



University of the West of England

**ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at 2pm in The Dartington Suite, Wallscourt Farmhouse, Frenchay Campus

Present: Jackie Chelin, Rachel Cowie, Fay Croft, John Deane, Megan Edmunds, Liz Falconer, Marie-Annick Gournet, Mandy Lee, James Longhurst, Marc May, Julie McLeod (Chair), Margaret Needles, Peter Rawlings, Gerry Rice, Fiona Tolmie, Erica Toms.

In Attendance: Lisa Connors (Officer), Dave Hazlegrove, Jan Richardson, Darren Watson, Jenny Wills, Gail Wilson.

	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>
AQEC14.04.01	Nadine Fry, John Clarke, Dawn Stephens, Neil Willey, Teresa Wood.
	<b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</b>
AQEC14.04.02	The minutes of the AQEC meeting held on 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2013 were confirmed to be an accurate record of the meeting.
	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE &amp; MEMBERSHIP</b>
AQEC14.04.03	The amended Terms of Reference and Membership were noted.
	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>
AQEC14.04.04	<p><b>AQEC13.12.08 Recommendations regarding the External Examiner Workload – update on feedback from ASQC</b></p> <p>The Group received the updated report and agreed to endorse Recommendation 5 regarding the embracing of technology. However, there was some concern about the use of the term Field Leader and the development of a role description as this was not a distinct role within the University, but a responsibility subsumed within existing role descriptions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Senior External Examiner Officer to clarify the terminology in the report.</b></p>
AQEC14.04.05	<p><b>AQEC13.12.09 Proposal for a Word Count Policy for Post Graduate Programmes:</b> The Director of the UWE Graduate School advised by e-mail that the Graduate School Committee agreed that the spirit of the word count policy could be applied to</p>

<p>AQEC14.04.06</p>	<p>Post Graduate Research students but that applying it to the letter could be difficult. It was suggested that the following statements from the word count policy could be inserted into the Graduate School Handbook for 2014:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word limits for theses of research degrees will follow the general precepts of the UWE word count policy.</li> <li>• Maximum word limits for research degree theses are given in K13.7.12.1P.</li> <li>• Examiners will not normally be expected to read beyond the maximum word limit.</li> <li>• A tolerance of 10% will be used on word limits for all research degree theses.</li> <li>• Appendices are not included in the word count but can be used to help inform the examiners' assessment of the thesis.</li> <li>• The word count needs to be clearly and correctly stated on the title page of the assignment.</li> <li>• Incorrectly understating the word count constitutes an assessment offence and may result in further action.</li> </ul> <p>Members expressed some concern at the proposal that appendices should be excluded from the word count and suggested that, where an appendix contained information or discussion relevant to the thesis, it should be included in the word count. The Group also recommended the removal of the 10% word count tolerance and cautioned against the use of the term assignment as it lacked clarity.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Officer to feedback to the Director of the UWE Graduate School.</b></p>
	<p><b>ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION</b></p>
<p>AQEC14.04.07</p>	<p><b>Outcome of the AQEC Enhancement Workshop</b> – The workshop was well attended and produced positive discussion, including immensely valuable student input. There was, however, disappointment that very few programme leaders attended. Three areas for action had been identified and these were being taken forward through the Academic Strategy Implementation Group.</p>
<p>AQEC14.04.08</p>	<p><b>Update from the Survey Enhancement Board (SEB)</b> – The SEB had been established at the beginning of the year to consider key areas relating to feedback from the NSS and SES: cross university working including assessment and moderation (led by Fiona Tolmie), Student Voice (led by Rachel Cowie), Timetabling (led by Julie McLeod) general start of the year activities (led by Rachel Cowie) as well as priority NSS subject areas. Action plans for the</p>

