College of Science and Engineering
College Learning and Teaching Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 20th November

Present: Dr N Hulton Convenor
Dr S Anderson School of Informatics
Dr S Bates School of Physics
Dr J Bond School of Biological Sciences
Dr T Bruce School of Engineering & electronics
Dr J Byatt-Smith School of Mathematics
Prof R Fisher PGT Adviser
Ms L M Henderson Academic Affairs Officer
Mr S McFadden Student Representative (UG)
Dr M Paton School of Chemistry
Dr S Rigby School of Geosciences
Dr D Williams Head of Academic Affairs
Ms L Burns Minutes Secretary

1. APOLOGIES

Noted:
Apologies were received from Prof J Ansell, Dean of Undergraduates, CHSS, Dr J Martin, Deputy Head of College and Mr S Martin, Student Representative UG.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Considered:
The minutes of the meeting of the College Learning & Teaching Committee held on 23rd October 2007. Paper A

Resolved
The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment at minute 4 to read that ‘Oral reports were given from the Schools of Biological Sciences, Informatics and Engineering & Electronics’.

2.1 Matters Arising

Noted:
i) Convenors Report (item 5 i) The Convenor stated that he had not as yet contacted John Power to congratulate on the JCMB studio project. This will be completed before the next meeting of the CL&T Committee. ACTION: NH

ii) National Students Survey (Item 6 ii) The Convenor confirmed that he had sent the revised guidelines to Heads of Schools for implementation.

3. REPORT ON THE LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY PROJECT

Note: Ms D Gachago, the E-Learning Advisor, attended for this item

Received:
An overview of the current situation regarding the ePortfolio from the E-learning Advisor, a copy of the associated paper is filed with these minutes.

Noted: The following points were noted in discussion:
• This was an entirely voluntary scheme, intended to empower the student to reflect on their learning process and build up a CV for future employers. Access to this space would be by invitation only.
• A small pilot scheme had been introduced to Biological Science. This study had indicated that the students had not utilized the ePortfolio over the whole semester. Therefore a strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the e-Portfolio to students was intended and further Schools invited to join the scheme.
The ePortfolio had been integrated into WebCT.
The plan was to roll the ePortfolio out to all students in the academic session 2008/09.
The success of the ePortfolio would depend on the level of support and input to the set-up by the School and how Schools integrated the ePortfolio into course delivery and assessment.
The ePortfolio would initially be populated with information and advice about study methods, self assessment and career development.
The portability of the ePortfolio was an issue – particularly with reference to working from a different VLE if the University changed its current systems.
It is important to consider whether ePortfolio will be compatible with EUCLID.
It was suggested that a calendar with links to a timetable would be a beneficial addition.
Evaluation would be carried out by questionnaire and feedback groups.
It was suggested that the ePortfolio could be useful for students undertaking degrees with placement years. The portfolio could be used to build up an academic profile of their work and skills to assist in placement selection.

Resolved:
The Convenor would ask Nora Mogey to contact Directors of Teaching to ascertain levels of support for this scheme. ACTION: NH

4. TEACHABILITY

Received:
Action plans from the Schools of Engineering & Electronics, GeoSciences, Mathematics and Physics. Papers B, C3, C4, C6 & C7

Noted:
Each School had undertaken a review on Teachability in the academic session 06/07 and had drawn up action plans.

Resolved:
i) That Schools that have not yet submitted their Action Plans should respond to David Williams in electronic form within the next two weeks; ACTION DoTs
ii) David Williams would then collate responses and circulate to members before the next meeting in January;
iii) the Teachability theme for the academic session 07/08 would be ‘Creating accessible course or programme design and structure for disabled students’. A meeting of the Working Group would be called later in December or January. ACTION: DW

5. COURSEWORK STICKERS

Considered:
A paper outlining the policy of coursework stickers for students with specific learning difficulties prepared by the Disability Office.

Noted: The following points were noted in discussion:
i) Students were not obliged to use these stickers on their coursework
ii) The current system needs more clarification regarding the difference the actions arising from stickers for coursework (do not alter marks) and exams (may not penalise poor spelling/grammar);
iii) It was suggested that an electronic tick box which was only accessible to those eligible students would be beneficial.

Resolved:
The Convenor would clarify the issue of electronic coursework with the Disability Office and report to the next meeting. ACTION NH

6. STRUCTURE OF BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Considered:
Papers on Assessment Administration Working Group Guidance setting out the thoughts for Phase 1 and College Proposals for Implementation from the Convenor. Paper D1 and Paper D2.
Noted: The following points were noted in discussion:

i) Board of Examiners were not thought to be working as beneficially as they might;

ii) The role of the External Examiner had changed over the years and was more focused on quality and standards;

iii) A guideline should be introduced giving models of good practice and setting goals, thus reducing the variety of practices within the University;

iv) The new structures would permit a better level of ‘look across’;

v) A better view of cohort performance.

Resolved:

i) The Convenor would put together a list of good practices and goals to feedback to the Working Group;

ii) A copy of the draft list would be forwarded to Committee Members for comment. ACTION: NH

7. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Considered:

A Closed Paper outlining EUSA / HSS suggested changes to the process of dealing with Special Circumstances throughout the University. Paper E

A Closed minute of this item is available in a separate document.

8. CHANGES TO COLLEGE ORDINARY DEGREE REGULATIONS

Considered:

Paper outlining proposed changes to the BSc Ordinary Biological Sciences Degree Regulations to take in the designated discipline of Psychology. Paper F

Noted: Ownership of this stream was transferred to CHSS and is an exception to the School pattern.

Resolved: The amendments to the College Regulations were AGREED.

9. NEW COURSES

Noted: Sustainable Energy Group Design Project (U03889) approved on Convenors Action

Considered:

New Courses to be approved - 3 New courses from Engineering and Electronics (Paper G)

Resolved: All new courses should be approved

10. NEW PROGRAMME

Considered:

New MSc in Carbon Management from the School of Geosciences (Paper H)

Noted: The fees for this programme have yet to be formally approved by the Fee Strategy Group.

Resolved: The new programme should be approved, subject to approval by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

11. CONCESSIONS

Considered:
Reports from School representatives on the procedures for the award of concessions.

Resolved:
The Convenor would draft a document further clarifying the current College guidelines.
ACTION: NH & DW

12. Off Campus Examining Policy

This item was deferred.

13. EUCLID

Received:
An oral report from the Convenor regarding current EUCLID activities

Noted:
i) There were likely to be delays in the introduction of the functionality for assessment, which will now have a phased introduction.
ii) This may require SMART to remain operational for the 2008/09 session.

14. Convenors Report

a) Power Outage

Noted:
The Convenor will issue guidance to staff and students concerning missed lectures due to power outages, such as the recent incident in George Square.
Secretary’s Note: this has now been sent

b) QAA Enhancement

Noted:
The College had been asked to give their response regarding actions arising from the recent ELIR review. The Convenor would circulate a draft paper to schools for comment. ACTION NH

c) Employability

Reported:
i) The Convenor reported that there had been University funding to promote employability issues in the curriculum and the Careers Service has engaged an Employability Consultant to start in January 2008. The College has previously established a Careers in the Curriculum initiative to integrate employability issues within course material but the take-up in schools has been patchy.

ii) The Convenor considered that the University should have a list of graduate attributes and skills. In the University context this could link with QAA benchmarks and discussions on branding but a concise explanation of the benefits of such a list is needed. The Convenor will seek the opinions of staff. ACTION NH

15. Any Other Competent Business

There was no other competent business

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on 22nd January 2008 at 2.00 p.m. in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building.