



## ACADEMIC BOARD

### Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 03 October 2012 at 2pm in 3A22, Frenchay Campus

Present: John Clarke, Roger Clewett, Rachel Cowie, Fay Croft, Liz Falconer, Nadine Fry, Julie McLeod (Chair), Emmanuel Okon, Billie Oliver, Oliver Reid, Catherine Rex, Kathryn Ross, Fiona Tolmie, Stephen Waite, Neil Willey, Teresa Wood

In Attendance: Rebecca Smith (Officer), Beryl Furey-King (for item 5) Jan Richardson, Rob Stroud (for item 5)

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

AQEC12.10.01 Paul Gough, Lisa Harrison, James Longhurst, Margaret Needles, Sam Thomson, Jonathan Simmons, Karen West

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

AQEC12.10.02 The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee (AQEC). The key aims of the Committee would be enhancement, Quality Assurance and the student experience. Student representatives had not yet been elected, and therefore were not present at this first AQEC meeting. SU representatives would be elected at the Student Representative Committee (SRC) on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Members discussed the need to confirm student representatives at the earliest stage possible to ensure they are able to attend earlier meetings.

AQEC12.10.03 The Committee referred to the structure diagram included in paper AQEC 12.12.01, and noted that there were two lines feeding into AQEC: one for the standing committees such as the Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC), and the other for enhancement activities, including working groups. ASQCs would also feed enhancement led activity into AQEC, however they sit within the fixed Academic Board Committee structure. The Committee structure showed many groups and committees feeding into AQEC, and concerns were raised that a majority of the time at meetings would be taken up with receiving reports and minutes. Starred items on the Agenda would ensure these are included in the business, but unless any major concerns were raised and specifically highlight to AQEC, the item would not

be opened up for discussion. This would ensure enough emphasis and time was allocated to the enhancement agenda. It was, however, important to include these groups within the reporting structure. The Collaborative Provision Committee was currently reconsidering their remit and terms of reference, and this would also feed into AQEC.

- AQEC12.10.04 A nominated Associate Head of Department from each Faculty had been included in the AQEC membership, and therefore it was important that the reporting line also fed back down into the Faculty. The Committee confirmed they were content with the location of AQEC in the structure, and the reporting lines feeding into it.

### **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS**

- AQEC12.10.05 The minutes from the Learning, Teaching and the Student Experience Executive (LTSEE), which took place on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012, were confirmed as an accurate record. The local actions noted within the minutes had been taken forward by the faculties. The Head of Library Services confirmed an update with regard to the learning spaces project; the tab chairs in 4E12 had been replaced with node chairs, and 4D08 now had different shaped tables. Both of these pilots were part of a refurbishment project for teaching rooms, and feedback would be sought from both students and staff through an evaluation report.
- AQEC12.10.06 The dates for some of the Student Rep Staff Forums (SRSFs) were still to be scheduled due to outstanding information confirming programme clusters, however these were imminent and all dates would be compiled into one University sheet. There had been instances where meeting dates had been confirmed very close to the actual meeting, leading to problems with students not being able to attend. It was a priority to ensure SRSF meeting dates were confirmed as early as possible, along with early allocation of student representatives. There had been previous discussions regarding the opportunity for the timetabling team in CETTS to include timings of SRSFs in student representative timetables, although the capacity to do this was still to be confirmed. Faculties would hold Departmental Forums initially, with the SRSFs taking place after this meeting. It was envisaged that the programme clusters and student representatives confirmed for the 2012-13 academic year would be rolled over for the initial meetings in the 2013-14 academic year; this would ensure meetings were held as early as possible. Student representatives could then be included in important discussions at an early stage, for example the NSS Results. New student representatives would then be allocated at the usual time in October. It was also agreed that meeting dates could be confirmed by Corporate and Academic Services (CAS) earlier in the year prior to student representatives being allocated, providing the opportunity for faculties to start planning for these. A list of current University committees and student representatives would be

circulated to members.