AQEC14.04.09	<p>NSS were in place and lessons learned were being shared and would be the focus of an event.</p> <p>The Timetabling Group was working well, evidenced by the successful exam timetable and the draft Timetabling Policy which had been produced. The Start of the Year Group had preceded SEB but provided a regular report to the group and was ongoing. Priority areas included International and Tier 4 students and the provision of accurate data, particularly in the transition between admissions and registration.</p>
AQEC14.04.10	<p>The group focusing on the Student Voice had become formalised and also encompassed consideration of the Student Engagement Framework. Positive work was taking place with the Students' Union, including the development of the feedback campaign. Work with the NSS priority subject areas was ongoing and the University was developing KPIs in this area. Falling SES response rates was an area requiring action and it was hoped that the feedback campaign would help to address this.</p>
AQEC14.04.11	<p><b>Moderation Task and Finish Group</b> – The Task and Finish Group's mapping of the student assessment journey and moderation guide had now been discussed at Faculty Academic Standards &amp; Quality Committees where it was considered fundamentally sound. The guide had now been updated and included a suite of actions to support its implementation.</p>
AQEC14.04.12	<p>There was some discussion around the proposal that inconsistency identified in second sample marking should result in the remarking of the entire cohort. It was agreed that guidance was required on the circumstances that would trigger the remarking, possibly in the form of case studies on a dedicated guidance site.</p>
AQEC14.04.13	<p>The Group agreed that Assessment Cycle was a more appropriate title for the guide and endorsed its adoption. An implementation plan would now be developed, taking into account the work being done to move towards all standard modules.</p> <p><b>Action: Chair &amp; Officer of the Moderation Task &amp; Finish Group to develop an implementation plan.</b></p>
AQEC14.04.14	<p><b>Annual Report on Complaints &amp; Appeals</b> – The Complaints and Appeals Team had dealt with a very large workload in 2012/13 and it was noted that this was, in part, due to issues arising from September 2012 registration and it was anticipated that the work of the Start of the Year Group would alleviate this in 2013/14.</p>
AQEC14.04.15	<p>The new appeals procedure was a positive development, leading to enriched discussions and good quality decisions, and the engagement of the panel was applauded. Although the Stage 1 targets had not been met, the Team had actively managed the reduction of referrals to the OIA. The Team was researching conciliation work and linking with other Universities on this issue.</p>

AQEC14.04.16	2013/14 had seen a record number of appeals and this had adversely impacted on the responsiveness to complaints, resulting in the payment of compensation for delays, in line with OIA good practice. Complaints about fees had increased and would be monitored as comparison data became available. Following the move to One University Administration it had become more difficult to identify appropriate ownership of Stage 1 complaints in Faculties and Services and work would be undertaken to identify named contacts.
AQEC14.04.17	Future plans included the analysis of the reasons for appeals, with the Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences, which had a proportionately low number of appeals, being used as a case study. A new SharePoint site that would improve reporting capability was in development and was currently being tested by students.
AQEC14.04.18	Members discussed the recommendation to waive the penalty for the first online submission error and were sympathetic to the suggestion but agreed that there should be parity of treatment between online and hard copy submission. It was also noted that there was a wide range of potential electronic submission errors that would make it impracticable to implement the recommendation. It was concluded that acceptable or required online submission formats should be clearly stated in the module handbook and in the assessment brief.
AQEC14.04.19	The Learning Points identified in the report were considered and it was noted that awareness of the Maternity, Paternity and Adoption policy should be promoted and the issue around extenuating circumstances would be taken forwards in another forum by the Director of Academic Services. It was suggested that the Complaints and Appeals Manager should be invited to committees within Faculties and Departments to facilitate work on academic practices and it would be useful to circulate the case studies to ASQCs.
AQEC14.04.20	<p>The Group welcomed the report and its recommendations and it was agreed that the next step would be to identify where responsibility would lie for taking these forwards.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Action: Complaints and Appeals Manager to work with the Director of Academic Services. Complaints and Appeals Manager to circulate case studies to ASQCs.</b></p>
AQEC14.04.21	<b>Widening Participation Group and Access Agreement</b> – The delivery of the 2013/14 Access Agreement was progressing well and formal progress reports would be presented to the Widening Participation (Schools and Colleges) Partnership Committee on 30 <sup>th</sup> April. Plans for the 2014/15 Agreement would be progressing over the Summer and provisional budgets would be confirmed in April.
AQEC14.04.22	Guidance for the 2015/16 Access Agreement had been issued in

