

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 14 March 2018 by videoconference

PRESENT

Professor P Bartholomew (Chair), Dr D Barr, Dr G Breslin, Ms M Downey, Professor H Farley, Professor R Fee, Professor D Hazlett, Dr M Keenan, Professor B Murphy, Mrs M Paris

APOLOGIES

Dr M Black, Mr J Colgan, Ms A Honan, Professor A McKillop, Ms C Reid, Ms R Wasson

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs C G Avery, Mrs R McEvoy (for mins 18.25 – 18.32)

UNRESERVED

18.1 MINUTES

The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2017 were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

18.2 Terms of Reference (Min 17.94)

The Chair reported that Senate, at its January meeting, had approved the revised terms of reference of the Committee to take account of Senate's revised Delegated Authority Framework (Item 32) whereby the authority for the approval of planning of new courses and changes to titles and locations lay with ASQEC.

18.3 Extenuating Circumstances (Mins 17. 58 and 17.95)

The Committee noted that the revised Principles for Implementation would be received at a later meeting.

18.4 Examination Regulations (Min 17.98)

The Committee noted that Senate, at its January meeting, had approved the revision to regulation 21 of the Regulations Governing Examinations in Programmes of Study to amend the restriction on the type of electronic calculator which might be used in an examination room.

18.5 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Accreditation (Min17.105)

The Committee noted that Associate Deans (Education) had provided missing

reports and/or responses as requested and that only three reports covering four courses remained outstanding (see min 18.18).

18.6 External Examiners' Overview Report 2016/17 (Mins 17.109 and 17.111)

At the December 2017 meeting, Faculties, Associate Deans (Education) and CHERP had been asked to take account of the matters of concern and identified good practice highlighted in the 2016/17 overview report in their ongoing enhancement work.

It was also agreed that Associate Deans (Education) should consider current expectations for groupwork assessment, the involvement of PhD students in assessment, and the timeframe for feedback, for discussion at a Learning and Teaching Committee (mins 17.109 and 17.111ii) - iii) refer).

The University's normal expectation of 15 working days for the return of coursework and the provision of feedback was considered quite tight, particularly for modules with large numbers of students. However, it was noted that UUBS encouraged the return of feedback within 10 working days. Professor Bartholomew reiterated his view that there were no real benefits in providing feedback very early to students.

Given the current restriction on PhD students employed to undertake summative assessment when it contributed to the final classification of an award, the Committee had identified a need for this policy to be revisited in view of the proposed introduction of a new degree algorithm. It was noted that PhD students were normally involved in the 'co-assessment' of coursework and that they were usually supported. Members considered that PhD students should continue to have the opportunity to be involved in teaching and assessment provided that they received appropriate support and that safeguards were in place to ensure that students would not be disadvantaged by this arrangement.

Professor Hazlett advised that completion of the First Steps to Supporting Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Award, which satisfied the requirements of Descriptor 1 of the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education, was a requirement for postgraduate teaching assistants. The Code of Practice on Tutoring and Demonstrating by Postgraduate Students would require updating in due course.

AGREED that:

- i) Professor Hazlett progress changes to current requirements and support arrangements with regard to postgraduate students undertaking teaching and summative assessment with a view to seeking approval for implementation in the next academic year;
- ii) the Learning and Teaching Committee discuss the above-mentioned assessment matters at its next meeting.

Annual Course Review of Collaborative Courses 2016/17

18.7 Belfast Metropolitan College (FdSc Computing Infrastructure)

Dr Keenan confirmed that her Faculty had received the required action plan from the College for consideration (min 17.121 ii) refers).

18.8 Breach of Contract: Over-Recruitment

At the December meeting, the Committee had endorsed sanctions recommended by the Sub-Group in relation to programmes in Colleges where the maximum cohort number had been exceeded without prior approval by more than 20%. This involved the suspension of the course for the next intake; or suspension of several intakes until the maximum intake figure was achieved with further recruitment to be allowed only on receipt of a written guarantee from the College that the agreed number would not be exceeded in future (min 17.121 iii) refers).

Professor Bartholomew advised members that in future evaluation and revalidation panels should consider proposed minimum student cohort sizes for each programme (as well as the maximum number currently considered), and that panels for internal provision should also consider this matter, 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. Teams wishing to recruit more students would be required to submit a 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 APAG for consideration. Given that such requests might usually arise during the admissions period, Chair's Action could be taken on behalf of APAG.

18.9 UUSU/Ulster University Students-As-Partners Framework

At the December meeting, it had been agreed that the Associate Deans (Education) discuss in their Faculty the proposal that a Student Advocate be appointed in each School/Department (min 17.122 refers). Ms Downey advised that Ms Honan was continuing to work on the proposed Framework.

AGREED: that, if they have not already done so, Associate Deans (Education) forward their views on the proposed appointment of Student Advocates to Ms Honan for consideration by the Working Group.

CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

18.10 Degree Algorithm

The Chair reported that full student consultation had not yet taken place due to the UCU strike action. It was hoped that the proposed algorithm would be considered by Senate at its June meeting.

COURSE APPROVAL

18.11 Academic Planning Advisory Group

Professor Murphy presented the report from the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 29 January 2018 (Paper No ASQEC/18/1a).

18.12 Course costings and Consultation with Central Departments (Item 1)

The Committee noted that a revised course costing template was being trialled and that course costings must now accompany course proposals for consideration by the Group. These required Faculty sign-off by the Associate Dean (Education), and also the Executive Dean if a deficit was identified.

