University of the
West of England

BRISTOL

ACADEMIC BOARD

Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2013 at 2pm in The Dartington Suite, Farmhouse, Frenchay Campus

Present:	Jackie Chelin, John Clarke, Rachel Cowie, Megan Edmunds, Liz Falconer, , Nadine Fry, Paul Gough, Marie-Annick Gournet, James Longhurst, Julie McLeod (Chair), Margaret Needles, Peter Rawlings, Gerry Rice, Rosie Scott-Ward, Dawn Stephens, Fiona Tolmie, Neil Willey, Teresa Wood
In Attendance:	Lisa Connors (Officer), Rebecca Smith, Jan Richardson, Lucy Dumbell, Beryl Furey-King

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

AQEC13.10.01   Fay Croft, Billie Oliver, Jonathan Simmons

MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

AQEC13.10.02   Members were invited to note the Terms of Reference for 2013/14 with the caveat that a minor change to the Faculty representation had been approved by Academic Board but had not yet appeared in the published document.

AQEC13.10.03   The Chair welcomed the Learning for All Hub Leader as a new member of the Group and asked the Committee to consider whether Learning and Teaching Fellows should be added to the membership, reflecting their membership of Academic Board. Members noted that the Faculty representation varied across Faculties, depending on their structure, and requested that the membership should be worded in such a way that Faculties could forward the most suitable representative, which might well be a Learning and Teaching Fellow.

AQEC13.10.04   The Chair questioned whether the reference to the "University's Academic Strategy" in the first Term of Reference was appropriate as the strategy was properly called the 2020 Strategy. Members agreed that this should be amended to "University's academic 2020 Strategy".

> **Action: Governance team to be requested to update the wording of the membership as appropriate. Revised wording will be submitted to Academic Board for approval.**

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

AQEC13.10.05   The minutes of the AQEC meeting held on 5th June 2013 were confirmed to be an accurate record with the following minor amendments:

- AQEC13.06.27 –final question mark replaced with a full stop.
- AQEC13.06.30 – discussion amended to discuss in the first sentence. "UWE could not appoint different Examiners to consider collaborative provision" amended to "would not".
- AQEC13.06.38 – reference to MySkills website amended to "new Study Skills website".

MATTERS ARISING

AQEC13.10.06   The Group noted the approval of the following policies. Work with the Students' Union was ongoing to develop a communications strategy for these policies.
AQEC13.06.23 - Attendance and Engagement Policy
AQEC13.06.24 - Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy
AQEC13.06.25 – Disclosure & Barring Service Policy
AQEC13.06.25 - Student Conduct Policy
AQEC13.06.26 - Assessment Offences Policy
AQEC13.06.28 - Fitness to Study Policy

AQEC13.10.07   An update on progress against the External Examiners' Summary Report Action Plan was provided, with the majority of actions being subsumed into the Moderation Task and Finish Group or the proposal for the development of an online toolkit. Whilst several actions were noted as awaiting formal feedback from the Deputy Head of the Student Administration Team (SAT), the Acting Director of CAS advised much of this work was being taken forward and the formal feedback would be sought for presentation at the next meeting of the Group.

Action: Curriculum Enhancement Manager to obtain formal feedback from the Deputy Head of SAT

AQEC13.10.08   A suggestion for teaching observation to be put in place for all teaching staff was under review by the DVC (Academic) and members were invited to contribute views. The Group acknowledged the value of peer observation in sharing good practice and enhancing the quality of teaching. However, it was felt that the purpose of the observation must be very clear and, if it were to be used formally to inform Professional Development Reviews (PDR), then the observers would need to be appropriately trained. With the continuing development of technology enhanced learning (TEL) mechanisms should also be developed for observing online delivery.

Action: DVC (Academic) to update members at the next meeting on progress

AQEC13.10.09   Hartpury College operated a formal observation system based on

four risk management categories. This involved new teachers being observed and supported in their first delivery session and then again after eight weeks. An external observer was used to ensure impartiality and parity and staff becoming observers were required to undertake a standardisation exercise.