**Action: Deputy Academic Registrar**

### **MATTERS ARISING**

AQEC12.10.07 There were no matters arising noted on the Agenda for the meeting.

### **ANNUAL BUSINESS FOR AQEC**

AQEC12.10.08 The Committee noted the typical annual business for AQEC; mainly reports from QMEF processes, Academic Board committees or working groups. Further feedback was sought with regards to the inclusion of enhancement led activity. Initially it was agreed that some reports would be starred for noting, unless specific concerns or actions had been highlighted for the attention of AQEC; leaving more time to consider enhancement activity. It would also be useful to receive only summary reports; including key themes and actions. AQEC would then report these outcomes to Academic Board; ensuring the same reports were not communicated to both committees. AQEC could also identify working groups to facilitate further work in key areas, for example the Plagiarism Group identified by LTSEE in 2011-12, which developed the University plagiarism policy. Committees feeding into AQEC, such as ASQC, would have an item on their Agenda confirming actions to be fed into AQEC. The Deputy Academic Registrar would be holding officer briefing meetings to confirm this, and to ensure there is feeding down the committee structure as well as feeding up.

AQEC12.10.09 Enhancement activity which would be added to the annual business Agenda for AQEC were:

- Graduate and Postgraduate feedback;
- Academic Personal tutors – linking into portfolios and expanding for PG students;
- Student feedback and peer observation with regard to teaching and learning at a class based level, for example what has been engaging;
- AQEC organisation – allowing the ability to generate papers and add Agenda items – papers which are brought to AQEC should be well formed, however it would be useful to allow time in the meeting to further discuss what topics should be included;
- Student retention – aspects outside of the current project which also need to be considered;
- Student experience – ensuring the actions made by AQEC relate back to the student experience; communicating actions and results back to the University, and ensuring they are complete;
- Student Representative expectations – what do AQEC expect student representatives to feed into the committee;
- Learning spaces – ensuring that developments are grounded in pedagogy. The master plan is included in the

Board of Governors business, however further thought with regard to linking into other areas would be useful;

- The student experience of the infrastructure – capturing student retention risks which may not be academic related at level 1. These issues may be picked up in programme reports and personal tutoring, but the feedback may not reach AQEC; which has a responsibility for ensuring the quality and enhancement of the student experience as a whole;
- Communicating good practice up to Academic Board, as well as down in the Faculties and Services.

AQEC12.10.10 The Committee Chair, Officer and the Deputy Academic Registrar would meet to agree an annual business plan for AQEC, including timings.

**Action: AQEC Chair, Officer, and Deputy Academic Registrar**

### ONLINE MODULE EVALUATION

AQEC12.10.11 The Head of the Quality Process Team in CAS attended to talk to the item. In 2011 LTSEE approved a project to move to an online method of collecting student evaluation feedback. Blackboard would provide this online source, and in the interim period before Service Pack 8 was implemented, an alternative service within Blackboard would be utilised. Screenshots had been included within the tabled paper showing how this would be presented, with the proposed questions listed in the appendix. The next steps for the Group would be to ensure all modules had a presence on Blackboard, to implement this online, encourage engagement, and investigate how to extract and analyse the qualitative data. A further meeting of the sub-group would take place, and phase 2 of the operational aspects of the project would be launched.

AQEC12.10.12 Potential confusion with regard to the definition of a tutor since the introduction of personal tutoring was highlighted with regards to questions 4 and 5 of the evaluation. It was also noted there were no questions relating to employability and personal development. Could the evaluation also include the identification of good teaching as well as identifying issues? Should the evaluation also use words such as 'feedback' and 'prompt'; words which are used in the NSS which can help consistency and understanding at an earlier stage? The evaluation included qualitative questions, and the sub group were currently investigating how these would be analysed; they would not be included unless the University was able to understand the results. The level of engagement was discussed, with only approximately a quarter of students completing the evaluation in previous years. The results would feed into module reports, identifying changes which need to be made and areas of good practice. These reports feed into programme reports and are therefore fed into annual Monitoring and Evaluation (M+E). Departmental forums and SRSFs also provided the opportunity for students to provide feedback, to consider the data, and also for the University to confirm how they have responded to these. The timing of the evaluation was also