Mrs Peden had identified a need for much closer liaison between Faculties and subject librarians at an early stage in course development in order to identify accurately additional library resources requirements and to ensure that the investment was actually needed. The Resource Implications section of the CA1 form had now been revised to require confirmation from the Faculty that relevant central departments had been consulted.

18.13 Course Planning (Item 1)

The Committee received the recommendations for five new proposals to proceed to planning and evaluation for September 2018 start and proposals for new modes of delivery and locations.

The Committee noted:

- the relocation from Magee to Coleraine campus from September 2018 of MSc Applied Psychology (Mental Health and Psychological Therapies), Postgraduate Certificate Family Therapy and Systematic Practice and stand-alone Short Course Module PSY801;
- the proposed change in mode of delivery for the part-time FdSc Computing Infrastructure at BMC (Castlereagh campus) from two-year, three-semester to standard three-year, two-semester, part-time mode;
- delivery of the Advanced Diploma in Management Practice at a new outcentre: Marino Institute of Education, Dublin, from February 2018.

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

18.14 Programme Withdrawals (Item 2)

The Committee noted the programme withdrawals approved by Faculties (Appendix 2).

18.15 Course Approvals

The Committee noted that the Panel Chairs of one evaluation panel and two revalidation panels had now confirmed that the conditions and recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed for the following provision (Paper No ASQEC/18/1b):

- CertHE Tour Guiding at Belfast Metropolitan College (Sept 2018 start);
- PgDip Cataract and Refractive Surgery (Theory) (revalidation unit 9C2) (September 2018 intake);
- MSc Leadership and Innovation in the Public Sector (previous title 'Innovation Management in the Public Service') (revalidation unit 5J) (January 2018 intake).

The Committee noted that Chair's Action had been taken to approve an urgent request from the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment to approve the change of title of BSc Hons Interactive Multimedia Design to BSc Hons Interactive Computing from the September 2018 intake. This approval was made prior to the revalidation document for the relevant unit being signed off by the Panel Chair but was deemed necessary to allow the new title on the UCAS website for 2018.

The Chair noted that the MSc Leadership and Innovation in the Public Sector, revalidated in November 2017, had had an intake in January 2018 prior to the Committee granting re-approval. He advised members that the University needed to aim to ensure that students did not commence studies on a programme which has not been formally approved or re-approved.

The Chair expressed concern with regard to the large number of conditions recently set by a joint Ulster Evaluation and HCPC Recognition Panel (MSc Art Therapy) and suggested that on such occasions Panel chairs might wish to consider the option of not recommending approval. The Faculty could then choose whether to submit a revised proposal.

At the December 2017 meeting, the Committee had agreed that in future recommendations from Evaluation and Revalidation Panels for the (re-)approval of provision should only be presented to the Committee when the Panel Chair had confirmed that the stipulated conditions and recommendations had been satisfactorily addressed (min 17.102 i) refers). Given that the majority of validation documentation was finalised during the period June to September, another implication of the decision was that Chair's Action would now need to be sought during the summer period to endorse Panel recommendations for approval, and these would be subsequently noted at the first meeting of the next academic year.

The Academic Office had asked the Chair to consider reverting to the previous arrangement whereby the Committee endorsed a Panel's recommendation for approval subject to the conditions and recommendations being satisfactorily addressed and approved by the Panel chair. This allowed approval of certain aspects such as new/revised titles, new modes and locations in a timely fashion after the event to support the work of other departments such as Planning, Marketing and Admissions.

Mrs McEvoy advised that changes in course titles, locations and modes proposed at validation events and the timing of approval of recommendations by the Committee had significant implications for the admissions process, for example for the UCAS code. It was noted that course withdrawals were not an issue since these were approved at Faculty level and the Academic Office copied relevant departments into such communications (through CMS) prior to the withdrawal being noted by the Academic Planning Advisory Group.

The Faculty representatives considered that the current three-month review period was needed by course teams to submit their response and revised documentation, and particularly for units which involved several courses. Mrs Avery advised that for events held during or after May, teams were required to submit documentation in a shorter timeframe, and for a July/August event within four weeks.

Dr Keenan suggested that staff would find helpful an infographic setting out the timelines, processes and staff contacts in relevant departments for the processes for introducing changes to existing programmes and the approval and re-approval of programmes. Professor Bartholomew considered that the current business processes of relevant departments needed to be mapped and the integration of systems analysed to determine what, if any, improvements and changes needed to be made. This was likely to be a substantial piece of work. Professor Hazlett considered this review would be very useful in identifying possible opportunities for streamlining current processes and the tools used.

The Chair advised that Mrs Alleyne would advise staff of the first point of contact (one for each Faculty) in the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement (ASQE) configuration. It was noted that CHERP had already identified Curriculum Design Consultants for each Faculty.

AGREED that:

- i) the recommendations of the three evaluation/revalidation panels (Appendix 3) and the Chair's Action relating to the change in course title for BSc Hons Interactive Computing (formerly BSc Hons Interactive Multimedia Design) be endorsed (Appendix 3);
- ii) in future, Chair's Action be sought to permit the admission of students to programmes where validation documentation had not yet been signed-off by the Panel Chair;
- iii) the Chair discuss with representatives of the Academic Office the timing and nature of the Committee's consideration of Panel recommendations for approval and the implications for the work of other departments and in particular the admission of students;
- iv) a mapping of the current business processes of various departments in relation to course revisions and approval/re-approval be undertaken and critiqued.

