

H/02/27/02
CSPC: 17.09.15

**Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)
held on Thursday 17 September 2015 at 2.00p.m. in Room 235, Joseph Black
Chemistry Building, King's Buildings**

Present:

Professor Ian Pirie (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Learning and Development
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSCE)
Dr Adam Bunni	Representation and Democracy Manager, EUSA
Professor Helen Cameron	Director, Centre for Medical Education (CMVM)
Ms Joy Candlish	Head of Academic Affairs (CSCE)
Professor Allan Cumming	Dean of Students (CMVM)
Dr Soledad Garcia - Ferrari	ESALA, Edinburgh College of Art
Professor Alexis Grohmann	Associate Dean, Academic Progress (CHSS)
Mr John Lowrey	Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CHSS)
Dr Antony Maciocia	School of Mathematics
Dr Ewen Macpherson	School of Engineering
Dr Theresa McKinven	Head of PG Section (CHSS)
Mr Barry Neilson	Director of Student Systems
Ms Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web
Ms Imogen Wilson	Vice President, Academic Affairs, EUSA

In attendance:

Ms Nora Mogey	Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Ms Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

Apologies for absence:

Professor Peter Higgins	Dean of Students (CHSS)
Dr Neil Lent	Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Dr Sheila Lodge	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 4 June 2015 were approved as an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising

**19 March 2015 - Draft Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy (CSPC 14/15
4 O)**

Mr Ward updated members on the latest position regarding the draft Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy. CSPC had already commented on the document at the March 2015 meeting, and, following feedback from other stakeholders, the University planned a further stage of drafting before inviting the Central Management Group (CMG) to finalise it. Since CMG was aiming to finalise the new policy in the near future, CSPC would be provided

with a very short window for comment on the revised document before CMG was invited to sign it off.

ACTION: Tom Ward to forward latest draft of Children and Vulnerable Adults policy to CSPC members for comment, prior to submission to Central Management Group for final sign off (CMG)

3. Update on Assessment and Progression Tools (APT) Steering Group (CSPC 15/16 1 A)

Mr Barry Neilson presented this paper, which reminded members of the purpose and vision of the project, and outlined progress with strand 1 and strand 2. Strand 1 supported the implementation of the 'Informing Taught Students of their Final Programme, Course and Progression Results' policy. The focus had been on the communication of all final progression decisions and formal communication of final course marks.

By the deadline of 30 June 2015, over 18,500 progression decisions had been communicated to students. The overall position was extremely positive, with over 88% of all matriculated students who were not expected to graduate this year receiving a progression decision; the remaining percentage mostly represented students who were not expected to receive a progression or award decision at this point in the cycle. All awards were processed within the agreed deadlines of 12 and 19 June 2015, and over 90% of course results were uploaded by the deadline. Feedback from Schools had included some concerns about decision making processes, workloads and timelines.

Professor Pirie extended his thanks to colleagues across Schools and Colleges and in central services who had worked extremely hard to meet some very challenging deadlines.

Strand 2 of the project involved the development and implementation of the assessment and progression tools to deliver the vision. A pilot with eight Schools represented was to run in 2015/16, with roll-out to 17 Schools by September 2016 and full roll-out by September 2017. SMART was no longer expected to be used from September 2016. Further discussion would likely be required at CSPC over the course of 2015/16 with regard to processes at Boards of Studies/Boards of Examiners/Undergraduate Progression Boards. Key dates for 2015/16 were expected to be in line with 2014/15, but a more significant review of key dates was expected for 2016/17, and this would be brought to CSPC for approval.

Professor Helen Cameron referred to some difficulties that colleagues in Medicine had faced because of the timing of publication of the Taught Assessment Regulations, which usually took place in July alongside the other 'what's new' communications from Academic Services. It was noted that it would be extremely helpful if the Taught Assessment Regulations could be published as soon as possible after they were formally approved. This was agreed by CSPC. Formal approval of the assessment regulations routinely took place at CSPC in April (unless there were any particular issues that required further discussion at the June meeting of the full Senate). The degree regulations would not be available annually until July as usual, as different formal University Court approval processes were required for these.

ACTION: Academic Services – Ailsa Taylor and Susan Hunter - to publish Taught Assessment Regulations (and Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees) annually as soon as possible after they are formally approved.

