

H/02/27/02  
CSPC: 17.03.16

**Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)  
held on Thursday 17 March 2016 at 2.00p.m. in the Raeburn Room, Old College**

**Present:**

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Professor Graeme Reid (Vice-Convener) | Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSCE)                      |
| Mr Alan Brown                         | Associate Dean (Academic Progress), (CHSS)                |
| Dr Theresa McKinven                   | Head of PG Section (CHSS)                                 |
| Ms Joy Candlish                       | Head of Academic Affairs (CSCE)                           |
| Dr Sheila Lodge                       | Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)                    |
| Professor Helen Cameron               | Director, Centre for Medical Education (CMVM)             |
| Mr John Lowrey                        | Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CHSS)                      |
| Dr Antony Maciocia                    | Dean of Students (CSCE)                                   |
| Ms Imogen Wilson                      | Vice President Academic Affairs, EUSA                     |
| Dr Neil Lent                          | Institute for Academic Development                        |
| Mr Barry Neilson                      | Director of Student Systems                               |
| Dr Soledad Garcia-Ferrari             | ESALA, Edinburgh College of Art                           |
| Ms Anne-Marie Scott                   | IS Learning, Teaching and Web                             |
| Professor John Stewart                | Director, Biomedical Teaching Organisation                |
| Professor Susan Rhind                 | Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback              |
| Dr Adam Bunni                         | Head of Governance and Regulatory Team, Academic Services |

**In attendance:**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Ms Ailsa Taylor (Secretary) |   |
| Mr Tom Ward                 | Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services<br>Director, Academic Services |

**Apologies for absence:**

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Professor Alan Murray (Convener) | Assistant Principal, Academic Support    |
| Professor Lesley McAra           | Assistant Principal, Community Relations |
| Professor Allan Cumming          | Dean of Students (CMVM)                  |
| Dr Ewen Macpherson               | School of Engineering                    |

The meeting was convened by Professor Graeme Reid (Vice-Convener).

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 21 January 2016 were approved as an accurate record.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

### 3. Special Circumstances Task Group Update

Mr Tom Ward presented the paper, which provided details regarding the revised Special Circumstances policy, as well as a uniform policy on coursework extensions. The Special Circumstances policy included the notion of a sliding scale as regards requirements for evidence depending on the volume of credit affected. The policy aimed to respond to the difficulty faced by students in getting medical evidence to support special circumstances, and therefore allows students to self-certify in some cases; this was regarded as acceptable for most pieces of in-course assessment.

The Task Group had considered the issue of whether the decision regarding coursework extensions could be made by academic or administrative staff, noting that some teaching administrators had highlighted benefits to administrative involvement in this process. The Group had concluded that it was an academic decision, and should therefore be made by an academic member of staff, but that it could be mediated by teaching office staff.

The paper requested consideration from the Committee of three outstanding issues:

There were three outstanding issues in the paper which the Committee was asked for a decision on:

- The Committee agreed that loss of data or equipment should be kept on the list of circumstances unlikely to be accepted as special circumstances. The Committee did, however, note the need to make students more aware of their responsibilities in this regard.
- Following extensive discussion, the Committee agreed that Special Circumstances Committees should **not** have sight of information relating to students' marks in making a decision on Special Circumstances. The group noted, however, concerns from members that this prevents SCCs from determining whether a particular mark was an outlier.
- The Committee agreed that the maximum length of a coursework extension should be seven calendar days, and that late penalties would also apply for a maximum of seven calendar days.

The Committee further agreed that an option should be added to the list of those available to Boards of Examiners when dealing with special circumstances, stating that they may take no action at course level but refer the matter for consideration at a progression or award Board.

The Committee approved the paper with these changes.

|   |
|---|
| <b>ACTION: Academic Services to make the required changes to the Special Circumstances policy and regulation regarding coursework extensions and publish these.</b> |
|---|

### 4. Timetabling Policy and Guidance

Mr Scott Rosie presented this paper and asked the Committee to consider its recommendations. Currently, core teaching is only permitted on Wednesday afternoons in exceptional circumstances. The Convener noted that, due to constraints with timetabling, it is currently not possible to avoid teaching on Wednesday afternoons in all cases. The Committee noted that teaching on Wednesday afternoons is also common on the MBChB programme, and on teaching programmes.

