ULSTER UNIVERSITY

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FORUM

10 April 2019

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2019 at Coleraine Campus.

Present: Dr P Brogan, Mrs B Burns (for Mrs N Cameron), Ms E Connolly, Ms J Kelly (for Mr L Curran), Mr J Marley, Mrs T Millar,

Mrs H Miller, Mrs D McElwee, Mrs R McEvoy, Mr M McCamley, Mrs S McLaren, Mrs M Paris (Chair), Ms C Reid Mrs M Sowney.

Apologies: Mrs J Alleyne, Professor P Bartholomew, Mrs N Cameron,

Mr L Curran, Mr J Curran, Mrs C Davison,

Ms S McCall.

In Attendance: Mrs N Bartholomew, Mr C Cregan (for min 19.38), Mr H Deighan, Mrs A Gaston.

MINUTES

19.25 The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2019 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

19.26 Student Retention and Success (Min 19.17)

The Working Group established to look at the causes of high levels of attrition on Access programmes did not meet as a number of Colleges had not provided the University with their analysis of attrition within their own institution.

AGREED: that a short meeting be held after the Chairing of the Boards of Examiners training on 2May 2019 to discuss the causes of attrition on Access programmes and make recommendations to address the problems identified.

19.27 Fitness to Practise Protocol (Min 19.21)

The Chair informed members that the University will shortly be publishing a revised Fitness to Practise Protocol. This will be shared with partner institutions who can adapt it to suit their own management structures. It was noted that the Protocol covers all regulated programmes.

Mrs McEvoy said it was important to separate admissions to the course from approval to go on placement. Students could be admitted onto a programme even though they may not be permitted to go on placement due to an adverse Access NI decision. However, applicants must be made aware of this prior to being enrolled onto the programme.

AGREED: i) that the University’s Fitness to Practise Protocol be provided to partner institutions;

ii) that Mrs Sowney contact Professor Barr regarding the procedures to be followed where the Access NI check discloses situations requiring further consideration.

CHAIR’S COMMUNICATIONS

19.28 Annual Conference

The annual conference for HE staff in partner institutions will be held at CAFRE, Greenmount, on Friday 11 October 2019.

Suggestions for a theme for the conference should be forwarded to Quality Enhancement (QE) together with examples of good practice to be disseminated at the event.

19.29 Annual Cycle and Examination Board Training

The annual cycle and examination board training will be held on the morning of Thursday 2 May 2019 at Jordanstown. The cut-off date for registering for this event is 17 April 2019.

HE Co-ordinators were provided with a list of staff within their institution who have already participated in this training.

19.30 Staff/Student Consultative Committee Template

A new Staff/Student Consultative Committee template is available on the QE Website. The template aligns with the University template, is more student-focussed and the minutes are primarily action points.

19.31 Collaborative Course Register

The Academic Office records information on each approved programme of study in a collaborative register which is published on their webpages at [www.ulster.ac.uk/academicoffice](http://www.ulster.ac.uk/academicoffice). This is a publicly available register so it is important that the information contained in it is accurate and up to date.

AGREED: that FPMs examine the information on the Collaborative Course Register and advise Ms Roos in the Academic Office of any updates required.

19.32 Adults Engaging in Higher Education

The Community Engagement Manager is developing a brochure aimed at adult learners who may wish to engage with Higher Education. The brochure will list all approved programmes of study, and provide advice and guidance.

HE Co-ordinators will be provided with copies of the brochure which can be used as part of their overall marketing activity.

19.33 Enrolments for Validated Collaborative Courses

Mrs Burns informed members that as of today there are 1264 students registered on Access programmes and 3603 students registered on Foundation degrees.

The total number of students registered is fluid as a number of programmes have multiple start dates throughout the academic year, particularly those categorised as ‘Other Northern Ireland.’

19.34 Rotation of the Chair of the Forum

It has been agreed that the role of the Chair of the Collaborative Partnerships Forum be rotated every two years among the Faculties.

Ms C Reid, the FPM for the Ulster University Business School, will assume this role from September 2019.

APPLICATION OF THE NEW DEGREE ALGORITHM TO FOUNDATOIN DEGREES

19.35 At the last meeting of the Forum members considered the outcomes of an exercise whereby 193 sets of student marks were modelled using the degree algorithm of 30% level 4 modules, 70% level 5 modules to assess the impact of any changes to the marks. 82 students, or 42% saw their marks go down, while 111 students, or 58%, saw their marks stay the same or go up.

HE Co-ordinators agreed to discuss the proposed algorithm with their colleagues and report back. This was part of a range of measures which might enhance first sit success.