18.16 Evaluation/Revalidation Documentation

The Committee received a statement on progress made in relation to the submission of outstanding final evaluation/revalidation documents from 2014/15, 2016/17 and 2017/18 (Paper No ASQEC/18/1c).

The Committee noted that the submission of revised documentation for revalidation unit 16B1a Computing (UG/JN) (2017/18) had been slightly delayed due to a technical issue with CMS which had since been resolved by the system developer. It was also noted that documentation for revalidation units 5Gi MBA (2017/18) and 31B Integrated Foundation Programme (2016/17 – 2018 start) had now been received for checking.

The Chair reported that a significant number of events had been postponed to later in the academic year by Faculties resulting in more (27) than usual in semester 2. There were likely to be unavoidable delays in checking revised documents by the Academic Office as priority had to be given to servicing Panel meetings. This in turn would have implications for final sign-off.

The Committee noted that the Academic Office was liaising closely with the revalidation unit co-ordinator for 19A Media Studies (UG) with a view to ensuring that the documentation outstanding from 2014/15 could be finalised as soon as possible.

18.17 Course Revisions

The Committee noted course revisions and new short-course modules approved by Faculties and ADDL as at 6 March 2018 (Paper No ASQEC/18/1d) (Appendix 4).

18.18 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Accreditation

At the December meeting the Committee asked that an updated statement be provided on outcomes from accreditation visits/approval activity in previous years (2013/14 – 2016/17) for which no report had been received, together with an updated schedule of 2017/18 activities (min 17.105 refers).

The Committee noted a statement for three professional body accreditations for four courses (2014/15) for which the reports/responses had not yet been received from Faculties and hence had not been confirmed as being satisfactory (Paper No ASQEC/18/1ei). The Associate Deans (Education) had forwarded all other missing reports and/or responses as requested and these had been confirmed as being satisfactory.

As the draft mid-term monitoring review held by RIBA in Nov 2017 for the two Architecture programmes was now received for consideration by the Committee (see min 18.19), Dr Keenan asked the Committee to consider waiving the provision of the outstanding report and response from the earlier visit.

The Committee also noted an updated statement of activities for 2017/18, which included a large number of joint revalidation/accreditation events (Paper No ASQEC/18/1eii).

AGREED that:

- i) the requirement to provide the outstanding 2014 RIBA report and Faculty response to the Committee be waived;
- ii) the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences provide the missing reports and responses for two visits/courses in the 2014/15 academic year;
- iii) Faculties ensure that professional body reports and Faculty responses for visits held in 2017/18 were forwarded to Mrs G Doohar in a timely fashion.

18.19 RIBA Mid-term Monitoring Review Report: Architecture

The Committee received the draft mid-term Monitoring review report (July 2017) for the BA Hons Architecture and MArch programmes from the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) together with the Faculty response (Paper No ASQEC/18/1f).

Whilst the reviewers acknowledged in their report the significant restructuring and internal changes within the School, they expressed concern about the lack of progress. Professor Bartholomew considered the Faculty response to the report to be inadequate and that it appeared to rely heavily on the forthcoming University revalidation event in May 2018.

Dr Keenan reported that two Curriculum Design Consultants from CHERP had been involved in supporting the Architecture team in preparation for revalidation and that a mock event was scheduled for late March. Professor Bartholomew proposed that the Chair of the Panel should receive a report from the Consultants on matters identified through their support activities.

Mrs Avery suggested that it would help inform discussions if all evaluation and revalidation panels received a report from the Curriculum Design Consultants about their engagement with teams during the preparations and key matters which might still need to be actioned through the validation process.

As there appeared to be some variability in how validation panels were being chaired, Professor Bartholomew reported that he planned to run a workshop for all panel chairs. Mrs Avery reported that not all Heads of School were willing or available to chair validation panels and that recently appointed Heads of School who had not previously chaired a panel were encouraged to act as an internal panel member initially. As Associate Heads of School were currently only expected to chair panels when more senior members of staff were not available, it was suggested that it would be helpful if Associate Heads of School were permitted routinely to chair events and were invited to attend the proposed workshop.

AGREED that:

- i) the School make RIBA aware of possible implications that the delay in the completion of the new buildings at the Belfast campus might have in terms of meeting their expectation that opportunities should be explored in relation to the relocation of the Built Environment to an adjacent site at the Belfast campus (point 14.3);
- ii) a detailed action plan be forwarded to Professor Bartholomew for consideration outlining actions taken/to be taken by the School/Faculty to address all points identified in the RIBA report;
- iii) Professor Hazlett liaise closely with the Curriculum Design Consultants supporting the Architecture team and Dr Keenan to ensure that all matters were adequately addressed prior to the revalidation, and as Chair of the Architecture Revalidation Panel ensure that it explores the actions undertaken by the team to address the recommendations and concerns of RIBA;

- iv) a workshop for Panel chairs (including Associate Heads of School), led by Professor Bartholomew, be organised prior to the start of the next academic year.

DEPARTURES AND VARIATIONS FROM THE UNIVERSITY'S REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

18.20 Certificate in Custody Prison Officer Practice

The Committee considered Paper No ASQEC/18/2a) from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences requesting the following variations to the programme regulations:

- that no exemptions be allowed from any part of the programme;
- that no Aegrotat award be made available.