AQEC14.04.23	<p>late March and discussions were taking place in various fora including the Widening Participation Operations Group, Faculty Planning Groups and the Vice Chancellors Executive.</p> <p>The University had exceeded all of its WP recruitment targets with the exception of mature students, which had been narrowly missed in a context of a national fall in recruitment in this category. A detailed analysis of previous targets had been undertaken and targets for the full student life cycle proposed to include recruitment/enrolment; retention; good honours and good graduate outcomes. These targets would focus on Low Participation Neighbourhoods, BME, mature and disabled students.</p>
AQEC14.04.24	<p>The National Strategy for Access and Student Success had recently been released and emphasised the need for joined up government policy and sustained funding; focus on the full student life journey; the development of collaborative outreach; a Government led joined up approach to Information, Advice and Guidance in schools and colleges; the development of flexible study options and evaluation and demonstration of impact. An Evaluation Framework would be issued in January 2015 which would require compliance by the University.</p>
AQEC14.04.25	<p>The Widening Participation (Schools and Colleges) Partnership Committee would be considering a position statement on the UWE WP Strategy in April. This would include progress on existing development work and areas for further development; changes in the national context; priorities and revised targets and the development of action plans for delivery. The position statement would be presented to the next meeting of this Committee.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: AQEC member of SPS to present position paper to next meeting.</b></p>
AQEC14.04.26	<p>Following the recent restructuring of the Schools and Colleges Partnership Service, the Director of Student and Partnership Services would be the strategic lead for widening participation.</p>
AQEC14.04.27	<p><b>Professional Suitability Policy and Procedure</b> – The Policy and Procedure had been revised following external changes and had been consulted upon widely within the University and with Eversheds Solicitors, who had recognised it as a good practice model. There was discussion around paragraph 61 and the disclosure of Level 3 proceedings in student references. Members sought clarity about whether this related to all reference requests or only those specifically requesting this information. It was suggested that, if the former applied, guidance and suggested text should be provided for staff responding to such reference requests, particularly in terms of legal responsibilities.</p>
AQEC14.04.28	<p>It was noted that there were potentially Hartpury College programmes that were subject to the Professional Suitability Policy and Procedure which should be added to the policy paper. The Group agreed that any amendments required following these</p>

	<p>discussions could be approved under Chair's Action.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Officer to provide feedback to the Student Policy Manager.</b></p>
AQEC14.04.29	<p><b>Education for Sustainable Development Sustainability Plan 2013 – 2020</b> – the Plan had undergone rigorous consultation and had been approved by Academic Board, VCE and the Board of Governors. It drew upon developments initiated by HEFCE, the QAA and the NUS. It included a chapter on education for sustainable development (ESD) which outlined UWE's ESD plan including the aim for all students to be exposed to ESD through their programmes. It was emphasised that the Plan was to be owned and implemented by all staff.</p>
AQEC14.04.30	<p><b>ESD and the Quality Management and Enhancement Framework</b> – A guide had been developed to provide guidance on how ESD can be incorporated into the QMEF. It sets out the background and includes reporting mechanisms, trigger questions and measures of performance. A short checklist based upon the guide was currently under development. It was suggested that ESD should also be linked to graduate attributes.</p>
AQEC14.04.31	<p><b>Sustainability Strategy – Annual Internal Audit Report</b> – It was noted that the paper was the 2013 report.</p>
AQEC14.04.32	<p><b>Timetabling Policy</b> – Members broadly welcomed the Policy, which had been informed by the Timetabling Enhancement Group. There was some disappointment that timetables could not be released earlier in the year and it was hoped that the earlier resit period in 2015/16 would facilitate this. It was recognised that there were difficulties in timetabling for students with modules spanning academic levels and this should be a matter for consideration.</p>
AQEC14.04.33	<p>The Group requested that section 9 be amended to include CETS' responsibilities and the requirement for the policy to be reviewed in consultation with academic colleagues. Clarity was also sought on the reference to CETS checking information in the first responsibility of Appendix 1 and the omission of reference to lecturer absence in the paper.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Officer to feedback to the Head of Examinations and Timetabling.</b></p>
AQEC14.04.34	<p><b>Periodic Curriculum Review</b> – The purpose of the proposed revisions to the Periodic Curriculum Review process was to bring it into line with current sector practice and the updated QAA Code of Practice, as well as to streamline the process and establish a more enhancement focussed approach. The key principles included the inclusion of student panel members; the introduction of a risk based approach to review; the use of Quality Assurance outcomes; the use of Complaints and Appeals data and the clustering of programmes into coherent groups for review. The proposed process would introduce an initial risk assessment of an</p>