AQEC13.10.10 This formal system of observation was taken into account as a part of PDRs but was targeted at staff development. It was also augmented by informal processes, including a Good Practice Forum and sharing good practice with other colleges.

Action: Hartpury Associate Dean: Teaching and Learning to share paper on Peer Observation system

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

AQEC13.10.11 **Annual Business for AQEC** – Members welcomed the indicative schedule of business for 2013/14 and noted that new or reviewed polices on Social Media Use, Professional Suitability Policy and Procedure and the Student Pregnancy Policy could be expected to come forward for consideration. This would be the last full academic year before the QAA Institutional Review and the committee might also be requested to consider items in preparation for the review.

AQEC13.10.12 **Word Count Policy** – The revised policy had been based on consultation including a Student Focus Group. It sought to remove ambiguity of language from the policy and ensure parity for students. The major aspect of the revision was clarity that no formal penalty would be applied but that work exceeding the word count would not be marked.

AQEC13.10.13 There was concern amongst members that some students did not appreciate the implications of the marker excluding work exceeding the word count. It was agreed that module leaders should make this very clear and explain the purpose of the word count and importance of structuring written work. A communications strategy for the policy would need to be developed. The meeting discussed whether it was possible for online submissions to have an automatic cut off. However, the online element was purely around submission rather than compilation. Consideration would be given to providing guidance for students, such as FAQs. AQEC approved the amended policy and it should now be disseminated to staff and ASQC committees.

AQEC13.10.14 The 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.

Action: Director of Graduate School

AQEC13.10.15 **UWE Charter** – The UWE Charter was jointly under review by the University and the Students' Union following the publication of the report by the national Student Charter Group. The aim was to make the Charter simpler and more accessible and to connect it

with the University's strategy. The Charter was a legal document and, following consultation with Eversheds, it was proposed that it should contain high level principles underpinned by links to policies and procedures. The presentation of the revised Charter was being considered by Digital Media students and colleagues from IT Services.

AQEC13.10.16   Informal feedback from some Glenside based students was positive but suggested that some amendments should be made to the layout and order of the list of Expectations upon Students. They emphasised the importance of students acting as ambassadors for the University both on and off campus and suggested that point *v* might be moved to the end of the list to make it more prominent. Members also suggested that consideration be given to grouping the bullet points into coherent groups and that the opening sentence should be revised to be shorter and more coherent. The reference to responsibility for communications via social media was thought ambiguous and "be professional in communications" was suggested as an alternative. The consultation would close on 1st November and members were invited to forward any further comments to Jayne Storey.

AQEC13.10.17   **QAA Institutional Review (IR) Theme** – Institutions undergoing IR were invited to choose between the themes of student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement and employability. The Committee was asked to consider and endorse the selection by the IR Planning Group, of employability as the theme for the forthcoming IR. Members agreed to endorse the proposal as the University had strength in this area and it would link to the work of the Employability and Enterprise Management Group as well as the enhancement themes of this Group.

AQEC13.10.18   **Annual Review of Curriculum Design, Approval and Review Activity in 2012/13** – A thematic review had been undertaken of reports arising from Curriculum Approval Panels, PSRB Activity, Periodic Curriculum Review and External Reviewers. The recommendations arising from the report would inform and be monitored by Curriculum Approval Panels and many of the issues were also being considered by the Moderation Task and Finish Group.

AQEC13.10.19   There were two specific regulatory matters for consideration by the Group. The first of these was the inclusion of pass/fail outcomes for standard modules at level 2 and above. This had been excluded by the Regulations because it would affect degree classification but it was noted that professional practice modules could have a pass/fail outcome at any level. In the instance from which this query had arisen the issue was one of tutors also assessing their students in practice. The Group agreed to refer this issue to the Regulatory Review Group for consideration.

Action: Officer to refer issue to Regulatory Review Group

AQEC13.10.20   The second issue had arisen on a number of occasions with external bodies and concerned the University's use of level

descriptors that did not match the FHEQ. The Group declined to recommend a change to the descriptors but stated that programme documentation should be clear on this point and identified it as a staff development issue.