The consensus of opinion among the HE Co-ordinators was based largely on disucssions with course directors who noted that for many students the transition from FE to HE was significant and as such it would be unfair for the first year of the Fd to count towards the final award. Some students, particularly adult returners, require a considerable amount of pastoral and academic support during the first year of the programme.

It was also noted that within the FE sector there is more emphasis placed on completion of the programme rather than the HE success measurement.

In CAFRE many of the students on Fd programmes are co-taught with students on Honours degree programmes.

It was accepted that any analysis would be looking at historical data and would not take account of the fact that students might have performed better had they known that level 4 assessments contributed to the final award. It was also accepted that the student voice would have to be taken into consideration before a final decision could be made regarding the degree algorithm.

AGREED: i) that after the Supplementary Board Course Directors model the overall cohort performance based on 30% at level 4 and 70% at level 5;

ii) that the Chair provide a template to assist in this calculation;

iii) that HE Co-ordinators discuss the new Fd algorithm with students;

iv) that HE Co-ordinators report to the next meeting of the Forum on the outcomes of the modelling exercise and their discussions with students.

KEY DATES FOR ARTICULATION ROUTES

19.36 Members considered paper CPF/17/07 on key dates for articulation routes.

The main examination period is Monday 13 May to Saturday 25 May 2019 with the last date for holding Boards of Examiners being Thursday 13 June 2019.

For Year 2 entry for Fds signed and approved Course Results Sheets should be returned to the CCU by Friday 21 June 2019. Applicants who have passed their Fd but have not met the asking grades will be put on a waiting list.

The Supplementary Examination period runs from Wednesday 14 August to Thursday 22 August 2019 with all confirmed marks returned to the CCU by Thursday 29 August 2019 at the latest in order to meet the UCAS deadline for applicants to meet offer conditions in time (31 August 2019). As the examination period includes a Bank Holiday it is a very tight timeframe to hold examinations and get confirmed marks to CCU. Course teams should consider running examinations as early as possible.

The 2Y3S examination period runs from Monday 2 September to Friday 6 September 2019 with meetings of the Boards of Examiners to be held between Monday 16 September to Friday 20 September 2019.

HE Co-ordinators were reminded that 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 will have to wait a year until September 2020 and apply through UCAS by January 2020; alternatively they may take up part-time study following the boards in September 2019.

ONLINE ADMISSIONS

19.37 Members considered paper CPF/19/08 an Online Admissions (OLA) process to be available to all new students on collaborative programmes for the 2019/20 academic year.

The University piloted OLA at BMC and NWRC and now plan to extend the online process in all Colleges for new students for 2019/20 entry. The OLA process will include document upload of entry qualifications.

The OLA process involves the following stages:

1. The OLA process will be available for all validated programmes from August 2019 (the programmes to be made available are currently under review).
2. The time line for CCU OLA applications is as follows:

**OLA Open**: Monday 26 August 2019

**OLA Close:** Friday 27 September 2019 (end of week 1)

**Finance Deadline**: Friday 11 October 2019 (end of week 3)

**Open for late applications**: Monday 14 October 2019

**Close for late applications:** Friday 18 October 2019

1. Students who have been accepted by the College on collaborative programmes will apply via OLA to the appropriate programme and upload documents as appropriate.
2. There will be two categories of document upload to include for all students apart from Access Diploma applicants:

**Mandatory:** English Qualification or equivalent; any other appropriate qualification i.e. ‘A’ Level, BTEC/APEL signed summary sheet

**Optional**: Maths Qualification or equivalent

1. Student Administration will create student numbers B00 for those who have applied online and who have provided the appropriate documentary evidence. It is the responsibility of the Colleges to ensure that the documents uploaded complies fully with Ulster requirements. Only those applicants meeting the required criteria will have an enrolment form produced.
2. Enrolment forms will be forwarded by the CCU to the Colleges.
3. Completed enrolment forms, without mandatory modules included along with payment should be returned to UU Finance by Friday 11 October 2019.
4. A late enrolment fee of £35 per student will be applied after the OLA process closes.
5. Student Administration will register students meeting the above criteria.

Once the OLA process becomes embedded it is the University’s intention to adopt Online Enrolments (OLE) for module selection and uploading photographs for the printing and issuing of student ID cards.

A Handbook on the OLA process is currently being developed which will be provided to all partner institutions. An online video is also being produced which can be used for staff training.

PRINCIPLES FOR ASSURING THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND THE QUALITY OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE ON WITHDRAWN COURSES IN PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

19.38 Members received paper CPF/19/90 on the principles for assuring the academic standards and the quality of the student experience on withdrawn courses in partner institutions.

