

The University of Edinburgh
The Moray House School of Education
School Postgraduate Studies Committee

Minute of the meeting held at 2pm on 22 April 2015 in Room 5.02 Charteris Land

Present: Ms C Valentin (Convener), Ms N Alvares, Mr R Easton, Dr R Ewins, Dr K Fordyce, Dr A Irvine, Ms A Oganesyanyan, Ms R O'Neil, Dr M Petrie, Dr C Sinclair, Dr J Telford

In attendance Ms A Clayton-Jones, Ms L Rowand, Dr Charlotte Kemp, Dr Jingyi Li (Skype)

Apologies Dr S Benjamin, Dr H Christie, Mr P Evans, Mr V Galloway, Professor C Iannelli, Dr A Macpherson, Mr D Murphy, Dr A Niven, Dr G Reid, Ms R Rennie, Dr P Sangster, Mr G Thomson, Dr D Torrance, Dr T Turner

1. Welcome and apologies

The convener welcomed all to the fifth and last meeting of the academic year. Apologies were as noted above.

2. Minute of the meeting held on 11 March 2015

Mistake to spelling of surname on page 3, item 4.1.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Examination Boards in spring 2015 (item 3.1 refers)

The convener passed to the committee deadline dates for this year's Progression and Awards process. The convener reminded everyone that pre-board dates need to be added to the School calendar as soon as possible, dates for these meetings should be forwarded to the Graduate School Office. It was also suggested that pre boards should be held further in advance and allocated more time given the new guidelines for checking student marks and the lack of a second check at College level. This would also mean the marks for all students will need to be available for the pre-boards, increasing the importance of the pre-board. It was also noted that training for the exam boards is currently full, but more dates are expected to be added. **[Action: All Programme Directors to submit pre-board dates]**

3.2 English Language Support for International Students (item 3.2 refers)

The convener noted that Cathy Benson has agreed to take 50 Moray House students on her dissertation support course.

3.4 Dissertation processes 2014/15 (item 3.4 refers)

It was reported to the committee that Andrew Horrell has agreed to provide assistance in developing a video cast for Turn-it-in for staff showing how to enter marks and give feedback. **[Action: Graduate School to arrange development.]**

3.5 Personal Tutor System: Roles and Practices (item 3.5 refers)

R Easton reported to the committee the continued need for on-going Personal Tutor training for staff and the need for clear staff guidelines for the role. It was highlighted that training on concessions and mainstream adjustments for personal tutor staff would be particularly useful. It was also suggested that a time slot within the induction week timetable for personal tutor meetings would be appreciated. The Personal Tutor space on the intranet is currently empty, but will be filled soon. **[Action: R Easton to report to next SPGSC.]**

3.6 Postgraduate Programme Review: Draft Report (item 3.6 refers)

The convener noted that E McGregor has completed the initial response to the report.

3.7 Mainstreaming Adjustments (item 4.1 refers)

Ruby Rennie to be invited to report to next SPGSC about whether adjustments were being made as required and if the system was working effectively. [**Action: Ruby Rennie to be invited to speak to SPGSC**]

3.8 Timetabling (item 4.3 refers)

It was noted that there is a lot of confusion around room availability within the Moray House campus. The convener offered to contact Alison Fleming and Rowena Arshad to get clarification and then communicate that to the PD's. [**Action: Convener to contact AF and RA regarding room availability within MH campus**]

3.9 Course Caps on student numbers (item 4.4 refers)

It was confirmed that a report on current course caps within the School has been sent to College and that in future a case would need to be made for caps on student numbers on courses.

3.10 Succession Planning for Programme Directors (item 4.6 refers)

The convener reminded the committee of the need to think ahead for succession planning and that it is very important to advise Institute Heads in advance so measures can be taken. Typically a term for the Programme Head is 3 years, but this can be extended to 4/5.