AQEC13.10.21   The Group reviewed the remaining Recommendations and noted the following points:

- Recommendation 5 – should refer to the appropriate referencing style, not solely Harvard.
- Recommendation 6 – the word count should be considered as part of the assessment strategy and should not be directly linked to credit size. This point should also incorporate the HEAR statement.
- Recommendation 7 – should be clear that this does not refer to Joint Honours.

The Group endorsed the recommendations with the exception noted above.

AQEC13.10.22   The recommendation for an online Quality Toolkit was welcomed but could not fully be taken forward until the Intranet Project had concluded. The Learning 4 All Hub could be considered as a host for practical demonstrations and tools in the meantime. The Toolkit was envisaged as a dynamic tool which would allow interaction between colleagues. The resources required would need to be scoped and a request submitted to the Information Systems Co-ordination Group. The Director of the Education Innovation Centre indicated an interest in the development of the toolkit and other volunteers were invited to contact the Curriculum Enhancement Manager.

AQEC13.10.23   The Chair recognised the enormous amount of work by the Quality Team reflected in Appendix 2 of the report and noted that this was a snapshot of activity and those programmes marked as "not approved" might actually have been approved subject to conditions. In future iterations of the report the "Approved/Not Approved" categorisation would be enhanced to provide more information.

AQEC13.10.24   **Priority Feedback Subject Areas** – Academic Board had agreed five programme areas for specific monitoring towards improving NSS/SES results and subject position. AQEC would have overall responsibility for oversight of these programme action plans but they would be monitored by a new Survey Enhancement Project Board. Several cross-University themes had been identified and would be taken forwards by working groups. The emphasis would be upon the sharing of good practice and successful cohorts had been identified for scrutiny as exemplars. A Good Practice Event had been convened for all programme managers to help develop the community of practice and attendance would be actively encouraged.

AQEC13.10.25   **Moderation Task and Finish Group** – The Group had drawn together a wide range of stakeholders from across the University and were currently engaged in mapping the assessment journey to provide a context for their discussions. The project had been

divided into two phases and recommendations and areas for further discussion would be referred back to AQEC. The Group was seeking to bring clarity and consistency and there was a range of materials available on the AQEC SharePoint site. The goal was to produce a short hardcopy guidance leaflet.

AQEC13.10.26   **AQEC Enhancement Principles** – An update on progress against the Enhancement Principles action plan was received and considered by the Group. More discussion was required around Action 3, the use of 24-48 hour general feedback, as this would need to be adapted to suit different types of assessments. There was some confusion about when the 24-48 hour period should begin and how this would be affected by Extenuating Circumstances and extensions. There was also discussion around the form that this feedback should take with suggestions including lecture capture clips and generic feedback to groups of students. The paper had been circulated to Faculty ASQCs for dissemination.

AQEC13.10.27   **AQEC Enhancement Led Activity 2013/14** – For 2013/14 the Enhancement Led Activity session had been scheduled for February 2014 to allow actions to be taken forward within the academic year. Members agreed that the broad theme should be employability with focus on areas such as integration at programme level, enterprise and entrepreneurship.

AQEC13.10.28   **Graduate Destination Report 2013** – Data for the last five years showed a steady improvement in employability in general and an increase in graduate level employment. This was a reflection of investment in staff resource, growing business relationships, the emphasis upon employability at programme level and the promotion of various types of placements. Whilst the data was very pleasing work was continuing to improve in this area, particularly in light of the practice oriented emphasis of the 2020 strategy.

AQEC13.10.29   It was noted that the Glenside Library team had received funding from the Higher Education Academy to support nursing students on placement and a dialogue would take place between Library staff, the Learning 4 All Hub and the Student Services Department.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

AQEC13.10.30   **Amended UWE Harvard Referencing Method** – The referencing method had been updated in response to feedback and no longer required the inclusion of 'Great Britain' at the beginning of a reference for an official publication when citing a text. There had also been discussion around the use of single or double quotation marks and a note would be to the UWE Harvard referencing site to acknowledge that British English favours single quotation marks.

AQEC13.10.31   **20 Working Day Feedback Turnaround** – The expectation of the turnaround of feedback had been clarified as 20 working days, rather than the previous four weeks. Where there was a legitimate

reason for not adhering to the turnaround time tutors should consult their Associate Deans for advice. Any extensions would need to be discussed with the student body.