AQEC14.04.35	<p>evidence base followed by a “regular” or “light touch” review.</p> <p>It was agreed that student panel members would need appropriate training and it was suggested that the role might be suitable for Sabbatical Officers or Student Representative Chairs/Deputy Chairs. The initial assessment would need to be based on longitudinal data and take account of Faculty strategy and planning. Members agreed the principles of the proposed changes and the paper would be submitted to Faculty Academic Standards &amp; Quality Committees for discussion.</p> <p><b>Action: Head Of Quality Management to revise paper in line with comments and submit it to Faculty ASQCs.</b></p>
AQEC14.04.36	<p><b>Future Structure of External Examining</b> – From themes arising from an Academic Board workshop a number of changes to the structure of External Examining had been proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to stop consideration of level 1 modules by external examiners from 2014/15;</li> <li>• to establish programmatic external examiners at an Award Board level and schedule Award Boards into smaller programmatic clusters;</li> <li>• to support the establishment of a University Award Board;</li> <li>• to move, where possible, collaborative provision assessment boards into the 3 main assessment periods of UWE provision (February, June and August/September);</li> <li>• to establish a clearer termination policy for poor engagement by external examiners.</li> </ul>
AQEC14.04.37	<p>The Group broadly supported the proposals, with the exception of a University Award Board which would be fed into the current lean process review on Award Boards. There was support for the establishment of programmatic external examiners and it was noted that this might help to alleviate some of the issues around external examining of collaborative provision.</p> <p><b>Action: Senior External Examiners Officer to revise the proposals and submit them to Faculty ASQCs for comment.</b></p>
<b>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</b>	
AQEC14.04.38	<p><b>External Examiner Conference</b> – The report of the 2013/14 External Examiner Conference was noted.</p>
AQEC14.04.39	<p><b>External Examiner Appointment</b> – The following appointment was noted:</p> <p>Tanya Carey as Chief External Examiner for UWEBIC Programmes.</p>
AQEC14.04.40	<p><b>Executive Summary from Faculty ASQCs</b> – Summaries from meetings held in December, January and March were noted.</p>

AQEC14.04.41	<b>Employability and Enterprise Management Group</b> – The minutes of the meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2013 were noted.
AQEC14.04.42	<b>Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy Steering Group</b> – The minutes of the meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2013 were noted.
AQEC14.04.43	<b>Learning 4 All Hub Group</b> – The minutes of the meetings held on 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2013 and 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 were noted.
AQEC14.04.44	<b>Institutional Review Group</b> – The minutes of the meetings held on 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2013, 30 <sup>th</sup> January and 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2014 were received.
AQEC14.04.45	<b>Widening Participation (Schools and Colleges) Partnership Group and Widening Participation Operations Group</b> – The minutes of the meetings held on 28 <sup>th</sup> January and 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 were received.
AQEC14.04.46	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
AQEC14.04.47	The Head Of Quality Management would circulate data arising from Online Module Evaluation to the Group.
AQEC14.04.48	Members were reminded that the annual Learning and Teaching conference was being held on 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2014.
AQEC14.04.49	Hartpury College had established a Student Engagement Partnership and further details would be provided to the Group.