The Committee noted that the programme was a vocational award designed to prepare students to work as Custody Prison Officers and was the initial training for this role. The successful completion of the whole programme was a mandatory requirement and part of the terms of employment for this role in the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

AGREED: that the request be approved.

18.21 Diploma in Foundation Studies (with pathways in STEM and ABHSS)

The Committee considered Paper No ASQEC/18/2b) from Access, Distributed and Digital Learning requesting that all modules from the International Foundation Programme at both levels 3 and 4 contribute to the grading of the Diploma award, weighted according to their credit value. Under current University regulations, the classification of undergraduate awards was determined by the performance in modules studied at the highest level.

Students on the Diploma in Foundation Studies programme would be required to undertake one Level 4 core module and a second Level 4 module would be available for those students who had already achieved an IELTS level that enabled undergraduate progression to their preferred pathway at the University. The overall grading would therefore be based on 80 credit points at Level 3 and 40 at Level 4 or 100 at Level 3 and 20 at Level 4 depending on the modules studied.

AGREED: that the request be approved.

18.22 FdSc Responding to Alcohol and Drug Misuse at North West Regional College

The Committee considered Paper No ASQEC/18/2c) from the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences requesting a different exit award subject title of CertHE in 'Studies in Alcohol and Drug Use' from that of the FdSc award. This was needed to distinguish a student leaving with the Level 4 exit award who had not completed the WBL component and hence would not have had the opportunity to be assessed in practice against the relevant National Occupational Standards.

AGREED: that the request be approved.

18.23 BSc and PgDip Hons Specialist Community Public Health Nursing

The Committee considered Paper No 18/2d) from the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences requesting a different exit award subject title from that of the main award of 'Community Public Health Nursing'.

The Committee noted that the title of the primary award was protected for those who have achieved the relevant NMC standards and admitted to part 3 of the Nursing and Midwifery Register. The different exit award title was therefore needed for those who had met the requirements for the academic award but had not completed the practice element required to be eligible for admission to the Register.

AGREED: that the request be approved.

18.24 MSc Art Therapy

The Committee considered Paper No ASQEC/18/2e from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences requesting a different exit award subject title of 'Arts Facilitation' for the Postgraduate Diploma. It was noted that 'Arts Therapy' and 'Arts Therapists' were protected titles and that Postgraduate Diploma graduates would not be eligible to be registered with the HCPC as Arts Therapists.

AGREED that:

- i) given the significant number of conditions and recommendations set by the joint Ulster/HCPC (min 18.15 refers) the request be supported in principle at this stage (final approval to be granted when and if the conditions of approval were fulfilled);
- ii) Professor Fee take appropriate measures to ensure that the Panel's conditions and recommendations were fully met by the required deadline.

18.25 INTO ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT EXAMINATION (IELA)

Mrs Roisin McEvoy presented a paper on the INTO English Language Assessment Examination which set out findings of a University review arising from a request to accept the IELA as proof of competency in Academic English (Paper No ASQEC/18/3). The paper set out the recommended competency scores based on equivalence to the IELTS which were supported by CELT.

The Committee was asked to approve the IELA as an English language qualification for entry to Ulster degree courses in lieu of a UKVI Secure English Language Test (SELT) (i.e. IELTS equivalent) and the proposed equivalent standards.

It was noted that, in aiming to increase the number of international students studying at Ulster, the International Admissions Service was seeking to review and extend the range of acceptable academic and/or English language qualifications.

Mrs McEvoy advised the Committee that the progress of students admitted through this test would be monitored and students would be encouraged to undertake in-session language courses as well.

AGREED: that the IELA be approved as an acceptable English language qualification for entry to Ulster courses and that a review of the progress of students who join through the test be undertaken at the end of the first year of operation.

18.26 AUSTRALIA EDUCATION MANAGEMENT GROUP (AEMG) – LANGUAGE COURSE RECOGNITION

Mrs McEvoy presented a paper requesting approval of successful completion of the AEMG English for Academic Purposes 2 – Direct Entry Programme (EAP2 DEP) as acceptable proof of competency in Academic English (Paper No ASQEC18/4).

The Committee noted that the University had developed a partnership with AEMG, the purpose of which was to support delivery of Ulster's target to increase international recruitment and partnership activity. CELT had recommended acceptance of the EAP2 DEP with a minimum overall competency score of 70% and no section score less than 65% for equivalence to IELTS 6.0. CELT proposed to undertake some diagnostic testing of students admitted through this test and would put measures in place to monitor student progress.

Mrs McEvoy advised the Committee that use of this test would be helpful with regard to a proposal from the Ministry of Education in China for a joint school to be established with Ulster.

Professor Bartholomew considered there to be a slight tension between the commercial arrangement of AEMG and the academic oversight required by the University. The Committee noted the institutions listed in the paper which currently accepted the qualification.

AGREED: that the AEMG English for Academic Purposes 2 – Direct Entry programme (EAP2 DEP) be approved as an acceptable English language qualification for entry to Ulster courses and that a review of its use be undertaken in due course.

18.27 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FORUM

Mrs Paris presented the report from the meeting of the Collaborative Partnerships Forum held on 23 January 2018 (Paper No ASQEC/18/5).

18.28 Audit of GCSE Evidence for 2017 Enrolment (Item 2)

The Committee noted that at least one quarter of the sample of forms received from Colleges by the Collaborative Courses Unit were problematic in terms of the evidence of GCSE achievement provided. Mrs Paris assured the Committee that the Colleges were now fully aware of the need to comply with the University's list of approved English and Mathematics qualifications which are accepted as evidence of competence aligned with grade C in GCSE, and to provide that evidence. The Committee was also informed that key communications were

copied to all relevant senior managers in partner institutions. There was expected to be a marked improvement in the provision of evidence of GCSE qualifications in the next academic year.

