

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

ACADEMIC PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2017 by video-conferencing

PRESENT

Professor P Bartholomew (Chair), Dr S Crothers, Mr A G Faulkner, Professor J Jędrzejewski, Professor L Maguire, Mrs L McClelland, Mr D McGivern, Professor B P Murphy, Mrs J Peden, Mrs T Purdy

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs A Garland (Secretariat), Mr A Scott-McKinley (Min 17.48) and Professor H Farley (Min 17.53)

17.38 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Academic Planning Advisory Group held on 10 January 2017, chaired by Professor Millar, were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Professor Bartholomew clarified with members a number of matters in relation to business considered at that meeting.

It was noted that Professor Murphy was working on revised operational arrangements to support the development and consideration of new course proposals, which built on the initial work of a working group of the Student Recruitment and Marketing Sub-Committee (Portfolio Management and New Course Development) of the former Academic Development and Enhancement Committee. It was intended that a new group would replace the Academic Planning Advisory Group and report its recommendations to the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee for onward transmission to Senate. Pending approval of the establishment of the new sub-committee, the Advisory Group would continue to present its recommendations directly to Senate, but through the Chair in accordance with Senate's decision to transfer responsibility for this work from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to the Education portfolio (Senate January 2017, min 17.18 refers).

In future the summary reference numbers would not be used from the suite of forms for course approval, revision and review processes.

MATTERS ARISING

17.39 MSc Management (FT) (ME) (APSC Min 16.50, APAG Min 17.03)

It was noted that the proposed extended MSc Management programme, which had not yet been submitted for authorisation in CMS and therefore remained unapproved, was to be withdrawn.

17.40 PgDip/MSc Community Youth Work (PT) (APSC Mins 16.02 & 16.63 and APAG Min 17.08)

It was noted that the proposal to offer the programme at the Magee campus, previously deemed withdrawn by the Academic Planning Sub-Committee, had not yet been re-submitted in CMS.

17.41 Proposed MA International Journalism: Hostile Environment Reporting (FT/PT) (CE and DL) (Min 17.10)

It was noted that a Digital Learning Resource Agreement had been received and that the Head of School of Media, Film and Journalism had advised that the start date was likely to be September 2018 instead of September 2017.

17.42 Access Diploma in Social Sciences at South West College (Min 17.15)

It was noted that the Subject Partnership Manager had confirmed that the College was in the process of purchasing the appropriate additional library resources for the Omagh campus and that a report on the adequacy of these resources would be received at the next meeting of the Advisory Group.

17.43 Certificate in Custody Prison Officer Practice at Northern Ireland Prison Service (Min 17.16); CertHE Community Development at Belfast Metropolitan College (Min 17.17)

The Chair expressed serious concern that two proposals from partner colleges to change locations had been presented after the event.

AGREED that:

- (i) Faculties be reminded of the University's requirement that all proposals for course revisions be processed on a timely basis in advance of implementation;
- (ii) the Collaborative Partnerships Forum and Subject Partnership Managers reinforce this expectation with partner institutions.

17.44 FdSc Interactive Design at Belfast Metropolitan College (Min 17.22)

It was noted that action had been taken by the previous Chair on behalf of the Advisory Group to recommend to Senate approval of the proposal to revert to the previous title of FdSc iMedia from 2016/17.

17.45 Proposed BSc Hons Applied Pharmaceutical Sciences (PT) (CE) (Min 17.26)

It was noted that funding had been secured from DfE to develop the proposed programme and to recruit an e-technologist.

AGREED that the Faculty be asked to provide further information on the role of the e-technologist to the Office for Digital Learning and to ensure the e-technologist worked closely with the Office.

17.46 Proposed BSc Hons Nursing (FT/PT) at University of Buraimi, Oman (Min 17.27)

It was noted that confirmation of the financial model had not been received from the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences and that no further information had been received regarding the review of the proposed English language entry standard. The Chair advised that, as the Advisory Group's endorsement in January 2017 had been based on an Institutional Strategic Assessment dating back to March 2014, there was a need for an updated due-diligence investigation.

AGREED that:

- (i) the Faculty be required to re-submit the proposal following consideration of a new Institutional Strategic Assessment by the Senior Leadership Team if endorsement is given;
- (ii) the Quality Management and Audit Unit be advised that all Institutional Strategic Assessments should only be valid for a maximum of 18 months and that those for proposed international partnerships should include an objective assessment of the safety and security implications for University staff in areas of risk or unrest;
- (iii) Senate be asked to rescind the previous conditional approval to proceed to planning and evaluation for this proposal.

COURSE PLANNING

FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (APAG/17/10)

17.47 Proposed MSc Art Therapy (PT) (BT) (APAG/17/10a)

It was noted that the Faculty had requested that consideration of this 2018 proposal be deferred until the next meeting of the Advisory Group, owing to staff illness.

AGREED that any comments or issues which members wished to raise in advance be sent to the Secretariat for collation and forwarding to the Faculty.

