

# **University Teaching Committee [Confirmed] Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 December 2023, 09.30-12.30, in HG/21, Heslington Hall and via video conference.**

## **Meeting Attendance**

Members present:

Tracy Lightfoot, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Students)  
Steve King, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Students)  
Jill Webb, Associate Dean for Teaching, Learning and Students (Social Sciences)  
Claire Hughes, Associate Dean for Teaching, Learning and Students (Sciences)  
Tom Cantrell, Associate Dean for Teaching, Learning and Students (Arts and Humanities)  
Wayne Campbell, Academic Registrar  
Patrick Gallimore, Chair of Standing Committee on Assessment  
Meely Doherty, YUSU Academic Officer  
Cytherea Shen, GSA Vice-President, Academic  
Tom Banham, Director of Student Administration and Academic Affairs  
Jen Wotherspoon, Deputy Director, Student Services  
Duncan Jackson, Head of Academic Quality and Development  
Jan Ball-Smith, Head of Apprenticeships and Inclusive Education  
Kirsty Lingstadt, Director of Library, Archives and Learning Services  
Louise Thurston, Associate Director for Careers and Employability  
Petros Kefalas, Vice-President Learning and Teaching, CITY College  
Michelle Alexander (representing Arts and Humanities)  
Michael Bate (representing Sciences)  
Simon O'Keefe (representing Sciences)  
Claire Ball-Smith (representing Social Sciences)  
Scott Slorach (representing Social Sciences)  
Matthew Perry (co-opted member, Director of the International Pathway College)  
Lisa O'Malley (co-opted member, School for Business and Society)

In attendance:

David Gent, Academic Quality (Secretary)  
Claire Pinder, Academic Quality (incoming Assistant Secretary)  
Daisy Bowen, Special Cases Manager (for M23-24/73-75 only)  
Stephen Gow, Academic Quality (for M23-24/76-77 only)

Apologies: Richard McClary, Zoe Devlin, Paul Bishop.

## **Section 1: Standing Items**

### **Welcome**

23-24/60 The Chair welcomed Louise Thurston to the Committee as the new Careers representative. The Chair thanked David Gent for his service as Secretary to the Committee ahead of a move to a new role, noting that henceforth Duncan Jackson would serve as Secretary with Claire Pinder as Assistant Secretary.

The Committee expressed its gratitude to Wayne Campbell, Academic Registrar, for his service to the University ahead of his retirement, noting his extensive contributions on areas such as support for students; teaching and learning initiatives; cost of living; and strategic change, alongside leadership of Student and Academic Services.

### **Declarations of interest in items on the agenda [oral report]**

23-24/61 Members were invited to declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to the business of the meeting; none were declared.

### **Unreserved minutes of the last meeting held on 9 November 2023 [UTC.23-24/37, Open]**

23-24/62 The Committee **confirmed** the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 as an accurate record.

### **Action tracking and matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda [UTC.23-24/38, Open]**

23-24/63 The Committee **received** a log of progress on actions arising from the minutes. It was further **reported** that:

1. The incoming Secretary and Assistant Secretary intended to revise the format of the action log such that this was more easily accessible and editable.
2. A further update had been provided on the uptake of training on Turnitin Feedback Studio (*M23-24/58 refers*). There were eight training videos (totalling 30 minutes), with the video having the maximum number of views having been watched 398 times. There were fortnightly training events for marking online. Daily drop-in sessions had been scheduled between 15 February 2024 and 23 February 2024.

### **Chair's report [oral report]**

23-24/64 The Chair's oral **report** comprised the following points:

1. The Chair thanked all members of staff for their work during the year, noting that this work had supported a range of significant strategic changes. The Chair also specifically thanked Patrick Gallimore, Jen Wotherspoon and the Progression and Awards team for their work on the Marking and Assessment Boycott.
2. UTC had approved a new BSc in Nursing degree apprenticeship programme via a joint UTC and Nursing and Midwifery Council approval event held on 27 November 2023. A formal minute of this event would be submitted to UTC's next meeting. Thanks were expressed to Steve King, Claire Hughes, Jan Ball-Smith and David Gent for their participation in the approval panel and to Lisa O'Malley for earlier work to review the programme.
3. OFSTED had visited the University to review apprenticeship programmes, with a successful outcome. The OFSTED inspectors had indicated that the University had achieved an overall outcome of Good, identifying some outstanding elements. They had identified particular strengths in governance, noting the scrutiny provided by the Apprenticeship Monitoring Board; the quality of teaching and learning; and employers' satisfaction with provision. This outcome was **confidential** to members of UTC and under embargo until the report was published. The Chair expressed thanks to the Apprenticeships Team, People and Organisational Development; the Department of Health Sciences; Steve King as Chair of Apprenticeship Monitoring Board and Claire Ball-Smith for work underpinning this outcome.
4. Professors Jill Webb, Claire Ball-Smith and Steve King had all given inaugural lectures (the former two lectures being available [online](#)). The lectures had collectively highlighted the importance of supporting colleagues involved in teaching and learning in their professional