discussed; students currently needed to be in attendance at the University to complete the evaluation. The application of provided feedback on line therefore had the potential to increase the amount of student feedback. The evaluation would be requested at the end of teaching; however it may be before students have had their assessment feedback if the final assessment was an examination. If we asked students to complete this evaluation after the 4 week turnaround time when there is no face to face communication, it may decrease the level of engagement. There could also be potential problems with regards to different types of module deliver: semester long or yearlong modules? If they are yearlong modules, they could be a different set of students??

AQEC12.10.13 Question 10 of the evaluation was discussed: 'I am satisfied with my own commitment to this module e.g. self directed study'. How would a module leader identify any action from the results of this feedback? How would they use this feedback to change practice and ensure students are more committed? Could we ask students who identify that they have not engaged, what the reasons for this was? This question may also be defined differently for students who have studied online rather than at University. It was also queried whether the questions should represent the qualitative analysis and themes emerging from the NSS results, for example reflective learning. Further investigation from the findings of the faculty qualitative analysis could feed into this evaluation. It was suggested that a few additional questions could be added each year drafted by the Dean of Students Office to reflect the outcomes of the NSS data analysis. This would be fed back to the group; however it was noted that the rationale for keeping to 10 questions was to encourage engagement; if there were too many questions students would lose interest.

AQEC12.10.14 The current implementation date was Spring 2012, although it was hoped to have the online system in place at the end of November. The method of communicating this to staff and students would be discussed at the next sub group meeting. The feedback from AQEC would be taken to the sub group for further consideration, and AQEC would receive further updates.

**Action: Head of the Quality Process Team**

### **NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS**

AQEC12.10.15 A colleague from the Dean of Student Office attended AQEC to discuss the key highlights identified from the results of the NSS Survey. Two papers had been sent to members, which had been drafted from the analysis of a very complex set of results. Overall, UWE has maintained a comparable average score to the previous academic year, however the overall average in the sector had risen due to improvements made by other institutions; meaning UWE had dropped a few places in the overall ranking. 85% was now deemed as the overall satisfaction score, with UWE scoring 82%. Again, there was a lot of analysis which had to take place as overall satisfaction scoring at UWE had actually increased slightly, however the number of students who were dissatisfied previously,

had dropped their score to a lower level of dissatisfaction i.e. from mostly disagree to definitely disagree, which has brought the overall score down. The sector as a whole had taken on board the issues identified relating to the student experience, and enhanced these areas. This suggested that the sector focused on core NSS areas, whereas UWE had generally increased more in the optional NSS areas. This poses the question of whether UWE was targeting the right areas; the core NSS areas are public facing. UWE also receives feedback from the internal Student Experience Survey, and a like for like comparison of the data had also taken place. There was however a caveat that this was the first year the quality data had been available for comparison, and therefore trends were not able to be identified. Generally, the outcome of this comparison evidenced that the SES results show a further increase in dissatisfaction. UWE also had some very strong performing subject areas which were in the 90-100% satisfaction scores; however there were also some in the 60% scoring. The paper highlighted some areas the University could look at, and some suggested actions with regard to looking at the processes to improve the overall university position.

