College of Science and Engineering
College Learning and Teaching Committee
Minutes of meeting held on 17\(^{th}\) February 2015

Present
Prof G Reid Convener, Dean of Learning and Teaching
Dr P Bailey School of Chemistry
Dr T Bailey School of Mathematics
Dr M Gallagher School of Biological Sciences
Prof J Hardy School of Physics & Astronomy
Ms L Henderson Academic Affairs Officer
Dr G McDougall Dean of Quality Assurance
Prof C Stirling School of Informatics
Mr S Warrington School of Engineering
Dr D Williams Head of Academic Affairs (Secretary)
Prof W Williams School of GeoSciences

1. **APOLOGIES**

   Apologies were received from Prof Alan Murray (Dean of Students).

2. **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

   The minutes of the meeting held on 20\(^{th}\) January 2015 were APPROVED, subject to the following amendment.

   (i) Further to the report on comments from External Examiners (Paper C), an External Examiner had questioned the University policy of not requiring second marking on 20 credit courses and whether this was consistent with QAA guidance; the Committee had reviewed the Assessment Regulations and UK Quality Code B6 and considered that the University practice was consistent with those requirements and agreed not to pursue a change in policy on second marking;
   (ii) The wording in Section 10.1 should be amended to: “The Progression Board would be responsible for initiating a process for meetings with students who have not met progression criteria…”.

2.1 **Matters Arising**

2.1.1 **Item 2 – Calculator policy**

   A paper on this issue had been drafted and would be discussed at the March meeting.

2.1.2 **Item 2 - Clickers**

   Noted:
   (i) Members felt that although University Hardship Funds may be available for UK students to purchase mobile devices for this purpose, it was not an appropriate use of such funds;
   (ii) It may therefore require the relevant School or College to make funds available to a student to purchase an appropriate mobile device where necessary;
   (iii) The School that owns the programme on which the student is enrolled should be responsible for providing such funding;
(iv) There therefore needs to be a consistent and robust institutional policy with clear criteria for a student to qualify for support; the Committee may wish to propose such a policy.
(v) There had been a demonstration of Top Hat software through which students can link with their own mobile devices.

### 2.1.3 Item 2 - Examination timetable for Semester 1 2015 and 2016

Noted:
(i) Guidance had been issued to Schools stating that the expectation was that Schools would make every attempt to organise their provision in order to avoid teaching activity towards the end of week 11 in 2015, on Thursday 3 and Friday 4 December, thus maximising the revision period for students in December 2015. This was only to be done if it was understood that there would be no detrimental effect on the quality of the overall teaching and learning provision. If, by exception, any Schools would find it impossible to organise any specific courses in this way, they were to make contact with Craig Shearer before the start of the academic year in September 2015 to notify him of the course names/codes involved. An attempt would then be made to schedule these examinations in the latter part of the semester 1 examination diet in December 2015 if at all possible.
(ii) The representative for Chemistry indicated that most courses in the School would find it difficult to meet the above criteria, and also queried whether laboratory classes could be scheduled in week 11 for those courses without December exams.

**Action:** DMW

### 2.1.4 Item 10 – Undergraduate Progression Boards

Received: Recommendations of the Undergraduate Progression Boards Task Group (sent separately to members).

Noted:
(i) The Undergraduate Progression Boards would come into effect in academic year 2015/16, but Schools were encouraged to review their processes this year in preparation for the introduction of the Boards next year; upload of progression decisions into EUCLID is being implemented for academic year 2014/15;
(ii) The Committee expressed the following concerns:
- the tight timescale for progression decisions following the August exam diet;
- a lack of clarity on the role of the External Examiner at the Board, and what is meant by “oversight” and “remotely;
- that there would be additional workload on Teaching Offices;
(iii) The deadline for progression decisions to be entered into EUCLID should be 26 June, not 19 June (section 15, page 3);
(iv) CSPC deadlines for upload of course and progression outcomes should be based on advice from Schools and Colleges, not just Student Systems (section 14, page 2).

**Action:** Phil & Graeme to take comments to the next meeting of the Working Group.
3. **CONVENERS REPORT**

3.1 **Enhanced Course descriptors exemplars**

Noted:

(i) Most Schools had produced at least one exemplar;
(ii) Engineering are working with the IAD on a workshop for staff on defining appropriate learning outcomes;
(iii) The SCQF level descriptors are useful guidance for drafting learning outcomes.

4. **STUDENT LEAD INDIVIDUALLY CREATED COURSES (SLICC)**

Received: Draft guidance from Academic Services on the proposed arrangements for the pilot of SLICCs and a draft level 10 Course Descriptor.