Members made reference to the timing of publication of course and programme handbooks at the start of the programme or course. It was understood that the Programme and Course Handbooks Policy (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/handbookspolicy.pdf>) stated that

final versions of the handbooks must be available to students “at the start of their programme or course”. However, the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy (http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Accessible_and_Inclusive_Learning_Policy.pdf) stated that course outlines and reading lists were to be made available at least four weeks before the start of the course. Therefore the timing of publication of course and programme handbooks could be dependent on these factors, depending on the method used for transmitting the course outline and reading list information.

In relation to the planned review of the processes and data which support the Board of Examiners, the Steering Group was seeking to develop two or three high level models which would then be developed in consultation with Schools.

Reference was made to current assessment regulations, namely in relation to progression to honours and degree classification calculations. It was anticipated that systematising such calculations would involve a degree of complexity, therefore the Steering Group would need to commission some further analysis on degree requirements in order to advise further what might be possible here.

It was noted that for the vision to be delivered successfully summative assessment marks needed to be entered into the system throughout the academic year and semester 1 courses processed through a Board of Examiners in January wherever this was possible.

It was noted that the potential implementation of Grade Point Average may have a significant impact on the scope and delivery of the project.

CSPC endorsed the actions that the Steering Group were planning to take with regard to assessment and progression, as outlined in the paper, recognising that some points may need to come back to CSPC for a future decision.

ACTION: Mr Barry Neilson to arrange to involve Imogen Wilson (EUSA VPAA) in the discussions of the Assessment and Progression Tools Steering Group

4. Programme and Course Information Management (PCIM) Post Project Review Report (CSPC 15/16 1 B)

Mr Tom Ward introduced the PCIM post-project review report. The report provided an overview of the deliverables/project benefits, timescales, project resources, successes, lessons learned, mainstreaming of activity, and project evaluation and impact. Reference was made to the delivery of the enhanced course descriptor along with improved guidance and course proposal and editing systems for staff. The Programme and Course Design, Development, Approval, Changes and Closure Policy was now fully operational. The Boards of Studies Terms of Reference were reviewed, and a Programme and Course Handbooks Policy had been developed.

Mr John Lowrey raised a point about a potential systems issue in relation to the enhanced course descriptor/Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study for particular courses. It was agreed that further discussion on this matter would take place between Mr Lowrey and Student Systems (Barry Neilson) directly.

Reference was made to statistics in the report which gave early indicators of course activity from January to early April 2015. Over 700 idle courses had been closed already which was quite an achievement, but it was felt that more work needed to be done in this area to further improve that figure.

The Committee formally noted the post project review report.

5. Proposed Pilot of Examination Arrangements for Online Distance Learning Students (CLOSED)

Mr Tom Ward presented this (closed) paper, which was approved by the Committee. Feedback from the pilot would be obtained with a view to considering some potential future amendments to the Taught Assessment Regulations (e.g. to the examination regulation 22.5 in the Taught Assessment Regulations 2015/16).

6. Collaborative Provision (CSPC 15/16 1 D)

Mr Tom Ward introduced this paper which updated the Committee on the conclusion of the Collaborative Provision Guidance Project, and sought the Committee's approval that any College wishing to renew a '2+2' arrangement or enter into a new 2+2 arrangement on a dual award basis would not need to seek specific dispensation from the Committee provided that the proposed arrangement complies with the University's policy on Dual, Double and Multiple Awards Policy. The paper was approved, subject to an amendment that the provisions in the paper regarding approval of 2+2 dual award arrangements would only apply to the College of Science and Engineering, since, unlike the other two Colleges, it had extensive experience of developing and running 2+2 arrangements.

7. Taught Assessment Regulations regarding Feedback on Assessment (CSPC 15/16 1 E)

Mr Tom Ward presented this paper, which informed the Committee of the Convener's advice on interpretation of Taught Assessment Regulation 15 (2015/16) (feedback deadlines). Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee was expected to have a more strategic discussion of feedback at its next meeting in September 2015, whereas CSPC had been invited to comment on interpretation of both regulations 14 and 15, given its role in drafting and approving assessment regulations.

Taught Assessment Regulation 15.3 (2015/16) indicated that in exceptional circumstances, where the necessary marking and moderation processes could not be concluded within 15 working days, Schools could request an opt-out from the relevant College committee. College representatives reported that Colleges had not received opt-out requests from Schools as yet for courses in 2015/16.

