1 APOLOGIES

Noted:

Apologies were received from Prof J Ansell (Dean of Undergraduate Studies HSS), John Martin (Deputy Head of College), Prof S Bates (Physics & Astronomy) James Garforth (student representative)

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Considered

The minutes of the Learning & Teaching Committee held on 18th November 2008 (Paper A)

Resolved

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment to item 4 TPRs.

2.1 MATTERS ARISING

- TPRs
  The Associate Dean for QA was preparing a paper on possible different groupings for TPRs and was currently consulting with Schools

- Alignment of Learning Outcomes at different levels
  The Convenor had submitted a paper to SUGSC summarising the College’s progress to date. This paper had been well received.
Immigration Requirements
The concerns expressed by the CL&TC had been reported to the Head of College who had convened a meeting of School representatives and the College Representative for the University’s working Group.

- VLE
This is being considered during the current planning round discussions

Board of Examiners Model
The School of Chemistry confirmed that the Board of Examiners were fully compliant with the new guidelines.

3 ACADEMIC CONDUCT/PLAGIARISM

Received

A presentation from Dr Ewen Macpherson, College Academic Misconduct Officer

Dr Macpherson explained that the University is currently working towards harmonising procedures across all three Colleges. It had been agreed that:

- All suspected misconduct cases, including poor scholarship, MUST be reported to the SAMO.
- Cases for undergraduate 1st and 2nd years should be dealt with at SAMO/School level.
- A SAMO can not apply a penalty reduction of marks. If the SAMO concludes that a penalty is required then they should refer the case to the CAMO.
- For all cases the marker is required to provide a provisional mark for the academic merit of the work as if the plagiarism had been removed. It is possible for the academic mark to be reduced to zero if this is appropriate.
- In cases of collaboration, where two or more students have been deemed to have inappropriately collaborated on a piece of work a SAMO can determine to share the academic mark between the students eg 50%
- All suspected misconduct cases, judged by the SAMO to constitute plagiarism, at 3rd, 4th and 5th undergraduate years, should be referred to the CAMO
- All suspected misconduct cases at postgraduate masters level should be referred to the CAMO

Noted:

Summary guidelines had been developed. It was agreed that these were very useful and that they should be adopted with immediate effect. The College Office would circulate and post on the web.
EUCLID

Considered: A discussion document on the status of College preparation for EUCLID and some issues for the College to decide on the curriculum and assessment elements. (Paper C)

Note: Mike Calvert and Kevin Roberts from the EUCLID team; and Rachael Atherton (School of Geosciences), Linda Grieves (School of Physics), Karen Harris (School of Chemistry), Ann Haley (School of Biological Sciences) and Neil McGillivary (School of Informatics), attended for this item.

EUCLID timetable

Reported:

(i) Mike Calvert reported that a statement had just been issued that afternoon on behalf of the EUCLID Project Board announcing the extension of the EUCLID project for a further 12 months. This provides the opportunity to:
   (a) Review the University's IT infrastructure to support performance, resilience and future capacity matters;
   (b) Further improve the usability of EUCLID and address priority process and system enhancements and issues for Admissions;
   (c) Revisit the timings and approach for the next phases of the project including Curriculum Management, Assessment and Student Administration.

(ii) Mike Calvert reported that the EUCLID project teams needed to do some re-planning to make best use of the decision, but the likely implications are that:
   (a) Visiting Students and Other Admissions will go ahead as scheduled, with online course selection for Visiting Students to go ahead in mid-March;
   (b) Course creation and maintenance (CCAM) will now go ahead along with programme creation and maintenance (PCAM) in November, for 2010/11 courses;
   (c) The DPT element of the Curriculum Management project will go ahead as planned with EUCLID being the source of DPT data for 2009/10;
   (d) The implementation of the Assessment and Student Administration elements will be delayed by one year, i.e. until the start of 2010/11, and the current student record systems (DACS, PGDB) will continue until then.

He emphasised that the EUCLID team were keen to maintain the momentum of EUCLID development and would seek to continue with the requirements definition and build phases broadly according to the current schedule, but the extension would allow more time for the testing and training phases.
- **Online Course Self Selection**

**Considered:** There was a discussion on the College preference for date when Online Course Self Selection (OCSS) is opened for student self-enrolment. The School representatives considered that April was too early (because it would not be possible to incorporate feedback from the assessment processes into course amendments) and that August was too late (because it left insufficient time for preparations before the start of the Semester).

**Resolved:** There was the basis of a consensus for this functionality to be opened in June. It was felt that it was not feasible for the University to operate more than one date for online course selection across the University as this would be unfair to students in those Colleges not participating at the earliest date.

