

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

8 December 2015

**CAMPUS CO-ORDINATING GROUPS -
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE COMBINED STUDIES PROGRAMME 2014/15
MAGEE, COLERAINE AND JORDANSTOWN**

Introduction

This composite report is based on the reports from Magee, Coleraine and Jordanstown campuses and takes the format followed in previous reports. Overall the modularised provision, procedures and processes are well settled and provide for a considerable body of students. In going forward, each campus is working through its own particular issues and challenges. It is clear however that the solution or management of these on-going issues is best addressed in a spirit of cooperation and synergy rather than a rule based resolution. Combined programmes, under modular provision, are in a mature phase and while the processes test many guidelines and procedures concerning admission and discontinuation have proven the robustness of the regulations in managing, processing and taking students through to awards.

Enrolments

Enrolments are based on the official Programme Results Sheet – Programme Year Breakdown that drives the Combined Progress and Award Board (CPAB).

Magee: In 2014/15 there were a total of 370 enrolments on the Combined Studies programme at the Magee campus. This number is up from 353 in the last year. Demand fluctuates around the 300+ mark for modularised programmes at Magee and it still remains an attractive option for students to the campus. The number of options has been rationalised year on year. Students have availed of the opportunity to choose from the wide range of subject combinations on offer, with 45 different subject combinations now attracting enrolments. All faculties at Magee are represented.

Coleraine: The number of students enrolled at Coleraine on modularised courses was 945 (up slightly from 893). Students have a wide choice of subject combinations to choose from and the modularised programmes remain very popular. Arts related combinations account for the majority of students, closely followed by combinations within the Ulster University Business School.

Jordanstown: In 2014/15 the total intake at Jordanstown for modularised courses was 222 students across 24 subject combinations (up from 209). Sociology with Criminology, Law with Criminology and Communication with Counselling continue to be the most popular combinations.

Total number of students enrolled on Combined Studies Programmes across all campuses is 1537 for 2014/15 (1455 previous year). While there are fluctuations year on year between campuses and courses the overall numbers are reasonably consistent.

Subject Combinations

Magee: During the year Irish with Computing was approved. As part of the rationalisation process Law with Drama and any remaining combinations of 3 Minors were discontinued.

Coleraine: The rationalisation of combinations continued in 2014/15 with a number of course combinations withdrawn during the year from across the Faculties.

Jordanstown: The move of Economics to the Ulster University Business School has resulted in revisions to the Economics provision: both a revision to the major and the addition of new minors from within the UUBS.

Major Issues

The Modular Scheme for Combined Honours Degrees system continues to be firmly bedded into the mainstream of course provision and is working well.

At Magee the working group set up to improve the student experience at registration for those on Modularised Programmes has proved very successful. It still needs to be coordinated carefully year on year. Work continues on the outcomes of the Working Group on Modularised Provision in that it will take several years before all revalidations will have had the chance to consider Exit Awards for all combinations.

At Coleraine the major changes in the subject and courses offered at Coleraine will have a serious impact on combinations with large numbers of reductions in the forthcoming years in Arts and Business in particular.

At Jordanstown the uptake of exit awards continues in small numbers, but the value of the awards to the students is evident with some more work for External Examiners. Offering delayed student choice can result in a hit to attrition figures even if the students stay in the same school.

Chief External Examiner's Reports

Magee: Professor John Pollard (Trinity Hall, Cambridge) was unable to attend for his final CPAB due to serious personal issues and the incoming Chief External Dr Sean de Burca (UCD) made himself available at very short notice. He was very satisfied with the process and complimentary of the administration of the Board.

Coleraine: Professor Patrick Crotty (University of Aberdeen) was very positive in his report and drew particular attention to the concern and care taken by staff over student results. He praised the efficiency of the proceedings and the professionalism of all involved.

Jordanstown: The June 2015 Campus and Award Board was attended by Professor Ray Wilkinson (University of Sheffield) who again commented very positively on the procedures and conduct of the board. The Jordanstown CCG will appoint a new Chief External Examiner for the four year period from 2015/16.

Activities

Magee: The Campus Co-ordinating Group (Magee) will continue to enhance the enrolment process. The Campus Coordinating Group foresee some disruption to the combined offerings as subjects and courses are discontinued or moved.

Coleraine: The changing situation on the Coleraine Campus, particularly with the removal of subject areas within Arts and Business, which formed a large part of the Combined provision, will impact greatly on the combinations available for students. The Campus Coordinating Group at Coleraine will work towards developing new strategies and combinations within this changing environment.

Jordanstown: Plans for 2014/15 include more promotion of the value of modular provision, looking at both full-time and part-time provision and a review of the part-time asking grades.

The CCG will pursue the issue of delayed choice v's attrition.