

**The University of Edinburgh**

**The Moray House School of Education**

**School Postgraduate Studies Committee**

A meeting of the School Postgraduate Studies Committee was held on Wednesday 29 January 2014 at 14:00 in Charteris Land Room 5.2

**Minutes**

Present: Dr E McGregor, Dr P Allison, Dr S Beames, Dr S Benjamin, Mr P Evans, Dr K Fordyce, Professor C Iannelli, Dr A Irvine, Ms R O'Neil, Dr A Niven, Ms R Rennie, Dr J Ross, Ms J Sugden, Ms W Timmons, Dr D Torrance, Dr T Turner,

In attendance: Dr A Emejulu, Ms F Giles (minutes), Dr C Nash, Ms D Watson, Mr A Wigglesworth,

Apologies: Dr B Christie, Dr H Christie, Dr J Crowther, Mr R Easton, Ms D Fry, Dr S Falkner, Mr V Galloway, Mr A Huang, Dr L Hamilton, Dr M Jess, Dr A MacPherson, Dr G Reid, Dr G Robinson, Ms L Rowand, Dr P Sangster, Mr G Thomson, Ms K Woomble

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Convenor welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.

**2. Minute of the meeting held on 25 November 2014.**

The minute was approved subject to a minor amendment on page 2: O'Brien should have read O'Brien.

**3. Matters Arising**

**3.1 AERA 2014**

The school had selected two students to represent the school at the American Education Research Association (AERA) annual meeting in Philadelphia 3 April 2014. The Head of School would plan to attend AERA 2015 and would like to make this an annual event. It was hoped that another two post graduate research students we would be recruited to represent the School and attend AERA in 2015.

**3.2 Concessions**

It was reported that the new postgraduate concessions procedure was working well and the generic email address [pgconcessions.mh@ed.ac.uk](mailto:pgconcessions.mh@ed.ac.uk) was fully functioning. This email address had been added to the Moray House staff contact directory on the staff intranet and could be found under Concessions:

<http://www.morayhouse.me/StaffDirectory/unit1/AtoZ.php>

**3.3 Dissertation Planning**

The committee were advised of the following:

- Supervisors must be in place before Research Methods Three: Planning Research

(RM3) commences to allow for students to be advised on best options within RM3.

- The RM3 assignment had changed and the course organiser had circulated revised instructions. Students were required to design and present a poster detailing their proposed thesis.
- A database detailing staff interests would not be available this year.
- MSc Education, MS Educational Research and MSc TESOL would provide an individual database for their programmes
- Adverts promoting staff-led teaching would run this year
- A sub-committee on the dissertation planning had not yet been formed

#### **4. Convenor's business**

##### **4.1 Student attendance monitoring**

Programme Directors had been asked in December 2013 to identify ten points in the academic year to monitor student attendance and engagement. This was in part to meet Tier 4 requirements and maintain the University UKBA sponsor status. Recent new rules from the UKBA separated the monitoring of student attendance from the monitoring of student engagement. Furthermore the University had decided that Academic Registry would have responsibility for setting and monitoring five attendance points and schools would be responsible for setting and monitoring five engagement points for students registered on programmes owned by the school. The School office would be engaging with the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Offices to consider the best way to implement a student engagement monitoring system.

##### **4.2 Postgraduate Programme Review 2014**

The Director of Postgraduate study had circulated a summary report to the QQR 2008 and a list of School remit items to SPGSC, which included points raised by staff and students. The papers would be presented to the PPR at the Remit Meeting 4 February 2014. Staff were encouraged to forward any comments as they would be raised during the discussion at the Remit meeting. The director invited any interested committee members to assist with the analytical report.

##### **4.3 PGT Viability**

The School had been asked to report to College on programme viability and to categorise each Postgraduate programmes according to its level of viability. The director of Postgraduate Studies had sent the committee a copy of the guidance received from College.