In light of the increase in the number of courses being withdrawn or suspended in partner institutions the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee agreed that some principles and guidance be developed to:

* Assist Colleges in the management of the course closure process;
* Ensure the consistent, comparable and equitable treatment of students enrolled on these courses;
* Provide assurance to students, employers and other stakeholders that academic standards and the quality of the student experience are maintained until courses have been closed;
* Provide assurance to the University aa the awarding body that effective processes are in place for the delivery, management and monitoring of closing courses;
* Reduce the risk of decreased student satisfaction as expressed in NSS outcomes or through internal or external complaints and associated reputational risk.

In essence this guidance makes it clear that changes to the terms and conditions of course offerings must be clearly and unambiguously communicated to students at the (1) research and application stage (2) offer stage and (3) enrolment stages by providing them with the material information they need to make informed choices so that they can opt out or make alternative choices on a timely basis. Students must be advised of their right to cancel and all information must be provided in plain and intelligible language. Where material changes are made to existing provision the express agreement of students must be sought. Material information does not necessarily include all of the information that might potentially be of interest to a student but is the information which the student needs to make an informed choice. An HE provider’s terms and conditions and any changes made to them must not be deemed to be unreasonable in terms of fairness to the student.

ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW

19.39 Members were advised that the University is currently reviewing its arrangements for annual course review. The new process, when agreed, will concentrate on data sets such as recruitment, retention and success. There will be no requirement to complete a Self-Evaluation Report.

Further details as the new process, when agreed, will be provided in good time for the 2018/19 review.

LIBRARY SERVICES

19.40 Mr Cregan presented paper CPF/19/10 on library usages by Associate Students.

Below are the loan transactions of books borrowed by students from Ulster University libraries for the 2017/18 academic year:

College Total Loan Transactions

College of Agriculture Food & Rural Enterprise 4

North West Regional College 13

South East Regional College 7

Southern Regional College 15

Members were reminded that if the student has not received their ID they can still access and borrow books from the library using their ‘B’ number.

MARKETING ACTIVITY

19.41 Mr McCamley presented paper CPF/19/11 on current marketing activity.

The Marketing Engagement Team are working at revamping Open Days with a change of date and format. The dates are:

**Jordanstown campus**

Friday 6 September 2019

Saturday 7 September 2019\*

**Magee campus**

Friday 20 September 2019

Saturday 21 September 2019\*

**Coleraine campus**

Fri 27 September 2019

Saturday 28 September 2019\*

**Belfast campus**

Saturday 5 October 2019\*

Opens days run from 9.30am - 2pm

*\* Family days*

To register your College for the Friday Open Days, visit

ulster.ac.uk/open days

The information evening for any courses relating to Art and Design will continue to take place taking place in the Belfast campus in October.

The University is trying these new dates and format to try and encourage more students to attend Coleraine and Magee.

The Career Teachers’ Summit will be held on Thursday 6 June 2019 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Coleraine Campus. Registration for the event is at [www.ulster.ac.uk/teacherssummit](http://www.ulster.ac.uk/teacherssummit)

Requests for presentation are welcomed by the Student Recruitment Team. They are generally delivered at the beginning of Semester 1 to promote progression to Ulster University and the key factors students need to consider.

The Marketing Engagement Team works closely with Faculties who undertake their own marketing and promotional activity. While such events are attended well by second year students HE Co-ordinators were asked to encourage first year students to come to these events as well.

MATTERS ARISING FROM INFORMATION PAPERS

19.42 Members received information papers from FPM’s and HE Co-ordinators on a range of matters relating to collaborative activity.

No matters required discussion.

Duration: 1 hrs 50 mins

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10 April 2019

ACTION SHEET

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|  | MINUTE | ACTION | ACTION BY | DEADLINE |
| 1  2  3 | 19.27  19.31  19.35 | i) the University’s Fitness to Practise Protocol be provided to partner institutions;  ii) Mrs Sowney contact Professor Barr regarding the procedures to be followed where the Access NI check discloses situations requiring further consideration.  FPMs examine the information on the Collaborative Course Register and advise Ms Roos in the Academic Office of any updates required.  i) after the Supplementary Board Course Directors model the overall cohort performance based on 30% at level 4 and 70% at level 5;  ii) the Chair provide a template to assist in this calculation;  iii) that HE Co-ordinators discuss  the new Fd algorithm with  students;  iv) that HE Co-ordinators report to  the next meeting of the Forum  on the outcomes of the  modelling exercise and their  discussions with students. | QE  Mrs M Sowney  FPMs  CDs in Partner Institutions  Mrs M Paris  HE Co-ordinators  HE Co-ordinators | June 2019  June 2019  May 2019  After Supplementary Boards  April 2019  June 2019  Next meeting of CPF |