**Action:** David Williams formally to inform EUCLID of these views

- **User support**

**Noted:** The importance of service levels and support, particularly performance issues; and that the EUCLID extension had implications for the operating environment (e.g. new identity management system).

**Resolved:** There is a need for a user-forum to promote communication between users, and linked to an issues log. This would allow the dissemination of functionality issues within the user community, and minimise the need or issues to be escalated to EUCLID-support.

**Action:** David Williams to raise this with the EUCLID team

- **College participation**

**Noted:** There was a discussion on the best way for EUCLID to engage the wider College community, particularly academic staff. It was suggested that EUCLID give a presentation for each School (in Semester 2, between the end of teaching and the beginning of exams) on the issues and timescales.

**Resolved:**

**Action:** David Williams should liaise with EUCLID on this issue.

- **Compulsory courses / quotas / Honours options / preference ranking**

**Noted:** Students will be enrolled automatically on those courses specified in the DPT as compulsory. The Committee needs to consider the format of DPTs in relation to 'fixed options'. The Committee should discuss a couple of possible ways of reducing the amount of manual intervention necessary.
(a) make fixed options compulsory
Text can be added to these courses in the student selection view to say that these could exceptionally be changed off-line in consultation with the DoS.

(b) make them optional but highlight them as a separate option e.g.
Take course X or select 20 credits from this list (where X is the fixed option).
In this scenario text could also be added to course X in the student selection view to say something like 'it is strongly recommended that this option be chosen'.

- Level of input of "events" (e.g. practicals, tutorials) into the timetabling system

Noted: At the last Committee meeting it was felt that there needs to be a College (or University) policy for all to enter the required data if it is going to work and there was an action on members to respond to the Convenor with their views. A further concern arising from a briefing meeting to School representatives on 11 December 2008 was that input of all tutorial dates would generate clashes, even in cases where students need select only one of the tutorials. This may inhibit Schools’ scheduling tutorials. The Committee should have further discussion of this issue.

- Assessment contingency

Noted: Once the current student record is switched off (now delayed until July 2010) there will not be a contingency of reverting to local systems. It is therefore essential that there are clear milestones in the project plan that show the feasibility of full implementation by that date.

5. PGTQ AND PGTQ SUMMARIES

Received: PRES and PGTQ summaries for the College of Science and Engineering

- PGTC
low response rate was noted. this made it difficult to interpret the results in a meaningful manner. It was noted, as a concern, that the responses to questions 15 -21 regarding training needs indicated that the majority of the students who responded had not discussed their training needs or undertaken any training.

The timing of the questionnaire was designed to capture as many students as possible during the teaching period but this did not cover the period of dissertation study as well. It would also be helpful if there was some mechanism by which Schools could monitor the number of responses so that they could encourage students to complete the questionnaire.

Action: Lynda Henderson to pass these comments to SPGSC
Received: School 12 month response to the Quinquennial Review Panel Report.

Noted: The Convenor noted the good recommendations and the clear response of the School. The Director of Teaching reported that the timeliness of feedback to students had improved dramatically and they were continuing to work on ensuring consistency of quality of the feedback.

Resolved: to accept the report and confirm that the School had responded in a positive and constructive manner to the recommendations made.

7 CONVENOR’S REPORT

- College Ordinary and General Degree Regulations

Received: amended regulations for award of ordinary and general degrees. Some further amendments were agreed to ensure clarity over joint degrees

- Progression Harmonisation Working Group

Received: The report for APC was received. The working group was working to simplify the rules and procedures surrounding progression by integrating the current diverse practice into simple, uniform criteria.

- Careers in the Curriculum

The Careers service had provided all the events requested with attendance by students ranging from 100 to 0%. It was noted that the event was more successful where
  - there was a high level of staff involvement
  - session was held at a time that was within the normal timetable period;
  - attendance was poor where the event was ‘additional’

The Careers Service will be speaking to Schools in the near future.

8 NEW PROGRAMMES

Note: Geosciences Frontiers in Geophysics had now been approved

- MSc System Level Integration

Received: proposed revised programme to existing masters programme. The aim of the revamp was two fold; to update the technical content to reflect new technologies and to reverse current trend in decreasing numbers

Resolved: the revised programme was approved.
It was noted that the administration of this programme would transfer to Heriot-Watt University from September 2009.

9 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

- Appointing Tutors

It was noted that all casual appointments, including appointments of tutors and demonstrators were required to be placed before the Principal’s committee for approval. This was leading to considerable delays and severe operational problems for laboratories and practicals etc. the ability to appoint on a casual basis was critical to the education provision.

Resolved: Nick Hulton would take this forward with the Head of College.  

- Student Support Review

The publication of this report had been delayed due to illness of key staff. It should be noted that there may be increased financial constraints on full implementation in the short term.