3.11 Mainstream Adjustments; subtitling video clips (item 4.1 refers)

It was noted that the Disability Office does not currently have anything on the schedule of adjustments regarding the subtitling of video clips, but were reviewing their policy.

4. **Conveners Business**

4.1 Student Survey

The convener asked the board for suggestions to help raise our student survey numbers. The committee suggested a leader board with other Schools or something similar that would encourage School spirit. It was also noted by the student representatives that students feel bombarded with emails from different parts of the University and don't always read all the emails.

4.2 New course proposal guidelines

The convener noted the lack of concise guidelines for creating new course proposals located in one easy to access place. [**Action: Convener to collate existing guide material and locate it in one place on the intranet**]

4.3 Review of all Graduating students

Following the upheld appeal of a student over the wording within the generic handbook, the Graduate Office will be reviewing all students' marks for last year's cohort who were at distinction or borderline. It was noted that all Programme hand books should be checked to make sure they point to the generic handbook for certain information so if changes are made, they only need to be updated in one place and not in multiple Programme handbooks. [**Action: Graduate School to review student marks at borderline or distinction**]

5. Course Matters

5.1 New Course Proposal: Psycholinguistics' of Multilingualism

This course was very well received by the committee and members noted how interesting it looked and how they would like to take it. Committee noted the reading list was very teaching heavy and suggested more of a balance between theoretical and applied with maybe some journal articles added. Dr Charlotte Kemp informed the committee that the first choice for course title has already been taken elsewhere in the University and any suggestions for a better title would be welcomed. The title that was listed on the Agenda by mistake 'Psychology of Multilingualism' was an option. **[Action: Amendments then Forward to Planning and Resources Committee 6 May and then Board of Studies 21 May for approval.]**

5.2 New Course Proposal: The Curriculum: Change, Context and Development

Dr Jingyi Li Skyped the committee for the discussion of this new course proposal. Dr Jingyi Li explained that this was a resurrection and re-development of a previous course run by Garry Donn and David Carr 4-5 years ago. The re-development has included making the course more international and up to date for current students. A few recommendations were made by the committee to take out some of the detail for the EUCLID record and to tighten up some of the aims and outcomes to make them more Masters appropriate. It was also suggested that the reading list was a bit heavy on one particular author. **[Action: Amendments then Forward to Planning and Resources Committee 6 May and then Board of Studies 21 May for approval.]**

5.3 Amended Course Proposal: Language and the Learner

This paper outlined a change to the assessment of the course from one large assignment to two smaller assignments and a test under exam conditions. The use of a test as a form of assessment was encouraged by the committee, keen to promote a wide range of assessment tools within the School.

6. Blackwell's Bookshop – Oral report by Nahad Gilbert

6.1 Nahad Gilbert sent apologies that she was unable to attend this SPGSC and would try to attend another in the future.

7. AOCB

CLOSED BUSINESS

8. External Examiner appointments

8.1 Nomination for appointment of External Examiner for MSc Learning for Sustainability: Professor Stephen Sterling, University of Plymouth

The committee approved the appointment of Professor Stephen Sterling as external examiner for the above programme. It was noted that the start date should be October 2014. **[Action: Secretary to forward to College Office for approval]**

8.2 Nomination for appointment of External Examiner for MSc Research Methods: Dr Michael Waring, University of Loughborough

The committee approved the extension to the appointment of Dr Michael Waring as external examiner for the above programme. [**Action: Secretary to forward to College Office for approval**]

9. Graduate School Financial Report

9.1 Proposed Performance Industry Day – Bridging the Gap (Proposal by Wendy Timmons)

The convener welcomed the proposal for an industry day and members felt it would be a very good use of resources. The committee noted that something similar could be a good tool for launching new courses and marketing some of our other Programmes.

10. APL Claims

10.1 APL claim from student s0238437 (Emily Taylor)

Noted as approved by Chair's Action.

Ms Anna Clayton-Jones
Secretary, School Postgraduate Studies Committee