- AQEC12.10.16 The second paper confirmed the subject areas the University should be focusing on and what we have to do to remain in the sector. The subject area comparisons had now taken place, and this shows how well UWE score's against our competitors; UWE should at least be located in the average of this sector. UWE has some very large subject areas, and other areas which are a lot smaller and have less impact. If we concentrated on larger areas UWE could improve the overall satisfaction to 87%. The paper also drills down into programme level data; the actual student experience. Within different programmes in a subject area, the scoring can also be different making it difficult to analyse.
- AQEC12.10.16 The University would aim to get a general qualitative output to compare what has also been identified through local feedback; general themes could then be identified. There were themes which regularly occur, for example promptness of feedback. Personal Development would be a difficult area to identify issues and actions across the University, as the NSS does not directly ask questions relating to this (the questions relate more to enhanced career progression etc). It may be useful to ask lecturers to feed into this with regards to the positive outcomes students have achieved, rather than students not having the confidence to identify what they have done well. It was also noted that the NSS refers to academic issues, with other issues such as buses and catering not being included. Learning resources could also differ across the University. Data could also differ across different statistics websites. Overall the Committee agreed the paper was extremely useful, picking up the main issues for the University to consider. Faculty action plans were being drafted to target the issues identified, and AQEC would receive these for consideration. The report had also been sent to Professional Services to feed into their action plans. AQEC would want to receive an interim report reflecting on the NSS actions plans, as well as actions included within M+E reports. This would be fed into

the Vice Chancellors Executive, but would balance the lines of reporting and not duplicate it.

**DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR THE REVISED CURRICULUM DESIGN AND APPROVAL PROCESS WITHIN THE QMEF**

- AQEC12.10.17 The draft proposal was received by the Committee. It was noted that further work was needed to clarify the process for initial programme proposals (the Market Impact and Approval process), and the role of the Portfolio Review Group. The draft paper had been seen by a wide group of people, and the final version would be submitted to Academic Board at the end of October 2012. The main changes proposed were to add more scrutiny to the design stage, include student feedback and to balance the level of external scrutiny. External reviewers would now be members of the CAP, with external stakeholders and examiners feeding into the design stage. The CAP membership would also change, with all members being external to the Faculty. ASQC's would also scrutinise documentation prior to submission to CAP to enhance the scrutiny process. It was also identified that more information would be needed with regard to Collaborative Provision proposals, and the Deputy Academic Registrar had confirmed during the Academic Partnership Project that this guidance should be included within the QMEF Handbook, and not as a separate handbook. This would ensure there was only one statement and all processes would be the same.
- AQEC10.12.18 It was suggested that the time-tablars be consulted during the design process to identify the need for timetabling at an earlier stage. It was also noted that Professional Services were sometimes consulted later on in the design phase so that an urgent response was needed. There had been a pattern emerging throughout the year that many proposals were developed as a matter of urgency, and may not have gone through an appropriate scrutiny stage. It was therefore envisaged that timelines would be drawn up for 2012-13 to ensure all initial programme proposals (MIAs) were received in good time, to ensure sufficient scrutiny through the design stage, and to ensure approval was granted with time to meet conditions and market the programme prior to delivery. This would also help with regard to identifying what was to be developed within the academic year, and would ensure urgent additional CAPs very late in the year were not needed. It was also suggested that the identification of which programme cluster this new proposal would be aligned to could be confirmed within the design team sign off form. The area of inclusivity also needed more embedding into the QMEF. The areas of external reviewers/advisors and their definitions were also being considered, and the criteria for what constitutes a major/minor programme change would be clarified through a new impact assessment. The major/minor change process was discussed further, with academic colleagues advising it could sometimes be very restrictive for a programme to evolve when major processes have to be completed; resulting in no changes being made at all. This was noted and would be fed back as part of the review, although ensuring we meet QAA requirements for curriculum

design and approval was essential, as well as ensuring the student experience is of a sound quality. The design team sign off was also discussed, Could Heads of Department be given authority for this rather than just Associate Dean's? The HoD would have much more involvement in the design team stage and would know more about the process which has been undertaken. It would also be useful to have more clarification regarding what constitutes a normal CAP and a Special CAP. The TEL strategy would also need to be referenced, as this included actions to develop more online curriculum and programmes. This area would be mainly referred to in the design team sign off form, with the team considering the TEL strategy and, where necessary, involving colleagues from the EIC. With regard to all members of CAPs being external to the Faculty, it was queried whether it would be more beneficial to hold one overarching Institutional CAP. It was noted that at present the level of business would make this difficult and less flexible, however this would be taken back for consideration. The Deputy Academic Registrar would consider this feedback further within the review.