17.48 BSc Hons Community Youth Work (PT) (JN) (APAG/17/10b)

The Advisory Group received a course revision proposal to introduce a part-time fast-track mode of study in March 2017 and noted that:

- the programme would be fully funded by the Education Authority on a premium fee basis for 15 community youth work posts;
- funding was dependent on a start date prior to the end of March 2017;
- existing modules were used and the student load would not exceed 45 credit points per semester in semesters 1 and 2 and 30 credit points in semester 3;
- library resources were adequate to support this new mode of delivery.

AGREED that:

- (i) it be recommended to Senate that the proposal be approved for a March 2017 start;

- (ii) in view of the premium fee, Dr Crothers discuss the implications for block grant and statutory returns with the Faculty.

FACULTY OF COMPUTING, ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
(APAG/17/07)

17.49 Programme Withdrawals

It was noted that the following programmes had been withdrawn:

Last intake 2012/13

BSc Hons Creative Computing (ME) (final output 2016).

Last intake 2016/17

FdSc Business Information Technologies at South West College (Enniskillen campus)

FdSc Building Services and Renewable Energies at Belfast Metropolitan College (Millfield campus);

FdSc Building Technology and Management at Northern Regional College (Coleraine and Farm Lodge, Ballymena campuses).

17.50 Programme Suspension

It was noted that intake to the following programme had been suspended:

No intake 2016/17

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

FACULTY OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES (APAG/17/08)

17.51 Programme Suspension

It was noted that intake to the following programme had been suspended:

No intake 2016/17

FdSc Holistic and Integrative Health Therapies at South West College (Enniskillen campus).

17.52 Programme Withdrawals

It was noted that the following programmes had been withdrawn:

Last intake 2013/14

BSc Hons Nursing and Graduate Certificate in Nursing Practice at SAAD College of Nursing.

Last intake 2014/15

BSc Hons Optometry (CE) [programme replaced at revalidation for September 2016 intake by BSc Hons/MOptom. Students who entered the programme in 2015/16 will be transferred to the new BSc Hons/MOptom].

17.53 MSc Management and Corporate Governance (APAG/17/09a)

The Advisory Group received a course revision proposal and the Faculty's Business Plan to deliver the final three modules (60 credit points) of the programme at Hong Kong University (HKU) through the latter's School of Continuing and Professional Education (SPACE) under an outcentre arrangement. It noted that:

- the modules would provide an articulation route to the Master's qualification for students completing HKU's Postgraduate Diploma in Corporate Governance;
- a detailed mapping exercise had been carried out which identified that two of the HKU Postgraduate Diploma modules would require revision to ensure curriculum match with the first 120 credit points of the University's MSc;
- the three modules would be taught in block delivery of four days by Ulster staff;
- the Faculty had confirmed that the library and online resources available to support the programme at HKU were excellent and it was noted that the Faculty Sub-Librarian had been in contact with HKU to ensure that resources were in place;
- the projected intake was 15 students per cohort (rising to 20 in 2020), starting with one cohort in September 2017 and two cohorts in subsequent years;
- there was no specific reference to the required English language standard and it was noted that all courses at HKU were taught in English¹;
- while a business plan had been provided and the current guidance and form from the University's Finance Department would be reviewed as part of the new support documentation being developed (min 17.38 refers), it would be important for the Advisory Group to be reassured regarding the plan for this proposal, with greater transparency around costs of all activities associated with delivery in Hong Kong, opportunity costs, net margins, break-even point and the rationale for the fee split with HKU SPACE.

AGREED that:

- (i) confirmation be provided by the Faculty that the HKU curriculum had been revised in 2016/17, so that applicants for September 2017 would be able to avail of the full exemption envisaged;
- (ii) a more detailed business plan be provided;
- (iii) the proposal be considered at the next meeting of this group (5.5.17) or by its successor, or, if there was particular urgency, Chair's action be authorised;
- (iv) given the block delivery of modules, the course team be encouraged to liaise with the Office for Digital Learning regarding possible enhancements using new technologies.

¹ Secretary's note:

- a) The documentation made no proposal to depart from the University's standard admission regulations which include English language;
- b) Senate, April 2016, approved recommendations from the former Library, Information and Student Administrative Services Committee (which had oversight of the Admissions Policy) for revisions to the policy and acceptable alternatives to GCSE English. These included "any degree taught in the English language" (Senate min 16.32).

17.54 Programme Withdrawal

It was noted that the following programme had been withdrawn:

Last Intake 2015/16

MSc Management in Creative Industries (JN) (no intake).

17.55 STATEMENT OF ENROLMENTS ON NEW PROGRAMMES VALIDATED IN 2015/16 (APAG/17/11)

The Advisory Group received a statement comparing enrolments on new programmes validated in 2015/16 with proposed intakes as stated on the course proposal forms. It noted that:

- in a sizeable number of cases, there was under-recruitment against planned numbers, which highlighted the importance of improving business modelling;
- under-recruitment by collaborative partners to Foundation degrees resulted in fewer than anticipated students progressing to University programmes under approved articulations, which impacted on the University's own academic plan;
- there was significant under-recruitment or non-recruitment to new courses at QAHE.

Duration: 1 hour 25 minutes

3 March 2017

AGF/AG