AQEC13.10.32   **Online Module Evaluation** – The main updates arising from the Sub-Group meeting on 5th September 2013 were:
- Awareness that the move to online evaluation, although increasing deployment across modules, had badly affected response rates;
- Emphasis upon improved availability of evaluations and response rates, using sector best practice;
- Provision of additional guidance for staff;
- Reassurance that students were unable to submit multiple evaluations;
- Demonstrating the value to students, including a mid-term evaluation with feedback to students;
- Suggestion of allowing time in seminars for completion of evaluation via students' electronic devices or holding sessions in computer labs;
- Possibility of setting a question that allows students to state that they were happy with the course and had no further feedback;
- Emphasis to students of the anonymity of the evaluation;
- Coordination of announcements to reduce confusion;
- Updates on guidance to ASQCs and AQEC and through the E-Zine.

AQEC13.10.33   The Faculty of Environment and Technology asked the university to consider the development of an app to replace the current BlackBoard based online system. However, it was agreed that the current system should be fully trialled before alternatives were investigated. Consultation with Northumbria University, which had successfully used online module evaluation, suggested that replicating the processes employed with paper based evaluations significantly increased engagement.

AQEC13.10.34   **Executive Summary from Faculty ASQCs** – An executive summary was received from the Faculty of Business and Law. ASQCs were due to meet on 30th October and executive summaries from all Faculties would be received at the next AQEC.

AQEC13.10.35   **Employability and Enterprise Management Group –** The dates of the 2013/14 meetings and minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2013 were noted.

AQEC13.10.36   **Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy Steering Group –** The dates of the 2013/14 meetings were noted and an update received on the meeting held that day. The main focus of the meeting had been:
- Lecture Capture – Echo360 had been identified as a preferred system and there would probably be a pilot of the system this year.
- E-Portfolios – the use of Pebblepad was under consideration; it was a widely used system with capability for integration to

BlackBoard.
- Good progress was being made with the TEL strategy and a review would begin early next year to meet the deadline of June 2014.
- Open Access Education was a growing area and a wide range of courses was available through the Future Learn website.

Action: Chair to provide demonstration of Echo360 to Group

AQEC13.10.37   The TEL Group had also met and was focusing on the theme of learning spaces, both physical and virtual.

AQEC13.10.38   **Learning 4 All Hub Group** – Dates for the 2013/14 meetings had been received and would be reported at the next meeting. The last meeting had occurred on 15th July 2013 and the Group received the following update:
- The Hub was focusing on supporting Learning and Teaching Fellows and increasing the number of National Fellows;
- Development of the portal was ongoing, with video captures and pod casts being created;
- There was a strong emphasis on PAL with hundreds of students being trained, including a large number from HAS;
- Work was being done with the 2010 cohort of Learning and Teaching Fellows to capture good practice via Pebblepad;
- Equip was being used to support at risk students.

AQEC13.10.39   **Institutional Review Group** – The dates of the 2013/14 meetings and minutes of the meetings held on 7th August and 26th September 2013 were noted.

AQEC13.10.40   **Widening Participation (Schools and Colleges) Partnership Group and Widening Participation Operations Group** – The dates of the 2013/14 meetings were noted.

AQEC Minutes: L Connors
Unconfirmed: 24th October 2013
Chairs minutes: 12th November 2013
Confirmed:

ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT GROUP – ACTION SHEET FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 23RD OCTOBER 2013

Minute	Substance	Actioning Officer	Reporting\other deadline
AQEC13.10.04	Update the wording of the membership as appropriate. Revised wording will be submitted to Academic Board for approval	**Governance Team**	**Next Meeting**
AQEC13.10.07	Obtain formal feedback to the External Examiner Summary Report Action Plan from the Deputy Head of SAT	**Curriculum Enhancement Manager**	**Next Meeting**
AQEC13.10.08	Update members on progress against proposal for teaching observation to be put in place for all staff	**DVC (Academic)**	**Next Meeting**
AQEC13.10.10	Share paper on Peer Observation system	**Hartpury Associate Dean: Teaching and Learning**	**Next Meeting**
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	**Graduate School Director**	**February Meeting**
AQEC13.10.19	Refer issue of the inclusion of pass/fail outcomes for standard modules at level 2 and above to Regulatory Review Group	**Officer**	**Next Meeting**
AQEC13.10.37	Provide demonstration of Echo360 to Group	**Chair**	**Next Meeting**

**ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT GROUP – ACTION SHEET FROM THE
MEETING HELD ON 05 June 2013**

Minute	Substance	Actioning Officer	Reporting\other deadline
AQEC13.06.06	Nominations to join a group considering a University Strategy for further engagement with the Online Module Evaluation were to be sent to the Head of the Quality Management Team.	**Committee members**	**Complete**
AQEC13.06.14	The principles and actions resulting from the April Enhancement Led AQEC meeting would be taken to the first ASQC and possible Departmental Committee meetings within the 2013/14 academic year.	**ASQC and Departmental Committee Chairs**	**Complete**
AQEC13.06.15	The annual report from AQEC would be submitted to Academic Board.	**Committee Officer**	**Complete**
AQEC13.06.22	The comments made by AQEC would be fed into the final versions of the programme and module handbook templates.	**DAR**	**Complete but templates to be reviewed for 2014/15**
AQEC13.06.23	To develop an implementation plan for the new Student Attendance and Engagement Policy.	**DAR / Working Group**	**Ongoing**
AQEC13.06.25	Student Conduct policy - further work was needed to clarify the withdrawal, expulsion or time out of students and the financial situations attached to this.	**Student Services**	**Complete**
AQEC13.06.28	Fitness to Study - Further work to be undertaken to confirm when different policies should be used.	**Student Services**	**Ongoing – guidance & training in development**
AQEC13.06.29	Faculty ASQCs to consider further how effective the implementation of the policy had been, in conjunction with the work the SU has done regarding this.	**ASQC Chairs**	**30th October 2013**

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.	**AQEC**	**Ongoing – report to December meeting**
AQEC13.06.36	Look into the current status of tablet provision for students *[Tablets would not be provided by the University but the Library was considering introducing a laptop loan scheme].*	**DAR**	**Complete**

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ACADEMIC BOARD
ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
Meeting date: Wednesday 23rd October 2013

*EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR FACULTY ASQCS

- A proposal for teaching observation to be put in place for all staff was under Review by the DVC (Academic) and members were invited to contribute views.
- The revised Word Count policy had been approved and should now be disseminated to staff and ASQC committees.
- The UWE Charter was jointly under review by the University and the Students' Union following the publication of the report by the national Student Charter Group.
- The Committee endorsed to Academic Board the selection of employability as the theme for the forthcoming IR, noting that the University had strength in this area and it would link to the work of the Employability and Enterprise Management Group as well as the enhancement themes of other Committees.
- The Annual Review of Curriculum Design, Approval and Review Activity in 2012/13 was welcomed by AQEC and many of its recommendations were being taken forwards by the Moderation Task & Finish Group and the proposed Quality Online Toolkit. The Group declined to recommend a change to FHEQ Level descriptors.
- Academic Board had agreed five programme areas for specific monitoring towards improving NSS/SES results and subject position. AQEC would have overall responsibility for oversight of these programme action plans but they would be monitored by a new Survey Enhancement Project Board. Several cross-University themes had been identified and would be taken forwards by working groups.
- Graduate Destination data for the last five years showed a steady improvement in employability in general and an increase in graduate level employment.
- Updates from the Online Module Evaluation Subgroup included:
  - Emphasis upon improved availability of evaluations and response rates;
  - Provision of additional guidance for staff;
  - Reassurance that students were unable to submit multiple evaluations;
  - Demonstrating the value to students, including a mid-term evaluation with feedback to students;
  - Suggestion of allowing time in seminars for completion of evaluation via students' electronic devices or holding sessions in computer labs;
  - Possibility of setting a question that allows students to state that they were happy with the course and had no further feedback;

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*It is the responsibility of the Committee Officer to ensure the Executive Summary is fed to the relevant committees.