18.29 Attrition, Progression and Success data 2016/17 (Item 3)

The Committee noted that the Forum had agreed the following benchmarks for 'Success 2':

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

HE Co-ordinators were to report back to the Forum on their analysis of the 2016/17 data and the action taken to address problems identified. It was hoped that over time these benchmarks would be raised.

Professor Hazlett reported that CHERP had organised an event for College staff, including many senior managers, on 22 March, which aimed to provide ongoing support for enhancement activities. Mrs McEvoy reported that she intended to run an admissions workshop for College staff, which might also help with regard to retention matters. These events were welcomed.

Professor Bartholomew considered that data obtained on students and their learning through learner analytics systems would help the University in supporting learners and to enhance educational processes, which would also be useful in terms of collaborative provision.

AGREED that:

- i) the benchmarks be endorsed;
- ii) for courses not achieving the benchmarks, the relevant College be required to submit an action plan for consideration and follow-up by the Faculty; if necessary, support from CHERP might be considered.

18.30 2-Year, 3-Semester Attrition, Progression, Success Data 2016/17 (Item 4)

The Committee noted that four colleges offer 2-year, 3-semester programmes but that NRC was withdrawing this mode of study. Given that the mode was aimed at high achieving students, the high number of early leavers and poor success rate were very disappointing.

The Committee noted that the Forum had agreed a benchmark of 10% for attrition and 85% for Success 2, and that struggling students were expected to be moved at the earliest opportunity to the standard part-time mode.

The Committee noted that BMC wished to maintain this mode in the FdEng Civil Engineering due to employer demand and was intending to retain it at revalidation later this semester.

AGREED:

- i) that the benchmarks and proposal to move struggling students onto the normal part-time mode of delivery be endorsed;
- ii) that, as the University needed to ensure that the models which it approved work in practice, the 2-year, 3-semester model of Foundation degrees, including that offered by BMC, be phased out by Faculties.

18.31 Annual Course Review 2016/17 (Item 5)

AGREED: that the seven actions to address issues referred to the Forum from the Sub-Group reviewing the 2016/17 annual course review submissions be endorsed (Paper No ASQEC/18/6 and min 18.33 refer).

18.32 New Degree Algorithm (Item 7)

The Committee was asked by the Forum to provide clarification regarding the proposed new degree algorithm and how it might apply to Foundation degrees and Access Diplomas.

Professor Bartholomew confirmed that the proposed new algorithm was only being considered for Honours degrees (including Integrated Master's) 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. Detailed arrangements would be discussed further with Associate Deans (Education) when the new degree algorithm was approved.

18.33 ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW 2016/17

Professor Bartholomew presented the Sub-Group's follow-up report to the 2016/17 Annual Course Review exercise for validated courses in partner institutions (mins 17.115 – 17.121 refer) (Paper No ASQEC/18/6). The Sub-Group had met again in January to consider the adequacy and appropriateness of responses received to its findings of November 2017.

With regard to the issues referred to Faculties for consideration, the Committee noted that the Sub-Group was satisfied with the responses provided and actions taken or planned. In the case of the Access Diploma at NWRC Dr Breslin reported that a response had now been forwarded to Dr Keenan for consideration as Chair of the Sub-Group.

The Sub-Group was satisfied that the issues referred to the Forum and partner institutions had been addressed and that the seven actions taken were overall timely and appropriate (min 18.31 refers).

The Committee considered three matters referred to it for discussion relating to sanctions. Two of these, over-recruitment and low recruitment, had already been discussed by the Committee earlier in the meeting in terms of setting minimum and maximum intake sizes for courses at validation (min 18.8 refers). In relation to over-recruitment, the Sub-Group had asked for clarification of whether Colleges should be invoiced for the total number of students or a financial penalty should be set. The Chair advised that if a course over-recruited in one year, then the intake in the next year should be reduced by the corresponding figure. Mrs Paris advised that this option had not been discussed at the Forum. With regard to under-recruitment, it was noted that the Collaborative Strategy Review Group (which would report to the Committee's next meeting) would recommend a minimum number of year 1 enrolments of 15, below which a course should not run.

Finally, Dr Keenan reported that the new 'RAG' system had been useful in alerting Colleges to serious concerns in provision, but the Committee was asked to advise on what meaningful sanctions should be imposed if concerns remain unresolved.

AGREED that:

- i) the findings of the Sub-Group that there were no significant standards management or quality assurance issues outstanding from 2016/17 (except for the FdSc Computing Infrastructure at BMC) be endorsed;
- ii) a proposed penalty of 'claw-back' of student numbers for the following academic year, for programmes which over-recruit, be referred to the Forum for consideration;
- iii) if matters identified in action plans for provision where there are serious concerns were not fully addressed, then the next intake should be suspended.

18.34 ANNUAL REPORT ON EXAMINATIONS AND APPEALS: 2016/17

The Chair reported that the annual report on examinations and appeals: 2016/17 had not yet been received and would be considered at a later meeting.

18.35 QAA REVIEW OF UK HE DELIVERED IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: IRISH TIMES TRAINING (ITT)

The Committee noted the QAA Review of UK HE Delivered in the Republic of Ireland: Irish Times Training (Paper No ASQEC/18/9). No action was required of the Committee.