development, alongside the utility of showcasing teaching and learning best practice.

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5. The planned presentations on Strategy relating to online and distance learning programmes and on York Online provision (items 2.2 and 2.3 in the agenda) had been deferred to the next meeting due to staff illness.

### **Student Representatives' reports [oral reports]**

23-24/65 Meely Doherty, the YUSU Academic Officer, **reported** that:

1. YUSU had launched a campaign to reverse recent changes to Government policy on the ability of international students to bring spouses and dependents to the UK.
2. The Academic Officer had created an '[Academic Officer Box](#)' system to disseminate feedback and queries to departmental student representatives, for use where students were unaware who their representative was. This could also be used by staff.
3. Course representatives in two departments had raised concerns around free speech, relating to the ongoing situation in Israel / Gaza and around decolonisation. It was **observed** that:
  - a. The University strongly upheld the right to freedom of speech within the law, including in relation to contentious issues, noting the importance of the University's community treating each other with mutual respect.
  - b. The University's web-information and [guidance](#) relating to Israel / Gaza had recently been updated. This referenced guidance developed by the Inclusive Education Team around conversations on sensitive topics in seminars. The Inclusive Education team had also developed resources around decolonising and diversifying the curriculum.
  - c. Associate Deans of Faculty (Teaching, Learning and Students) offered to liaise with Faculty Representatives around this issue in advance of the next FLTGs.

**Action: Meely Doherty - YUSU Academic Officer -  
(to pass message to Faculty representatives)**

23-24/66 Cytherea Shen, the GSA Vice-President (Academic), further **reported** that:

1. The guidance around academic misconduct and Artificial Intelligence, approved by UTC at its last meeting, had been helpful to the GSA.
2. The GSA intended to raise awareness of the Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment policy and procedure.

## **Section 2: Strategic Development, Performance Monitoring and Student Insight– items for consideration and/or decision**

### **Education that Empowers Strategy [UTC.23-24/39, Open]**

23-24/67 The Committee **received** a presentation from the Chair [UTC.23-24/39] on the [Education that Empowers](#) aspect of the University Strategy. It was noted that not all elements of the Strategy were intended to apply to every Department/School/programme. The three Faculty Associate Deans (Teaching, Learning and Students) further **reported** on Faculty Strategies and priorities [UTC.23-24/49-51, *Category 2 papers, refer*], noting that these had been developed collectively and in light of the University Strategy.

23-24/68 The Committee had a wide-ranging discussion on the Strategy. Key points **observed** included:

1. The role of external organisations in supporting the Strategy, including both in advice to the University and in providing placements. There would be utility in addressing barriers to

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students' access to placements (including non-academic barriers such as accommodation), drawing on existing resources and experience.

2. The need to support transition into higher education and community building across all forms of provision and with respect to the differing needs of different groups of students.
3. That it was important that an implementation plan was developed to support the Strategy. This would direct resources and effort in professional services and support operational delivery of the Strategy. Further consideration would be given to developing an implementation plan for SAAS, noting the need to link this to Faculty Strategy implementation plans.

**Action: Tracy Lightfoot, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Students) and Tom Banham, Director of Student Administration and Academic Affairs to discuss implications for SAAS**

4. The implementation of the Strategy relied on the engagement and ideas of academic departments / Schools. The Chair would consider how best to achieve such engagement with the Associate PVC and Associate Deans of Faculty (Teaching, Learning and Students). **Action: Tracy**

**Lightfoot, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Students)**

5. The presentation noted the possibility of developing a module to recognise extracurricular activity. YUSU had already developed some proposals on this issue. It was also noted that Community Placements had been made credit bearing and that experience might be relevant. A group should be convened to take this issue forward, involving the Chair; the YUSU Academic and Activities Officers; Inclusive Education; Careers and Placements; Academic Quality; and the Associate Deans (Teaching, Learning and Students) for Social Sciences and Sciences.

