on the Quality Enhancement website.	QE	30/4/18
5	18.40	Colleges should provide clarity in the module handbook in terms of timelines for students to complete the requisite number of hours.	HE Co-ordinators	Ongoing
6	18.41	i) that HE Co-ordinators confirm that the Fitness to Practise Protocol is being fully implemented in their College;	HE Co-ordinators	31/5/18
		ii) that HE Co-ordinators forward their procedures for dealing with circumstances where the Access NI check discovers situations requiring further consideration.	HE Co-ordinators	31/5/18