



University of the
West of England

ACADEMIC BOARD

Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2014 at 2pm in The Dartington Suite, Wallscourt Farmhouse, Frenchay Campus

Present: Gaynor Attwood (Chair), Jamil Alkalouti, Jackie Chelin, JJ Clark, John Clarke, Rachel Cowie, John Deane, Jenny Dye, Liz Falconer, Marie-Annick Gournet, Rhiannon Jenkins, Mandy Lee, James Longhurst, Kevin Lowman, Stuart Marshall, Peter Rawlings, Fiona Tolmie,

In Attendance: Helen Butler, Lisa Connors (Officer), Alastair Osborn, Judith Ritchie, Ros Rouse, Martin Underwood, Gail Wilson.

	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
AQEC14.11.01	Nadine Fry, Jo Midgley, Gerry Rice, Jonathan Simmons, Dawn Stephens, Neil Willey, Teresa Wood.
	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
AQEC14.11.02	<i>Paper AQEC 14.06.M was received.</i> The minutes of the AQEC meeting held on 4 th June 2014 were confirmed to be an accurate record of the meeting.
	TERMS OF REFERENCE & MEMBERSHIP
AQEC14.11.03	<i>Paper AQEC 14.11.01 was received.</i> Amendments to the Membership were noted and it was agreed that this would be further reviewed in light of changes to the University structure.
	MATTERS ARISING
AQEC14.11.04	<i>Papers AQEC 14.11.02, AQEC 14.11.06 and AQEC 14.11.04 were received.</i> AQEC14.04.14 – The Group received an update on progress against the 2013/14 Complaints and Appeals Action Plan, along with a report on emerging trends and points of concern. This report would be considered by Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Committees. Complaints and appeals procedures were currently under review as it was apparent that many of the appeals made were not genuine appeals and were often related to late applications for extenuating circumstances.
AQEC14.11.05	AQEC14.06.45 – The Group received clarification that the reference in the Student Pregnancy Policy to the provision of

<p>AQEC14.11.06</p> <p>AQEC14.11.07</p> <p>AQEC14.11.08</p>	<p>teaching and learning materials during absence was not a blanket expectation but would be negotiated, as appropriate, with individual students and their tutors.</p> <p>AQEC13.10.21 – An update was received on actions taken in response to recommendations in the 2013/14 Curriculum Approval and Review Report.</p> <p>AQEC14.06.39 – The date of the QAA review visit had been confirmed as the week commencing 12th October 2015 with the SED and supporting documentation to be submitted by 20th July 2015. More detailed actions and deadlines were set out in the planning calendar and it was noted that much of the activity would take place during University vacation periods. Faculties would be asked to nominate appropriate staff to be available during these periods.</p> <p>It was noted that Chair’s Action had been taken to approve amendments to the membership of the Widening Participation and (Schools and Colleges) Partnership Group.</p>
	<p>ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.09</p> <p>AQEC14.11.10</p> <p>AQEC14.11.11</p> <p>AQEC14.11.12</p>	<p>2014/15 Business for AQEC <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.05 was received.</i> An indicative schedule of committee business was considered and it was noted that this would be reviewed with the new Chair. The QAA HE Review would be made a standing item for future meetings.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Action: Officer to add QAA HE Review to agenda</p> <p>Student Voice The University had adopted a different response to student feedback this year, focusing on institution wide issues rather than individual subject areas. This included an emphasis upon professional standards for all staff and targeted discussions and monitoring within Faculties. This would then align with the work being undertaken in Faculties with respect to particular subject areas.</p> <p>The Student Experience Survey would be carried out in 2014/15 but this survey and others were under review to develop a more coherent approach to student feedback. A highly visible “You said, UWE did” campaign was being undertaken at Frenchay and would be rolled out to other campuses and Faculties and Services were invited to contribute their own instances of responding to student feedback. There was a strong focus on providing students with clear expectations from the outset.</p> <p>AQEC Enhancement Theme <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.06 was received.</i> Faculty ASQCs had considered the UWE Graduate Attributes Framework which had been developed from the 2013/14 AQEC</p>