18.36 PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGES

Professor Bartholomew presented a paper containing two matters involving proposed regulatory changes which had been discussed by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its February meeting (LTC minute 18.07) (Paper No

ASQEC/18/10). These relate to the timing of the application of changes to regulations and prerequisites.

The Committee noted that the Learning and Teaching Committee would give further consideration to the topic of number, timing and volume of resits.

18.37 Timing of Changes to Regulations (Item 1)

The Committee noted that current practice was for a change to regulations to apply from the next intake, i.e. to new students, unless the change was not detrimental to all current students, in which case it might be introduced earlier with the informed consent of each cohort. The relevant committee in considering changes decided on their timing. It was now proposed that revised regulations be applied routinely to current students if this gave a more favourable outcome. Such an outcome would be determined on an individual basis, not by cohort or year group, as the particular change might not always favour the whole set. The new approach would only apply to matters of award (grade bands or classification algorithm), not other regulatory matters such as the consequences of failure.

It was noted that, if adopted, it might no longer be necessary to obtain the consent of current students to such changes, as only those changes which were to their advantage would be applied to them, and detrimental ones would only apply to new students. The Learning and Teaching Committee had considered this approach preferable and that explicit student consent should no longer be needed. It would, however, remain the responsibility of Faculties to ensure that current students were advised of the changes and that Boards of Examiners considered outcomes for current students against more than one set of regulations.

It was noted that new students who might study particular modules alongside continuing students would not benefit from a more favourable old regulation, in contrast to continuing students for whom both sets of rules would apply.

AGREED: that the proposal be endorsed and that it be recommended to Senate that the following new penultimate clause be added to the Regulations Governing Examinations in Programmes of Study which detail the duties of Boards of Examiners (Regulations 4, 8 and 11), to make explicit their responsibility to consider the circumstances of each current student who enrolled under earlier regulations and to apply the most favourable outcome:

“if regulations regarding the classification of final results have been revised during a candidate’s period of registration, to apply the regulation which gives the most favourable outcome.”

18.38 Prerequisites (Item 2)

The Committee noted that a prerequisite module was defined as 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.

The Chair reported that the Learning and Teaching Committee had supported a proposal that failure in a prerequisite module should not stop progression and carrying of failure, subject to the current limit of 20 credit points and any PSRB requirement.

The Committee was, therefore asked to consider a proposal that within the University's regulatory framework the concept of 'prerequisite' be retained but that the pass standard for progression only be specified in course regulations where a PSRB explicitly required it. If approved, Faculties would need to review course regulations to remove clauses which specify a prerequisite requirement, unless this was a PSRB requirement. (This review would also apply to courses in partner institutions.)

It was noted that regulation templates would be updated and Faculties should also revisit any module descriptions which specify prerequisites (which must be studied) and consider whether this information should be retained. CA3 forms should be processed accordingly.

Dr Keenan suggested that the specification of successful completion of a prerequisite module should be retained even if a PSRB did not require it in regard to students seeking to study a particular pathway or option in the following year.

AGREED that:

- i) the proposal to revise the prerequisite rule be approved;
- ii) Faculties and partner institutions 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 was a PSRB requirement, and process course revision forms where appropriate.

18.39 PENALTIES FOR EXCEEDING WORD LIMITS AND GUIDANCE ON WORKLOAD EQUIVALENCE

The Learning and Teaching Committee, at its meeting in June 2017, received a paper on penalties for exceeding word limits setting out current Faculty policies and practice elsewhere in the sector and agreed that a small working group be established to review these (LTC min 17.53 refers).

Professor Bartholomew presented Paper No ASQEC/18/11, which set out principles for word limits, proposed penalties and associated guidelines. The paper also included a section giving guidance on module size and workload, which had been prepared by CHERP in support of the Curriculum Design Framework.

The Committee noted that the proposed principles and guidance would apply to both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and that an assessment workload equivalence guide had been constructed to support assessment design, and to help ensure consistency of student effort commensurate with the credit value of the module. This was not meant to be overly prescriptive as the demands and preparation time of assessed work varied considerably depending on the nature,

context and level of that work, and the differing work rates of individual students. 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 was more than one item of assessment per module, the assessment workload should be divided between items and where there was more than one component of assessment within a single assessment item, the assessment workload should be divided across them.

The Committee noted that the additional guidelines stated that if concise writing was deemed a necessary skill this should appear as a learning outcome and any penalty for failing to achieve it should be identified in the marking scheme. The Chair confirmed to Professor Fee that, for certain subjects like English and History, the inverse of this might be deemed appropriate.

AGREED: that, subject to a number of minor amendments to be undertaken by the Chair, the principles, penalties and guidance on equivalence be endorsed (Appendix 5), for implementation from 2018/19 academic year.

18.40 PRIZES AND AWARDS

The Committee received Paper No ASQEC/18/12, which set out proposals for the establishment of three new prizes:

- Heron Brothers Construction Excellence Award (BSc Hons Quantity Surveying and Commercial Management);
- Cyber Crime and Forensic Technology Prize (BSc Hons Accounting (Accounting Pathway)/BSc Hons Accounting and Law/BSc Hons Accounting and Management);
- FinTrU Portfolio Management Group Project Prize (BSc Hons Financial and Investment Management/BSc Hons Financial Investment Analysis).

AGREED: that the new prizes be recommended for approval on behalf of Council by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education).

