College of Science and Engineering
College Learning & Teaching Committee
Minutes of meeting held on 19 November 2013

Present
Prof G Reid          Convener, Dean of Learning and Teaching
Dr P Camp           School of Chemistry
Dr M Gallagher      School of Biological Sciences
Dr L Haworth        School of Engineering
Ms L Henderson      Academic Affairs Officer
Dr W Hossack        School of Physics & Astronomy
Prof A Murray       Dean of Students
Dr A Simpson        School of Informatics
Dr D Williams       Head of Academic Affairs
Prof W Williams     School of GeoSciences

In attendance:
Mrs L Archibald     Minutes Secretary

1. **APOLOGIES**

   Apologies were received from Phil Bailey (School of Chemistry), Gordon McDougall (Dean of Quality Assurance), Michael Rovatsos (School of Informatics), Stephen Warrington (School of Engineering), James Ferguson (Lead Student Representative)

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

   The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2013 were approved.

2.1 **MATTERS ARISING**

   i) **Curriculum for Excellence**

   Directors of Teaching had been asked to suggest suitable teachers in their disciplines who may be useful contacts for curriculum for excellence. Members should contact the Convener with any recommendations.

   ii) **Turnitin Workshop**

   The College Office would contact Schools with information on this event as soon as possible.

   iii) **Innovation & Enterprise for Scientists and Engineers Course**

   The Convener would meet soon with Stephen Warrington to discuss this. It was hoped that a potential course organiser would be identified to have this course up and running next year. Any Director of Teaching interested in becoming involved should contact the Convener.

   iv) **Visiting Students**

   The Committee had discussed whether Schools should standardise
procedures for providing resits for visiting students. David Williams had contacted Curriculum and Student Progression Committee asking for clarity on this issue. No response had been received as yet and the item would be raised again at the next CSPC. In the meantime, Schools were asked to continue their current practice.

v) Declaration of Own Work Form

Committee had responded to the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) expressing its view that it was felt unnecessary for all assessment to include this form.

The CAMO had accepted this view and proposed a policy that all online submissions should contain a modified version of this form in the paperwork. A form should be completed for major written submissions or submitted at least once per course.

The Committee asked that the CAMO investigate ways of implementing this online procedure with University’s other Academic Misconduct Officers. Provided a suitable procedure could be found, this proposal was agreed.

3. TPR REPORTS – EARTH SCIENCES

The Director of Teaching and Director of Quality Assurance for the School of GeoSciences spoke to the papers TPR Report (Paper B1) and School Report (Paper B2).

It was noted:
- While the TPR was constructive, it had focused mainly on generic issues such as feedback policy and health and safety with less emphasis on School-specific areas.
- In all cases, changes recommended in the report have been completed or are scheduled to take place.
- Commendations were received by the School including their study patterns and coherent programmes.
- The Report was a valuable experience but was thought to be very time consuming, particularly for administrative staff.
- The School of GeoSciences currently have three separate TPRs. It was thought that a combined TPR incorporating all sections of GeoSciences would be a very positive step. Gordon McDougall would be asked to contact the School to negotiate possible schedules for a joint TPR.
- It was suggested that any exemplary performance within teams, or of individuals, should be emphasised in these Reports. Lynda Henderson would discuss this issue with Tina Harrison to suggest the inclusion of highlighting best practice within the TPR Guidelines.

4. CONVENERS REPORT

i) Timetabling

The Timetabling system did not deliver the anticipated performance in
September. The priority for the current year will be to consolidate the system to ensure reliability, rather than focus on enhancements.

It is hoped that the new version of software will be delayed until semester 2. It is likely that the system will be down for a whole day but advance warning of its installation will be given to Schools.

The College must have a clear list of what is essential from this system. It is hoped that funding will be made available for these elements through the normal planning round.

ii) Meetings with Schools

The Convener had held constructive meetings with representatives from Schools. Items included learning and teaching, assessment and aimed improvements in NSS results.

iii) Assessment

Schools should continue to give thought to the methods and rationale for assessment patterns at programme level.

Biological Sciences are currently engaged in a project called LEAF which uses well proven methodology (TESTA) to analyse assessment. It is expected that if successful this project will be rolled out to all schools. GeoSciences have already chosen to engage with this approach in the current academic year.

Sue Rigby has asked the College to advise of any resources needed to develop this project. It was thought that this could be used for the research phase (collecting and analysing data, interviewing staff and student focus groups) or implementing change as a result of findings. Ian Pirie was currently organising a workshop to look at Crowdmark software. Alan Murray would forward the link to members for information.

5. INNOVATIVE LEARNING WEEK

This event had been initially planned for a three year trial. This year will be its final trial phase before review. The longer term future of ILW is not known as yet, although it is envisaged that this will continue in some form.

It is important for the College to share experiences and monitor results. It is accepted that there has been mixed success with this event and Schools were asked to give a brief overview of their plans for this year.

Informatics

The School had found that in the past year, large organised events had been very successful. This year, it planned to focus on larger events organised by staff with a few organised by students themselves. Some events planned included:

- A member of staff is organising a smart data hack for up to 120
- A workshop on preparing for interviews for programming jobs for up to 100
- A student led treasure hunt
- A workshop on teaching students to problem-solve from a student perspective.