It was agreed that the wording of the guidance associated with these particular feedback regulations (regulation 14 and 15) would benefit from some careful scrutiny prior to publication of the 2016/17 regulations.

8. Proposed review of Special Circumstances Policy (CSPC 15/16 1 F)

Mr Ward introduced this item.

CSPC approved the arrangements outlined in the paper for a review of the University's Special Circumstances Policy.

This review was to focus on consistency of practice, clarification of the position regarding medical documentation (including the potential for students to self-certify in certain circumstances) and would link to the EUCLID Assessment and Progression Tools project (to consider how EUCLID could support the special circumstances process). It had been agreed

that it would also be sensible to consider the University policy on extensions to coursework deadlines, alongside the special circumstances issues.

It was agreed that two EUSA representatives would be invited to join the proposed task group – one representative from the Advice Place and the EUSA VPAA Imogen Wilson.

It was proposed that it would be helpful if a member of staff with clinical expertise in relation to mental health could be involved in the work of the task group, if this was possible. It was noted that a significant amount of progress had already been made in moving towards more consistent practice across the University regarding the implementation and management of special circumstances and that this review was to further improve and refine our approach in this complex area.

9. College of Humanities and Social Science: Innovative Learning Week Opt-Out Request (CSPC 15/16 1 G)

Dr Theresa McKinven presented this paper which contained an opt-out from Innovative Learning Week for some specific courses in the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences.

CSPC approved this opt-out.

10. CSPC Membership and Terms of Reference 2015/16 (CSPC 15/16 1 H)

This paper was received for information.

11. Guidance for Senate Committee Members (CSPC 15/16 1 I)

This paper was received for information.

12. Student Discipline Committee Membership and Student Discipline Officers 2015/16 (CSPC 15/16 1 J)

This paper was approved, with the following amendment to the Student Discipline Committee 2015/16 membership list:

Vera Velhuizen was no longer a student at the University, therefore was not a student member of the Student Discipline Committee in 2015/16.

ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to publish new Student Discipline Committee membership and Student Discipline Officer lists for 2015/16 on the University website at:
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee>
<http://www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Discipline/StudentDisciplineOfficers.pdf>

13. Annual Senate Committees' Report 2014/15 (CSPC 15/16 1 K)

Mr Tom Ward introduced this item. This report was circulated to all Senate committees at the end of 2014/15, and it reported on the activity of the committees for 2014/15 and proposed ambitions for 2015/16 and beyond.

This report was received for information.

14. EUSA Priorities 2015/16 (CSPC 15/16 1 L)

Ms Imogen Wilson outlined EUSA priorities for 2015/16.

15. Electronic Business

a) Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

Mr Barry Neilson reported on the latest developments with regard to the Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement policy. CSPC members were thanked for approving the revised version of the policy by electronic business on 28 August 2015. The revised version was now available via the International Office at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/international-office/immigration/staff-guidance/staff-policy-documents>

b) CHSS Summer School Opt-Out from Taught Assessment Regulation 24 2015/16 (resit attempts)

A paper which requested approval for an opt-out to Taught Assessment Regulation 24 (2015/16) on resits for students taking our Summer School courses had been circulated by electronic business. The College of Humanities and Social Science had requested that the Summer School students (who were undertaking courses at levels 7-10) would be permitted one assessment attempt and one resit attempt. This paper was approved by CSPC on 15 July 2015, as presented.

16. Any Other Business

Professor Graham Reid updated colleagues on Study Abroad developments, with reference to the annual College Study Abroad Progression Committee meetings which had now been held in the College of Humanities and Social Science and the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. It was anticipated that further discussion would need to take place at CSPC in order to refine the processes for next year. This was expected to involve further discussion of the role of the Exchange Co-ordinator, and the role of the International Office more generally, particularly in terms of assistance with interpretation of the range of academic transcripts from abroad. Further discussion was also expected on pass/fail course and credit load matters.

Professor Alexis Grohmann referred to challenges that were currently being faced in the central area with regard to room bookings, which was having a significant impact on timetabling and the accommodation of the academic year in some areas. Other colleagues reported that the pressure to use space efficiently had also brought some challenges.

The convener requested that the College Deans provide an update at the next meeting of CSPC on any disruption to course delivery at the commencement of Semester 1.

ACTION: College Deans to provide an update at the November meeting of CSPC on any disruption to course delivery at the commencement of semester 1 as a result of pressure on room bookings.
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Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
24 September 2015