Duration: 2 hours 35 mins

11 April 2018

AGF/CA/lh

MIN 18.13

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ACADEMIC PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP, 29.1.18

i) New Proposals to Proceed to Planning and Evaluation

September 2018 Intake

MSc Internet of Things (FT/PT) (JN)

Subject to approval of costings by Executive Dean:

MSc Strength and Conditioning (FT/PT) (JN) Not yet received

MSc Global Capital Markets (with PgCert and PgDip exit awards) (PT) (JN/in company) Received

MSc Entrepreneurial Competitiveness (PT) (BT) Received

January 2019 Intake

MEd Higher Education Practice (with Postgraduate Diploma Exit Award) (PT) (JN)

ii) Mode of Delivery

FdSc Computing Infrastructure (PT) at Belfast Metropolitan College (Castlereagh campus) from two-year, three semester to standard three year, two semester, part-time mode.

iii) New Locations

Relocation from Magee to Coleraine Campus (from September 2018)

MSc Applied Psychology (Mental Health and Psychological Therapies)
PgCert Family Therapy and Systemic Practice
Stand-alone Short Course Module PSY801

New Outcentre

Advanced Diploma in Management Practice – the Marino Institute of Education, Dublin (from February 2018)

PROGRAMME WITHDRAWALS

Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

Last Intake 2013/14

FdEng Engineering (Industrial Electronic Engineering) (Motorsport Technology) (FT, PT, Two Year Three Semester PT) at South West College (Omagh Campus).

Last intake 2015/16

PgD/MSc Computational Intelligence (ME).

Last intake 2017/18

BEng Hons Computer Games Development (ME).

Ulster University Business School

Last intake 2015/16

Advanced Certificate in Civic Leadership and Community Planning (Cavan Innovation and Technology Centre).

Advanced Diploma in Civic Leadership and Community Planning (JN/ME).

COURSE APPROVALS

COURSE APPROVAL

FACULTY	COURSE TITLE	MODE		INTAKES	LOCATION	INTAKE (Partner Institutions only)	
		FT	PT			FT	PT
ULSTER UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL	Certificate of Higher Education in Tour Guiding at Belfast Metropolitan College		✓	2018 – 2020 [Note: 1 st intake approved for Sept 2018 and not Jan 2018 as proposed]	Titanic Quarter campus (theory) and Castlereagh campus (practical elements)		24

COURSE RE-APPROVAL

FACULTY	REVAL UNIT	COURSE TITLE	MODE		INTAKES	LOCATION	INTAKE	
			FT	PT			FT	PT
ULSTER UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL	5J	MSc Leadership and Innovation in the Public Sector [previously MSc Innovation Management in the Public Service]		✓	2017 – 2021 [1 st intake: Jan 2018]	ME	N/A	N/A
LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES	3C2B	Postgraduate Diploma in Cataract and Refractive Surgery (Theory) (with Postgraduate Certificate exit award)		✓	2018 - 2022	DL	N/A	N/A

COURSE REVISIONS AND NEW SHORT COURSE MODULES 2017/18

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 4 December 2017.

ACCESS, DIGITAL AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING

Course Revisions

Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice

To revise the course from four 15 to three 20-credit point modules, to be completed in one calendar year.

Credit-bearing Short Courses

Certificate of Personal and Professional Development Framework

To revise the assessment strategy in module PPD297;

Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Development Framework

To add modules ENE821 and ENE825 as stand-alone short courses within the framework; to add module PHE708 to the framework and to remove an identified prerequisite for the module.

ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Course Revisions

Access Diploma in Combined Studies at North West Regional College (Strand Road campus)

To make module PSY008 available in semester 1 as well as 2 from 2018/19;

Access Diploma in Social Sciences and Humanities at South West College, (Enniskillen campus)

To revise the assessment strategies in modules ENG020 and HIS013;

Undergraduate Hons Subject: Sociology

To revise the assessment strategy in module SOC101; to make a current Magee module SOC511 available within the subject as an optional module at Jordanstown and to review the assessment strategy in the module; to revise content and assessment of module SOC311;

BSc Hons Community Development

To complete the initial population of modules AED513 and 514 and to reinstate AED514 in the programme; to replace AED514 with new module AED516, 'Managing Community Projects';

BSc Hons Creative Technologies

To revise modules CRE103 and CRE104 to 20 credit points (from Semester 1, 2017); to add a new compulsory module at Level 5, CRE333, 'Maker Studio';

BSc Hons Social Work

To revise the title of the CertHE and AB exit awards to 'Applied Social Studies' to meet PSRB requests [**Note:** Chair's action taken on behalf of ASQEC by PVC (Education) to authorise distinct titles]; to revise the assessment strategy in module SWK335;

PgDip/MSc English Language and Linguistics

To swap semesters of modules CMM735 and 751;

LLM Access to Justice

To replace module LAW833 with new module LAW728, 'Housing Law';

MA Contemporary Performance Practice

To replace five 20-credit point modules with four 30-credit point modules: DRA701, 702, 703 (increased to 30 points) and DRA704 and DRA705 combined in a 30-point module DRA704; to remove optional modules HTM726 and 709.