**Action: Tracy Lightfoot, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Students)**

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#### **Future TEF Preparations [UTC.23-24/41, Open]**

23-24/69 The Chair **considered** a paper on preparations for future iterations of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Duncan Jackson, Head of Academic Quality and Development, presented the paper.

23-24/70 The Committee **observed** that:

1. It was important to engage departments / Schools in TEF and capture good practice. This could be done partly by the annual review system and other existing mechanisms. It was however noted that departments would not necessarily report innovative practice (relative to the sector) in annual review if this was already well-established. The model used in Subject TEF 2019 was highlighted as an effective method of gathering departmental input.
2. The University's data infrastructure, resourcing and capacity needed to be improved to support preparations for TEF.
3. Resources and workload would need to be allocated for TEF preparation. The University invested significantly in preparations for REF, partly due to the fact that success in REF was

revenue generating. TEF had a reputational impact that was less directly impactful but nevertheless was thought to support revenue (e.g. through student applications).

4. There was a need to establish a consistent framework of evaluation, noting that the University's Access and Participation activity already used a specific framework.

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5. A Working Group should be established to support TEF preparation, involving the Chair; Associate PVC and Associate Deans for Teaching, Learning and Students; the Head of Academic Quality and Development and the Director of Strategic Planning and Change, drawing also on the REF experience of the Head of Policy, Integrity and Performance. The Group should consider how best to involve departments / Schools in TEF preparation. **Action: Duncan Jackson, Head of Academic Quality and Development**

### Section 3: Policy and Regulatory Matters

#### Extraordinary Congregation for Awards [UTC.23-24/42, Open]

23-24/71 The Committee acted as an extraordinary, private Congregation to confer awards *in absentia* for overseas students unable to attend ceremonies in February 2024 due to a gap between the ceremonies and the expiration of visas; and for awards delayed by the Marking and Assessment boycott. The Chair acted as the Presiding Officer. There was a definitive list of students receiving awards at this Congregation.

23-24/72 The Committee **observed** that:

1. The conferment of awards was not a responsibility of UTC; rather, this function had been delegated to the Chair by the Vice-Chancellor.
2. There were students in other situations for whom the ability to confer awards ahead of a graduation ceremony could be helpful, in particular where - such as with PhD study or those on professional programmes - a delay in graduation could significantly affect employment outcomes. This could also be helpful for CITY College and York Online students and for students whose award had been delayed by ECA claims. This raised the possibility of the early conferment of awards in absentia being a regular feature at UTC meetings.
3. There was potential to split the graduation ceremony from the conferment of awards for all students.
4. The potential to confer further awards in absentia outside of graduation ceremonies should be further explored and proposals developed for the Vice-Chancellor and Senate.

**Action: Tom Banham, Director of Student Administration and Academic Affairs and Jen Wotherspoon Deputy Director, Student Services (liaising with Tracy Lightfoot, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Students))**

#### Special Cases Policy Changes [UTC.23-24/43, Open]

23-24/73 The Committee **considered** a set of proposals relating to Special Cases. Daisy Bowen, Special Cases Manager, attended the meeting for this item. Jen Wotherspoon, Deputy Director (Student Services) spoke to this item and **reported** that:

1. The proposals were made in light of the dissolution of Special Cases Committee and, in the

case of the Progress Cases Policy, acted to codify existing practice.

2. It was intended to create student-facing and staff-facing webpages to provide user-friendly information relating to the procedures and policies under consideration.

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3. A key change was to remove the need to evidence fitness to return in the case of Leave of Absence for medical reasons. This change had been made on the advice of the Director of Student Life and Wellbeing. Returning students could, as appropriate, be referred to the Support to Study procedure.