**Engineering**

Engineering have a programme of events for ILW which includes some past successes. These include:

- Working on a Railway and other small resource-based activities
- An Innovation Grant application had been successful and it was intended to have an event for 20-25 student to create a ‘Bio-Bot’
- Staff within Engineering have also been encouraged to develop new activities.

**Mathematics**

The School were hoping to organise various events this year including:

- Owntool event – where participants will build a 4-5 dimensional model
- The Alumni Careers event was successful last year with companies carrying out mock interviews for students. A similar session was planned for this year.

**Physics & Astronomy**

Physics and Astronomy are planning a schedule similar to that of last year which will include
- Group and team presentations
- A large keynote lecture with a reception beforehand
- A BB cluster challenge using Raspberry Pi was intended
- Employability presentations with internal bodies.

**Geosciences**

This week was often used for fieldwork courses and a similar plan was intended to that of the previous year. This will include:
- Mock interviews
- Careers events
- Visits to observatories

**Chemistry**

Planned events include:
- A Chemistry Conference over 3 days.
- Poster sessions
- Presentations on IT skills
- Technical Interviews
- A performance from a theatre group and a Q&A session with performers
- Recent Chemistry graduate presentations for final year students
- Visiting guest speaker to talk about the history of chemistry in Edinburgh
Biological Sciences

A mixture of events were planned including:

- Fife Trip
- Careers trip for Biologists with external speakers
- PG feedback session
- Visit to Firbush
- Project planning with IAD
- Outreach activity (Oriental Express)
- Scottish Innovation and Enterprise morning
- Avoiding Plagiarism Session
- Student led chess tournament, debate and ‘build your own microscope session’

While events organised during Innovative Learning Week were thought to be of great benefit, pressure had also been placed on Schools to organise more and improved group meetings. The aims of these Group Meetings overlap somewhat with the intention of Innovative Learning Week.

Contact could be made with Sue Rigby to seek a more coordinated link between University student innovations via the Student Enhancement Project Board.

Innovative Learning Week itself arose in response to the asymmetric structure of the academic year. The current structure came into being 10 years ago and many issues such as time constraints on feedback and coursework timing are a direct consequence of having short semesters.

6. Widening participation

The Deans of Science and Engineering for Scotland are engaged in an ongoing project to review procedures within different institutions. This Group intend to present to the Scottish government a unified view of what Higher Education want and what we are capable of delivering.

A challenge remains with the articulation between Colleges and University. The Government foresee HND students starting at University from level 9. It was thought by the University of Edinburgh, and other institutions, that the transition from this level without specific preparation may prove extremely problematic for students.

The College is engaging with the Sutton Trust Summer School which will focus on widening participation. CHSS had operated a similar scheme the previous year which had been extremely successful.

Difficulties may exist in identifying students who require assistance with transference. It is important that consideration be given to plans in place to increase access to university for all potential students.

Outreach activities should be well targeted and both encourage students who would not normally come to University and enhance their
preparation.

Members were asked to give thought to any activities planned within their School or suggestions for College initiatives in this area. This item will be discussed again at the next meeting.

7. UPDATE OF COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Members were circulated a document which included the updated links for College Policy and Procedures (Paper C).

Wikis have been created from the webpage which will help with navigation and both standardise and simplify usage. The document contains all regulations and contains hyperlinks to relevant policies.

Members who have any comments on this document should contact David Williams as soon as possible.

It was thought that this document would be useful for Personal Tutors and the College Office would send copy to Senior Personal Tutors for circulation.

8. REPORTS FROM SENATE COMMITTEES

Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

- A paper was received regarding informing students on their final summative results. Where a student has failed a programme of study, they should be informed privately in person before results are released publicly. Schools are strictly forbidden from posting lists and the communication of results would be through MyEd only.

- Students with reassessments should be provided with academic feedback, support and guidance to help with revision. Further information was required on this issue and David Williams would report back to Committee after the next CSPC meeting.

Senate Learning and Teaching

- A paper was received asking whether, in light of the defined role of Director of Quality, the College would be in favour of repeating this process for the Director of Teaching.

- It was thought that as variances exist between the volume of students and School directives, it may constrain the Head of School with the assignment of tasks but there were no strong feelings against the proposal so long as the description of the role was suitably flexible.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Disability and Examinations

Clarification was sought regarding the agreement of learning profiles for students between the Disability Service and Registry.
While the support deadline for students was 1st November, it could be unclear to students whether this deadline was for contact with the Disability Service or for learning profiles to be agreed and received at Registry.

Potentially a student who requires a learning profile may not allow enough time for agreement with the Disability Service before examination timetables were set through Registry.

It was noted that the deadline given was for agreement and not contact with the Disability Service. Students should be made aware that contact should be made between 3-6 weeks before the deadline.

When a Learning Profile agreement is made ahead of the deadline, the University are obligated to implement this. If any agreement made ahead of the deadline is not implemented, this may be considered through special circumstances. Where a Learning Profile has been agreed after this deadline and therefore not implemented, this would not be considered as special circumstances.

The College Office agreed to discuss the wording of the message to students with the Student Disability Service.

**Dissertation Marking**

The Convener clarified that in the event of disagreement between two markers, a third marker may be employed.

The role of External Examiner is to oversee the process.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

21st January 2013 @ 2.00 p.m.