In addressing the recommendations in the paper, the Committee agreed the following:

- 1. The Committee felt that it did not have sufficient information regarding involvement of PGT students in sporting activities on Wednesday afternoons to approve a change, exempting PGT teaching from the restrictions. The Committee also requested a breakdown by College of Wednesday afternoon teaching.
- 2. The Committee agreed that existing curriculum constraints prevent the policy on Wednesday afternoon teaching from being fully upheld.
- 3. The Committee agreed that core “whole class” teaching should be rescheduled to slots outside Wednesday afternoons wherever possible.
- 4. The Committee noted concerns raised by EUSA and EUSU, but agreed to defer any proposals for wider change pending the outcome of the forthcoming global timetable modelling project.

**Action: Mr Scott Rosie to provide a breakdown by College of Wednesday afternoon teaching.**

## 5. Proposals for MBChB from August 2016

Professor Neil Turner presented the proposals for restructuring of the MBChB medical curriculum to the Committee. The proposals included plans for students to gain a BMedSci Honours degree at the end of Year 3 of the new programme. The Committee noted concerns that students would be short of SCQF credit requirements for an Honours degree at the end of Year 3. This deficit could not be entirely addressed by Recognition of Prior Learning. The Committee agreed that this issue would need further consideration before the Committee could agree to it. The Committee also agreed that there should be further discussion between Medicine and partner Schools regarding the management of Year 3.

**Action: Relevant staff from CMVM to discuss options with Academic Services and report back to the next meeting of CSPC.**

**Action: Relevant staff from CMVM to discuss the management of Year 3 with partner Schools.**

The paper proposed that Years 4 to 6 of the new programme be offered as a single course of 180 credits for each year. This would allow the programme to reflect the programme outcomes stipulated by the General Medical Council. The Committee raised concerns that students who partially fail the year should be able to gain some credit for what they have passed.

The Committee agreed that one course per year would be acceptable, but that arrangements should be made to allow students who fail a year to gain partial credit.

The paper proposed that the courses each have 12 learning outcomes, as opposed to the usual maximum of five. Professor Turner explained that these would map more closely onto the GMC’s 16 programme outcomes. The Committee noted that the requirement for five learning outcomes comes from the SCQF, and that this does not preclude providing more detailed information in addition. The Committee agreed that it should be possible to present the relevant information within three learning outcomes.

**Action: CMVM to revise the learning outcomes in order to reduce the number to three.**

The Committee agreed that the Taught Programme Review of Medicine due in November 2017 should pay specific attention to the new structure, and especially the single course approach in Years 4 to 6.

**Action: CMVM and Academic Services to ensure that these issues are considered as part of the TPR.**

## **6. Zhejiang Task Group Remit and Membership**

The Committee approved the remit and membership of the Task Group.

## **7. Zhejiang University – University of Edinburgh Institute: academic management of jointly delivered dual award UG programmes**

Professor John Stewart presented the paper. The Committee noted that an updated version of some of the regulatory documentation had now been produced, which superseded that which had been provided. The newly established institute will have its own regulations for programmes. There are two areas where Chinese students have to do certain courses to get the degree (relating to physical and military training): these courses will not be compulsory for overseas students, and credit will not be awarded for them by the University of Edinburgh.

Tom Ward noted that the Task Group had met recently to discuss proposals regarding the academic governance and regulatory arrangements for the programmes, and tabled a paper setting out the Task Group's advice on these proposals. In general, the Task Group was content with the proposed arrangements, subject to the academic governance arrangements making it clear that key responsibilities held by Schools or Colleges in the University of Edinburgh would not be delegated to the Institute but instead would rest with the Deanery of Biomedical Sciences or the Colleges of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. For example, external examiners should be appointed by the College. There remained some minor issues with the regulations to be addressed.

The Committee supported the Task Group's advice on the paper, and agreed that it was content for that Task Group to take responsibility for finalising the documentation, and that this would only return to CSPC in the event that there were contentious issues.

**Action: Mr Tom Ward to support the Task Group in finalising the regulations, and address any issues with the existing UoE regulations.**

## **8. Assessment and Progression Tools (APT) Steering Group Recommendations**

Mr Barry Neilson presented the paper. The paper proposed that there be a single date by which all ratified course marks must be available in the student record in Semester 2. This would ensure that ratified marks were available to determine progression and award, offering benefits in terms of efficiency. The Committee noted reservations that the deadline would allow only two weeks between the end of examinations and the upload of ratified marks.