**Action: Deputy Academic Registrar**

#### **REVIEW OF PERIODIC CURRICULUM REVIEWS IN 2011/12**

AQEC12.10.19 The paper highlighted all of the conditions, recommendations and commendations which came out of the Periodic Review process within 2011/12. Although it was useful to see these outcomes, the Committee was unclear as to which actions they need to consider further, whether any needed to be referred to other areas, and whether any key themes had been identified. Generally ASQC would pick up faculty actions, and AQEC would pick up University actions; however how would the good practice be identified and disseminated? The Academic Registry had previously reviewed and analysed the outcomes of all periodic reviews, identifying actions for the University, good practice, key themes etc, and it was therefore recommended that this be conducted within the Quality Process Team. It was also queried whether a similar report would be produced for curriculum design and approval processes. It was reported that this was an area being looked at as part of the review discussed in the previous Agenda item. CAPs report directly to Academic Board; however AQEC would be the appropriate forum to report key themes, good practice and actions for enhancement. Further consideration regarding how this would be completed across the University would be beneficial, for example how module, programme and M+E reports feed into Periodic Reviews? Whilst conducting periodic reviews of subject areas, changes to programmes can sometimes be identified; could these be considered within the review rather than having to then come through curriculum design and approval once the review had been conducted? This would be considered further by the Deputy Academic Registrar, with a further analysis of the outcomes from Periodic Review coming to the next AQEC in November.

**Action: Deputy Academic Registrar**



### TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING STRATEGY

- AQEC12.10.20 The TEL strategy, which included input from LTSEE, Executive Deans and many other groups within the University, was received by the Committee for endorsement before forwarding to Academic Board. The Strategy reflected current practice at UWE, and reflected a balanced approach. The terminology used with regard to developing entirely online programmes was queried, could this be a bit misleading to the student? The study material would be online, but some facilitation would still be supported by staff contact. This would be changed in the paper.

**Action: Head of EIC**

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- AQEC12.10.21 With regards to the TEL Strategy considered above, could we move to a more online method of sharing committee papers? The resource to do this was discussed further; laptops were available to staff, but this may not be achievable in the short term. The TEL Strategy would highlight this agenda, and the Head of the EIC would take this forward and add to the cover sheet for the TEL Strategy when considered by Academic Board.

*AQEC Minutes: R Smith*

*Unconfirmed: 04 October 2012*

*Chairs minutes:*

*Confirmed:*

**ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT GROUP – ACTION SHEET FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 03 OCTOBER 2012**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Substance</b>	<b>Actioning Officer</b>	<b>Reporting\other deadline</b>
AQEC12.10.06	A list of current University committees and student representatives would be circulated to members.	<b>DAR</b>	<b>By the next meeting</b>
AQEC12.10.10	The Committee Chair, Officer and the Deputy Academic Registrar would meet to agree an annual business plan for AQEC, including timings.	<b>Chair, Officer and DAR</b>	<b>By the next meeting</b>
AQEC12.10.14	The feedback from AQEC with regard to the Online Module Evaluation project would be taken to the sub group for further consideration.	<b>Head of the Quality Process Team</b>	<b>By the next meeting</b>
AQEC12.10.18	The Deputy Academic Registrar would consider the AQEC feedback with regard to the review of the Programme Approval process further within the review.	<b>DAR</b>	<b>By the next meeting</b>
AQEC12.10.19	The AQEC request for further analysis and specific actions identified for the Committee would be considered further by the Deputy Academic Registrar with regard to the review of Periodic Curriculum Reviews, with an additional paper coming to the next AQEC in November.	<b>DAR and Officer</b>	<b>By the next meeting</b>
AQEC12.10.20 & 21	To update the TEL Strategy to clarify the definition of teaching entirely online, and to forward the paper to Academic Board. The cover sheet would also be updated to reflect the need for paperless Committees, and the resources needed.	<b>Head of EIC</b>	<b>By the next meeting of Academic Board</b>