#### **5 Innovative Learning Week**

Innovative Learning Week (ILW) was launched on 27 January. Students would be expected to engage and participate in events. The ILW communications team advised that students had reported staff endorsement of events had encouraged attendance. The Graduate School would circulate slides to be used by teaching staff to promote ILW during lectures and tutorials.

## **6 Moray House System Guidelines for Student Learning Profiles**

The Disability Act 2010 provided a formal system for receiving and acting on schedules of adjustments for students who declared a disability. The School Academic Coordinator of Accessibility advised the committee that there had been some updates to this system: Following the introduction of the Personal Tutor System, the Disability Office would inform Personal Tutors of students with adjustments. The Personal Tutor would impart this information to Programme Directors and Programme Secretaries. It was noted that under the Disability Act 2010 all staff had a duty of care to make any reasonable adjustment. It was suggested that the Graduate School office would ask the College Office if it would be able to report on numbers of enrolled students declaring a disability. It was further noted that it could be difficult to find information relating to the declaration of a disability on the Postgraduate application form.

## **7. Programme Review and Validation Events**

### **7.1 Validation of MSc Sports Coaching (Online)**

The committee considered the proposal for a new Online Distance Learning (ODL) Programme in Sports Coaching and made the following comments:

- The proposal documentation and programme content was commended as well presented, clear and concise
- It was very encouraging and innovative to see an ODL programme being developed in a new area
- The work based practice model was relevant to the target audience and there was clear focus on applied learning.
- The virtual tutorials and group sessions with students in different geographical locations was progressive and would have a positive impact on learning experience.
- Directors of ODL programmes reported that it had not been an issue to organise virtual tutorials across different time zones.
- The committee were impressed by the numbers reported in the demand survey. It was noted that only 37% of respondents were organic, though this equates to six per month and is very encouraging and in line with the average numbers seen in demand surveys for new programmes across the University.
- It was noted that a number of survey respondents reported that financial restrictions could prevent them from applying for the programme.
- The programme team were asked to consider whether offering one standard master's dissertation option may be more manageable than offering three diverse dissertation routes.
- It was noted that the school did not have a policy on Accessibility for any ODL programmes. It was suggested that it would be useful to liaise with the School Academic Coordinator of Accessibility and include a statement on accessibility on the programme documentation.

SPGSC approved the paper for presentation at BoS

### **7.2 Validation of MSc Social Justice and Community Action**

The committee considered the proposal for a new Online Distance Learning (ODL)

Programme in MSc Social Justice and Community Action and made the following comments:

- The demand survey showed good level of interest
- There was concern that as this course was similar to MSc Community Education it would attract the same or similar students
- The programme was designed to be part time ODL and therefore allowed greater accessibility which would add to the sustainability of the programme.
- The committee recommended that the programme team consider a September 2015 start. January start dates have been problematic and two recent new School of Education programmes launched in January did not recruit sufficient numbers to run.
- The programme had secured Digital Education Initiative (DEI) funding for development and teaching costs for its first two years. However the committee noted that the financial costs and demands on staff time of developing and running a new programme should be fully considered.
- The committee felt that better use should be made of existing Research Method Courses rather than the creation of a specific research methods course for MSc Social Justice and Community Action. The School had moved away from offering an extensive choice of Research Methods courses, particular to a programme and had developed a set of generic Research Method courses taken by the vast majority of students. If there was a need for a different Research Methods course then the School should look at its portfolio of Research Methods Courses rather than creating a programme specific course.
- It was suggested that the reading lists should be reviewed.
- It was suggested that entry and exit points for the Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate should be explicit in the document
- It was suggested that option courses in D (iii) were clarified

SPGSC approved the paper subject to minor amendments for presentation at BoS

### 7.3 **3-14 Physical Education Postgraduate Certificate**

The committee considered the proposal for the continuation of the 3-14 PE Postgraduate Certificate programme for self-funded students. This programme had been funded by a Scottish Government grant that covered full tuition fees.

SPGSC approved the paper for presentation at BoS