4.1 Noted: The following terms were noted in the document:

(i) Each participating School will be asked to produce a SLICC course in CCAM “Self Design Learning” and seek approval through their Board of Studies; the pilot courses will run for academic year 2014/15; (section 3.2; 3.1)

(ii) For the pilot participating Schools would not allow students to take SLICCs with the intention of making up a known shortfall in credits; for non-honours students approval may be given by the PT, for honours students approval must be given by the College; (section 3.1)

(iii) If a student takes a pilot SLICC during an honours year, it would not count towards the calculation of a degree classification or as part of any award of credit on aggregate and could not be substituted for any other honours courses that a student is taking. (section 3.1)

4.2 Noted:

(i) The following points were noted about the pilot course in GeoSciences
- the course has been given approval by the School Board of Studies;
- the course is part of the 120 credit honours programme, i.e. not an additional course, so does not require a College concession;
- the School has selected 3 strong students, but for this pilot if they fail then the course will be null-rated (subject to approval by CSPC).

(ii) The course above does not seem to be consistent with the guidance document in that it is an honours course but not additional; and it would appear that if a student fails the course in the final year, they would not be able to graduate in June as their assessment will not be complete and they may not have sufficient credits.

4.3 Noted: The following points were noted in discussion:

(i) It is essential that all SLICCs are approved through a formal School Board of Studies and that minutes of that Board are recorded; and that students meet the required criteria and have the required PT or College approval to take the course;

(ii) There need to be realistic expectations by students and staff on the amount of supervision (especially in a laboratory environment) and the workload on members of staff for supervision and assessment;
(iii) It is unclear how School will become aware of those students who may have expressed an interest in SLICCs by attendance at the EUSA student briefing event;
(iv) SLICCs may provide a good opportunity for very able students, normally at honours level, to take an additional course tailored to their interests

5. COLLEGE POLICY ON LATE ARRIVALS

Noted:
(i) Because of an increasing number of problems in implementing the current College policy on late arrival of students for the beginning of the academic year, the Committee had agreed to a review of the policy;
(ii) The original policy had been implemented in 2009/10, in response to the timescale for issuing a CAS to Tier 4 applicants;
(iii) Now that the timescales are more consistent, there is less of a requirement to allow flexibility beyond the 2 weeks permitted in the Degree Regulations;

Resolved:
(i) The Academic Affairs Officer should draft a policy with the following terms:
   - all Schools should require all taught students to arrive within two weeks of the start of the academic year – after discussion, this was interpreted as having Attendance Confirmed in EUCLID by noon on the Friday of the second week of teaching;
   - it is the student's responsibility to ensure they arrive by this deadline - if there are unexpected problems with a visa which were not a direct consequence of an action by the student, then the relevant School may seek a concession from the Dean to extend the deadline
   - there should be a deadline for the issuing of offers, such that students have a realistic prospect of arriving at the University by the specified deadline.
(ii) The draft policy should be considered by the Committee and, if endorsed, then forwarded to CSMC for approval because of the resource implications.

Action: Academic Affairs Officer to liaise with the Admission Office on the timescale for offers, then draft a policy for a future meeting. Action LMH

6. COLLEGE STUDY ABROAD PROGRESSION BOARD

Because University guidance on the membership and operation of College Study Abroad Progression Boards is imminent, discussion on this topic was deferred to the next meeting.

7. REPORTS FROM SENATE COMMITTEES / WORKING GROUPS
Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC), 28 January 2015

Noted:

(i) Learning Analytics
This project is exploring gathering learning analytics for centrally-managed Virtual Learning Environments. There was a useful discussion of the issues and SLTC will discuss further when the new Chair of Learning Analytics is in post.
(ii) Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)
A proposal to extend the range of student activities included in HEAR to also include committee members of Volunteering Groups and Council members was not supported and a decision deferred.

Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)

Noted:

(i) The discussions on the Examination timetable for Semester 1 2015 and 2016; extended course descriptors and SLICCS had been covered above;
(ii) There is to be a consultation on what guidance and support could be offered to assist Schools to collect data on feedback times; members indicated that they would not wish to see another University IT system developed for this purpose.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), 5 February 2015

Noted:

(i) QAA consultations: There were a range of benchmark statements on which the University had responded to consultations;
(ii) Student Representation for Distance Learners: There were discussions on how class representatives would communicate with distance learners, and some concern was expressed about the dissemination of email lists;
(iii) a briefing of Knowledge Strategy Committee included:
   - a proposal for a substantial investment in the IT infrastructure of the University;
   - enhancements to the Timetabling system are continuing;
   - a proposal for an increase in funding for Library Committee.

8. AOB

(i) The representative for GeoSciences raised concern about the balance of number of undergraduate student admissions between Geography and Earth Science programmes; he would raise this concern with the Admissions Office.

(ii) The representative for Mathematics raised concern about the potential for the misuse of smart watches in examinations; the Academic Affairs Officer had raised this with concern with Student Administration and would also raise it with Academic Services during the annual review of regulations and report to the next meeting. Action: Academic Affairs Officer LMH