	<p>enhancement theme. These committees were broadly supportive of the framework but noted that some of the language was difficult to interpret and the diagram was unhelpful. There needed to be greater connectivity between the framework and the learning outcomes set out in module and programme specifications and it should be embedded in curriculum development. The Director of Academic Services would be working with Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) to develop the framework further prior to consideration by Academic Board.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.13</p>	<p>The March meeting of the committee would take the form of an enhancement led workshop and the Group discussed potential themes for the session. Assessment and feedback, programme identity and learning environments were considered but it was agreed that further discussion was required with the new AQEC Chair before a theme was selected.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.14</p>	<p>Variant Academic Regulations for Hartpury College <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.07 was received.</i> As part of its preparation for obtaining Taught Degree Awarding Powers, the College was developing variant regulations that better aligned to its programme portfolio. These regulations would be modelled during the 2014/15 award boards, with implementation planned for September 2015. Members agreed to recommend to Academic Board that the variant regulations were accepted in principle, with the caveat that proposed ISIS developments might not be possible to implement.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Officer to communicate recommendation to Academic Board</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.15</p>	<p>Policy and Code of Good Research Conduct <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.08 was received.</i> The policy and code had undergone wide consultation within the University and would help to underpin compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Whilst the code and policy were broadly welcomed by members, it was noted that there should be a clear and proportionate approach to implementation. Implications for learning and teaching also needed to be taken into account, particularly with relation to projects and dissertations.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.16</p>	<p>There was some discussion around the sections of the code relating to student responsibilities and insurance and the importance of the role of the supervisor was emphasised. The Group agreed to recommend the policy and code to Academic Board for approval on the understanding that there was still some significant work to be done on the implementation around learning and teaching.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Officer to communicate recommendation to Academic Board</p>

AQEC14.11.17	<p>Annual External Examining Report <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.09 was received.</i> The report provided an overview of 2013/14 External Examiner reports with a view to identifying and sharing good practice and any continuing themes. Bunching of marks was a concern which had been raised by students and it was hoped that a move to a more programmatic approach to external examining would make it easier to identify and address this. Academic Skills for international students and collaborative provision students were being supported by the Academic Literacy Forum and the Library Services. The latter would be exploring making more support available online for collaborative partners. Members considered the highlighted themes and endorsed the proposed actions.</p>
AQEC14.11.18	<p>It was noted that very useful and detailed discussions had been undertaken with each Faculty but these had not been included in the report. Faculty specific outcomes from these meetings were to be circulated to members.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Action: Curriculum Enhancement Manager to circulate Faculty specific outcomes</p>
AQEC14.11.19	<p>Hartpury College HE Review Report <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.10 was received.</i> The College had undergone a very successful QAA Review which had identified features of good practice in a number of areas. The resulting action plan had been shared with the University's HE Review Groups and would be presented to the next meeting of AQEC. The single recommendation arising from the review related to the reporting of a sub group of the College's ASQC and the University's own processes in this area would be reviewed by the Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement with Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching).</p>
AQEC14.11.20	<p>Student Conduct Policy and Disciplinary Procedures <i>Papers AQEC 14.11.11, AQEC 14.11.12 and AQEC 14.11.13 were received.</i> The policy had been updated following a planned review and based upon the experience of managing student cases under the new arrangements. The amendments included reference to a zero tolerance policy towards violence and harassment, inclusion of new policies and changes related to the restructuring of Student and Partnership Services. The updated policy was supported by the 2013/14 annual report on student conduct.</p>
AQEC14.11.21	<p>There was concern around inappropriate use of social media which was seen to be hampering useful student engagement through these channels. This issue was being addressed by the Student Behaviour Network and there was potential for a task and finish group to be established to develop guidance for students and staff.</p>
AQEC14.11.22	<p>Members discussed whether the policy could be used to prevent legal protest. It was clarified that it could only be invoked where conduct during a protest breached the policy and it was proposed</p>