COMPUTING, ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Course Revisions

BSc Hons Architectural Technology and Management

To revise modules ARC101, 106, 302 and 501 (including assessment strategies); to replace BEN103 with revised BEN100 and ARC504 with ENE516; to remove module ENE117;

BSc Hons Biomedical Engineering

To revise learning outcomes and assessment strategy in module BME504;

BSc Hons Biomedical Engineering

BEng Hons/MEng Hons Mechatronic Engineering

BEng Hons/MEng Hons Electronic Engineering

To revise the assessment strategies and learning outcomes in modules EEE313, 424, 427 and MEC355, 358, 359 and 502; to revise the learning outcomes and assessment strategy in module EEE507;

BEng Hons/MEng Hons Civil Engineering

To add CIV309 to the AB and BEng exit awards;

BSc Hons Civil Engineering (Geoinformatics)

To correct the location of the module ENE301 to Jordanstown;

BSc Hons Computing Science

BSc Hons Computing Technologies

BEng Hons Software Engineering

To remove identified prerequisites for modules COM322 and COM373;

BSc Hons Quantity Surveying and Commercial Management

To revise the teaching and assessment strategies in module SUR505;

BEng Hons/MEng Hons Safety Engineering and Disaster Management

To revise the learning outcomes and assessment strategy in module SAF301;

BEng Hons/MEng Hons Safety Engineering and Disaster Management BSc Hons Energy

To revise the learning outcomes and assessment strategy in module ENE124;

Graduate Diploma in Computing

To remove three 10-point modules, add a 20-point compulsory module COM673, 'Cloud Development for Employability', and increase the project module to 40 credit points; to revise the content of modules COM648, 655 and 658 (and the title of the latter);

Graduate Diploma in Computing (Data Analytics) / (Software Engineering) (PT) at Microsoft (Dublin)

To introduce a semester 2 intake from 2017/18 in accordance with what was agreed by APAG in June 2017;

MSc Professional Software Development: modules COM557-558, 808-814

To revise delivery of modules at QAHE, where the course is available in part-time mode, to provide for up to two hours per week of pre-recorded lectures in each module.

LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Course Revisions

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

To revise the assessment strategy in modules NUR187 and NUR188 and to change the content and assessment in SOC109; to revise the assessment strategy in module 'Innovative Practices to Support Health and Well-being';

BSc Hons Stratified Medicine

To increase the contact time in module BIO541 through an increase in tutorial hours;

BSc Hons Specialist Community Public Health Nursing PgDip Specialist Community Public Health Nursing

To correct the PSRB record;

MPharm (Hons)

To replace, from 2018/19, PHA711 with a new 10-credit point module, PHA743, 'Zoonoses and Public Health';

MSc Health Psychology

To revise the assessment strategy in module PSY856.

Credit-bearing Short Courses

Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Development framework

To add six modules to the framework: PSY706, 707, 708, 709, 710 and 711.

ULSTER UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Course Revisions

Advanced Diploma in Managing the Customer Contact

To introduce modules BUS311, BUS312 and BUS313; to revise semesters / form (new location and delivery) of modules BMG472, BMG474 and BMG498; to change status of BMG499; to change semester of BMG450;

BSc Hons Business Technology

To replace module MKT348 with new module BUS307, 'Globalisation and the International Business Environment';

Modules BMS180-181, 362-365, 439-440

To withdraw and permanently archive the above modules (part of the former Advanced Certificate in Credit Union Practice);

Modules BMS329, 331, 332, 432

To withdraw and permanently archive the above modules (previously offered within the AdvDip in Management Practice).

Credit-bearing Short Courses

Modules BMG118, 122, PPD059, 141-154, 156, 161-162, 164, 180-182, 186-188 and 198

To withdraw and permanently archive the above modules (previously available within the CPPD framework);

Modules BMS729-731

To withdraw and permanently archive the above modules (previously offered within the PG CPD framework).

WORD LIMITS PRINCIPLES AND PENALTIES

The principles and guidance set out below will apply to both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

PRINCIPLES

Penalties for exceeding word count or other requirements in relation to the length of a piece of assessed work can only be imposed where the following principles have been applied:

- ❖ There must be an obvious and transparent relationship between the assessment rubric for a module and the learning outcomes of that module.
- ❖ If a student has met the learning outcomes of a module the penalty imposed for exceeding the word, or other, limit cannot result in the student failing the module.
- ❖ Requirements in relation to the length of a piece of assessed work should be expressed in the unit most appropriate to the learning outcomes of the module: word count, number of pages, duration of recording / video etc.
- ❖ In all cases clear instructions in relation to requirements, including font size, spacing, margins and what is included / excluded from calculations must be provided as part of the assessment brief issued to students and care should be taken to ensure these instructions are unambiguous and easily understood.
- ❖ Students should be asked to self-declare word counts and any other specified measurements related to the assessment.
- ❖ A margin of +10% of the size limit will normally apply before a penalty is considered.
- ❖ A student will not receive a double penalty on any piece of work. If the marking scheme already has a specific reduction associated with assignment length, a separate additional penalty cannot be applied under this policy.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

- ❖ If concise writing is deemed a necessary skill this should appear as a learning outcome and any penalty for failing to achieve it should be identified in the marking scheme.
- ❖ Consider which of the following, inter alia, will / won't be included in determining word count:
 - Content pages
 - In line references
 - Appendices

- Footnotes
- Abstracts
- Bibliographies
- Reference lists
- Diagrams / graphs / images
- Title sequences / credits

❖ If the coursework submitted is very much in excess of the limits set there is no expectation that staff will read the entire piece or provide feedback on every aspect. Students should be made aware of this.

PROPOSED PENALTIES

- +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

Penalties must be applied consistently.