*AQEC Minutes: L Connors*

*Unconfirmed:*

*Chairs minutes:*

*Confirmed:*



**ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT GROUP – ACTION SHEET FROM  
THE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Substance</b>	<b>Actioning Officer</b>	<b>Reporting/other deadline</b>
AQEC14.04.04	To clarify the terminology around Field Leaders in the External Examining report	<b>Senior External Examiners Officer</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>
AQEC14.04.05	Feedback to the Director of the UWE Graduate School the Group's comments regarding the introduction of a word count for Post Graduate Research	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC14.04.13	To develop an implementation plan for the Assessment Cycle	<b>Chair and Officer of Moderation Task &amp; Finish Group</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>
AQEC14.04.20	To work with the Director of Academic Services to identify responsibilities for recommendations arising from the annual Complaints and Appeals report	<b>Complaints and Appeals Manager</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>
AQEC14.04.20	To circulate case studies from the annual Complaints and Appeals report to ASQCs	<b>Complaints and Appeals Manager</b>	<b>Next available ASQC Meeting</b>
AQEC14.04.25	To present a position statement on the UWE WP Strategy	<b>SPS Representative</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>
AQEC14.04.28	Feedback to the Student Policy Manager the Group's comments regarding the Professional Suitability Policy	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC14.04.33	Feedback to the Timetable Enhancement Group the Group's comments regarding the Timetabling Policy	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC14.04.35	Revise Periodic Curriculum Review paper in line with comments and submit it to Faculty ASQCs	<b>Head Of Quality Management</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC14.04.37	Revise External Examining structure paper in line with comments and submit it to Faculty ASQCs for comment	<b>Senior External Examiners Officer</b>	<b>Next Meeting of ASQC</b>

**ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT GROUP – ACTION SHEET FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Substance</b>	<b>Actioning Officer</b>	<b>Reporting\other deadline</b>
AQEC13.12.08	External Examiner workload update paper to be circulated to Faculty ASQCs	<b>Senior External Examiner Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.12.21	External Examiner Report data to be made available to ASQCs and Hartpury College	<b>Senior External Examiner Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.12.21	Examination Feedback Form to be circulated to the Group	<b>Senior External Examiner Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.12.21	External Examiner Report to be amended in line with the Group's comments	<b>Senior External Examiner Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.12.30	Communicate AQEC comments to ASQC Officers	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.10.04	Update the wording of the membership as appropriate	<b>Governance Team</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.10.07	Obtain formal feedback to the External Examiner Summary Report Action Plan from the SAT Manager	<b>Curriculum Enhancement Manager</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.10.08	Update members on progress against proposal for teaching observation to be put in place for all staff	<b>PVC (Academic)</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.10.10	Share paper on Peer Observation system	<b>Hartpury Associate Dean: Teaching and Learning</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.10.14	Graduate School Committee would be requested to consider whether the Word Count Policy should be added to the Code of Practice for Post Graduate Research students	<b>Graduate School Director</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.10.19	Refer issue of the inclusion of pass/fail outcomes for standard modules at level 2 and above to Regulatory Review Group	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.10.37	Provide demonstration of Echo360 to Group	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Complete</b>
AQEC13.06.22	The comments made by AQEC would be fed into the final versions of the	<b>DAR</b>	<b>Complete but templates to be</b>

**CONFIRMED**

	programme and module handbook templates.		<b>reviewed for 2014/15</b>
AQEC13.06.23	To develop an implementation plan for the new Student Attendance and Engagement Policy.	<b>PVC / Working Practices group</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
AQEC13.06.28	Fitness to Study - Further work to be undertaken to confirm when different policies should be used.	<b>Student Services</b>	<b>Ongoing – guidance &amp; training in development</b>
AQEC13.06.30	The Chair agreed the recommendations regarding the External Examiner Workload would be opened up to Associate Deans for consideration with a deadline of a week to provide any comments. The Chair would then consider providing endorsement under delegated authority.	<b>AQEC</b>	<b>Complete</b>