	<p>that this be made explicit. It was also suggested that the policy should be cross-referenced to the Free Speech policy, staff conduct guidance and legislation on protected characteristics.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.23</p>	<p>It was confirmed that the Students' Union had been consulted during the review of the policy and that students were entitled to be represented by the Union when facing disciplinary panels. However, students were not currently included in the composition of such panels.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.24</p>	<p>Members welcomed the data in the Student Conduct Report and questioned where this would be considered and acted upon. It was the first year that such detailed data had been available and it was currently being reviewed by the Student Behaviour Network. The members noted the report and agreed to approve the revised policy.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.25</p>	<p>Academic Literacy Forum <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.14 was received.</i> The Forum was working to develop a more consistent approach across the University by linking with associated services such as the English Language and Academic Skills Unit. A needs analysis in relation to skills support was being undertaken with each Faculty and the aim was to embed these skills, where appropriate, in the curriculum.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.26</p>	<p>A pilot of a pre-arrival self-assessment tool was being undertaken in HAS. This would enable students to identify both their own needs and the support available to them prior to joining the University. A range of workshops and drop in sessions were being held and advertised through the Events webpages. These events were scheduled at a variety of times as it was acknowledged that it could be difficult for students to attend.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.27</p>	<p>There was some concern around the frequency with which students were seeking assistance in understanding assessment briefs and being referred to their tutors for advice. There was also an issue with students expecting whole assessments to be proofread and it was important that their expectations in this area were managed and they were directed to appropriate support tools. Similarly, there was a lack of clarity and consistency in the support available for reviewing draft assignments.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.28</p>	<p>Work was ongoing to promote the role of the Forum and the resources available, with the study skills website being highlighted as the initial point of contact. There was also a proposal to develop a roadshow and links with student advisers were being enhanced.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.29</p>	<p>Learning 4 All Hub There was a strong focus on teaching recognition and sharing of good practice and a range of resources was available through the Learning 4 All portal. There was an emphasis upon supporting all teaching staff to achieve HEA professional recognition and in more staff becoming National Teaching Fellows. Following on</p>

<p>AQEC14.11.30</p> <p>AQEC14.11.31</p> <p>AQEC14.11.32</p>	<p>from the Equip Project, work was ongoing to support the embedding of inclusive learning in the curriculum and the framework and resources could be accessed via the portal.</p> <p>The 2014/15 conference would be held in April 2015 and would focus on outstanding learning for all, the second workstream relating to the 2020 strategy. Jane Harrington and Tim Thornton had been confirmed as speakers and there would be participation by the Vice President Education and other students.</p> <p>Annual Reports from ASQCs <i>Papers AQEC 14.11.15 and AQEC 14.11.16 were received.</i> The 2013/14 report from the HAS ASQC was received and noted by the Group. The Hartpury College report had been omitted from the committee pack but was available here.</p> <p>Items from Faculty ASQCs Requiring Action by AQEC The Faculty of Business & Law raised concern over both the plagiarism software adopted by the University and the lack of a policy on its use. Members discussed various options and agreed that further consideration would be required with the newly appointed DVC Academic.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Action: Issue to be discussed at a future meeting of the Group with the DVC Academic</p>
	<p>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.33</p> <p>AQEC14.11.34</p> <p>AQEC14.11.35</p>	<p>Grade Point Average <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.17 was received.</i> A number of universities had been involved in an HEA facilitated project to consider the use of grade point average (GPA) as a measure of student achievement. The potential benefits of the system were increased differentiation between students; transparency in how a final measure is calculated; the use of a system that is recognised internationally and encouraging improved marking practices.</p> <p>The pilot tested various GPA models and the HEA would produce a report. It was apparent that further consultation would be required and that a partial adoption within the sector would result in confusion for students and employers. The notion of international recognition seemed to be negated by the lack of a single calculation method.</p> <p>It was noted that Lancaster University had made major developments in terms of assessment, classification and information for students and further details were available here.</p>
<p>AQEC14.11.36</p>	<p>Annual Report on Periodic Curriculum Review and PSRB Activity <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.18 was received.</i> The Group noted the large amount of activity that had taken place in 2013/14 and the high number of commendations arising from</p>