Ms Imogen Wilson explained that students were keen to have a clear date on which exam results would be communicated. The Committee noted that it was already policy that Schools should have webpages setting out the dates that they would publish results.

### **9. SMART System Contingency Plans**

Mr Barry Neilson presented the paper. The paper outlined contingency plans in the event that the SMART system currently used for recording of marks in some Schools failed. The Committee noted that the invocation of Taught Assessment Regulations 67 and 68 on “significant disruption” should only occur in catastrophic situations; Mr Neilson confirmed that this would only be invoked in the event of catastrophic system failure. The Committee was content to approve this approach.

### **10. Double Award PhDs**

Mr Tom Ward presented the paper. The Committee had approved the policy on Dual, Double and Multiple Awards 18 months ago. This had previously excluded PhD programmes.

The Committee approved the revision of the policy to include PhD programmes.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Action: Academic Services to amend and publish the revised policy; make any necessary revisions to the Postgraduate Degree Regulations.</b> |
|--|

### **11. Assessment Requirements for Excellence in European Doctoral Education Project (ExEDE) Joint PhD Candidates**

Mr Tom Ward presented the paper. The Committee approved the proposals regarding assessment procedures for ExEDE Joint PhD candidates.

### **12. College of Science and Engineering: New Collaboration Programme and Model – 1+1+1 Collaboration between School of Biological Sciences and Ningbo University**

Ms Joy Candlish presented the paper. The proposal was for a three-year Masters programme, with students spending one year in China, then one year taught masters, before taking this credit back for a further year in China before getting a further Masters degree. From Ningbo’s perspective this would be a dual award, but not from a University of Edinburgh perspective. The students would have to meet admissions criteria in order to enter UoE.

The Committee approved the model, and agreed that it should not be regarded as a dual award.

### **13. Senate Committee Planning 2016/17**

Mr Tom Ward presented the paper. The Committee agreed to send in ideas for priorities via email ahead of the next Committee meeting.

### **14. Visiting and Non-Graduating Student Policy and Procedure**

Mr Tom Ward presented the paper. There are currently two policies in existence covering these issues, which also include details about fees which are not within the control of CSPC.

The Committee approved the proposal to replace these two policies with one Visiting and Non-Graduating Student Policy and Procedure.

### **15. Moderation Policy Review**

Mr Tom Ward presented this item, and asked for the Committee's view regarding a review of moderation policy. The Committee agreed that it would be desirable to simplify the documentation, but that this should be discussed with relevant staff from the Colleges to determine whether the policy should be revised, or deleted. As such, it approved the broad approach set out in options (a) and (b), but with some additional College input into the process.

|   |
|---|
| <b>Action: Ms Sara Welham to discuss with relevant College staff.</b> |
|---|

### **16. Credit for Study Abroad Task Group Update**

Professor Graeme Reid presented the paper. The Group has been working on suggested new regulations covering Study Abroad, especially around volume and level of credit required. Further discussions were required regarding the role of the Exchange Coordinator.

It was proposed that the group be expanded to add further academic representation, and from the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

The Committee agreed the remit and membership of the group (subject to extending the academic representation) and noted the progress of the Group.

### **17. Regulations Review 2016/17**

Two regulations review meetings had been held. In general the most substantive changes relate to study abroad, but there were some issues which warranted further discussion: entitlement to resits and the regulations regarding exclusion through failure to progress; feedback turnaround times; retrospective authorised interruption of studies. There was also desire to discuss whether the Glossary should be pared down or deleted entirely. The Committee agreed that these issues would be discussed at the April meeting of CSPC or by correspondence.

The Committee noted concerns about the difficulty of harmonizing between PGT and PGR issues in the Postgraduate Degree Regulations.

The Committee agreed to replace references in the Regulations to "he", "she" etc. to "they".

### **18. Academic Year Dates**

The Committee noted the progress of the Academic Year Working Group. Proposals were being discussed regarding moving Semester 1 exams to January. Professor Graeme Reid explained that there would be extensive consultation on any final proposals.

### **19. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report**

The Committee noted the paper.

### **20. Final ELIR Reports**

The Committee was invited to read the final ELIR reports.

### **21. Strategic Plan Consultation**

The Committee was invited to contribute to the consultation regarding the new University Strategic Plan.

### **22. Any Other Business**

There was no further business.

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services, 24 March 2016