	PSRB events. It was agreed that it was important that mechanisms were explored to communicate this to staff and students.
AQEC14.11.37	<p>Curriculum Approval Panel Annual Report <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.19 was received.</i> The Group received a report reflecting on the operation of approval panels in 2013/14 and recommending enhancements for the future. It was noted that an EU directive which required students to be considered part of the consumer rights bill will impact upon the ability to approve changes to the curriculum. Further discussion around this issue would take place between the Director of Academic Services and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching).</p>
AQEC14.11.38	<p>Award Board Data <i>Paper AQEC 14.11.20 was received.</i> The Group considered Department level data on Good Honours and other KPIs and noted that AQEC would continue to review and discuss this data.</p>
REPORTS/UPDATES FROM THE SUB-GROUPS OF AQEC	
AQEC14.11.39	<p><i>Papers AQEC 14.11.21, AQEC 14.11.22, AQEC 14.11.23, AQEC 14.11.24, AQEC 14.11.25 and AQEC 14.11.26 were received.</i> Minutes were received from Faculty ASQCs along with a summary of minutes from the following sub-groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Review Board • Learning 4 All Management Group • Student Voice Working Group • Technology Enhanced Learning Group • Employability and Enterprise Management Group
AQEC14.11.40	<p>Members queried whether there was a policy or guidance on the use of lecture capture as there was currently an inconsistent approach to its use. It was noted that there was not currently a policy but consideration was already being given to this matter.</p>
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
AQEC14.11.41	2.00, Wednesday 11 th February 2015, Dartington Suite, Wallscourt Farmhouse, Frenchay Campus

AQEC Minutes: L Connors
 Draft: 2nd December 2014
 Unconfirmed: 17th December 2014
 Confirmed:

**ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT GROUP – ACTION SHEET FROM
THE MEETING HELD ON 26TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Minute	Substance	Actioning Officer	Reporting\other deadline
AQEC14.11.09	QAA HE Review to be added as a standing agenda item.	Officer	Next Meeting
AQEC14.11.14	Recommend to Academic Board that the Hartpury College variant regulations were accepted in principle.	Officer	Complete
AQEC14.11.16	Recommend to Academic Board approval of the Policy and Code of Good Research Conduct	Officer	Complete
AQEC14.11.18	To circulate Faculty specific outcomes	Curriculum Enhancement Manager	Next Meeting
AQEC14.11.32	Issue around the plagiarism software adopted by the University and the lack of a policy on its use to be discussed at a future meeting of the Group with the DVC Academic.	Officer	Next Meeting



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ACADEMIC BOARD

ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting date: Wednesday 26th November 2014

SUMMARY FOR E-NEWS

- **Student Voice** – This year there was a strong focus on institution wide issues, and a highly visible “You said, UWE did” campaign is being undertaken at Frenchay and will be rolled out to other campuses.
- **Policy and Code of Good Research Conduct** – This new policy and code have undergone wide consultation within the University and will help to underpin compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.
- **Student Conduct Policy and Disciplinary Procedures** – The policy has been updated following a planned review and based upon the experience of managing student cases under the new arrangements.
- **Academic Literacy Forum** – The Forum is working to develop a more consistent approach of supporting students across the University by linking with associated services such as the English Language and Academic Skills Unit.
- **Learning 4 All Hub** – The 2014/15 conference would be held in April 2015 and would focus on outstanding learning for all.