23-24/74 The Committee **observed** that:

1. Version control information should be added to all the proposed policies and procedures.  
**Action: Daisy Bowen, Special Cases Manager**
2. The terms of reference of the Special Cases Advisory Group should be revised such that UTC (rather than the Group) reviewed the Group's effectiveness: this could be done via the annual report on Special Cases.  
**Action: Daisy Bowen, Special Cases Manager**
3. The language and tense of the appeals procedure changed within the document; the document should be revised for consistency, with 'student' being used rather than 'you'. **Action: Daisy Bowen , Special Cases Manager**
4. The revisions to the appeals procedure and Regulation 6 deleted the ability to appeal against a recommendation that a student's enrolment be terminated (or the student transferred) on the grounds of failure to comply with the requirements of external organisations / PSRBs (currently Regulation 6.7.2(e)). It should be confirmed that this change was intentional. **Action: Daisy Bowen, Special Cases Manager**
5. The language of Regulation 6.5(f), which concerned the finality of Special Cases decisions in certain types of case, should be checked and if necessary revised to make clear whether appeal was possible in this sort of case and, if not, to clarify that this did not apply to other types of cases. **Action: Daisy Bowen, Special Cases Manager**
6. Fitness to practise issues meant it was necessary to evidence fitness to return from medical leave of absence on professional programmes. Removal of evidence of fitness to return would also create problems for degree apprenticeship programmes. The Progress Cases Policy should be adjusted such that evidence remained required for these kinds of provision. **Action: Daisy Bowen, Special Cases Manager**
7. The University charged tuition fees in the event of repeat study, which covered the costs of repeat teaching. In order to be able to repeat study, students were required to show that they had not been able to benefit from the first period of study, thus raising the question of whether charging repeat fees was fair and proportionate. It was noted that financial concerns were one reason students sometimes did not wish to take a leave of absence. This issue should be examined again by UTC, as part of a broader review of repeat study and leave of absence.  
**Action: Jen Wotherspoon Deputy Director, Student Services (liaising with the Interim Academic Registrar)**

23-24/75 **Resolved:**

1. **To approve the Terms of Reference for the Special Cases Taught Programmes Advisory Group, subject to the amendment identified above.**

2. To approve revisions to the University's Student Academic Appeals Procedures, subject to the revisions in M23-24/74, 3-5 above, with a final version to be presented to the Chair for final approval.

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3. To approve the proposed Special Cases Progress Cases Policy, subject to the revision around fitness to practise identified in M23-24/74, 6 above.

4. To approve the proposed revisions to Regulation 6 (General Academic Regulations and Procedures for Students on Taught Programmes), subject to the revisions identified in M23-24/74, 3-5 above, with a final version to be presented to the Chair for final approval.

#### **Future of the Guide to Assessment [Verbal Report, Open]**

23-24/76 The Committee **received** an update from Patrick Gallimore, Chair of Standing Committee on Assessment, on developments in the policy framework for assessment of taught students. Stephen Gow (Academic Quality) attended the meeting for this item. It was **reported** that:

1. It was intended to revise the Guide to Assessment such that policy would be separated from procedure, guidance and good practice. This built on existing work to separate out Progression and Award rules from the broader Guide. The resulting policy would be renamed (so as to no longer be called a 'Guide') and sit within the institutional policy framework. Other policies and Regulations referencing the Guide to Assessment would be updated accordingly.
2. It was intended that there would be an overarching section with policy that applied to all provision, with distinct sections for policy that only applied to certain forms of provision. Policy would reference both assessment and feedback.
3. Current work was focused around developing a high-level structure for the new policy, drawing on examples of other institutions as appropriate.

23-24/77 The Chair expressed thanks to the Chair of SCA and colleagues in Academic Quality for their work on this issue. Committee **observed** that:

1. There was a need to check and as necessary revise the project timelines, to align this work with the Assessment and Feedback project and ensure sufficient time was given for staff and student consultation and (as necessary) any revisions of Regulations required at Senate.
2. A meeting should be set-up to give further direction on this work and timelines, involving the Chair; Chair of SCA; Head of Academic Quality and Development and colleagues involved in Academic Quality, and drawing on the expertise of the Deputy Secretary as necessary. **Action:**  
**Duncan Jackson, Head of Academic Quality and Development**
3. UTC should be kept updated of the status of the project.

## **Section 4: Quality Assurance Processes**

### **New Programme: BA in Social Work [Degree Apprenticeship] [UTC.23-24/45, Open]**

23-24/78 The Committee **considered** a proposed BA in Social Work, a new degree apprenticeship programme within the School for Business and Society. The programme was full-time over three years, with a start date of September 2024. Planning approval and Apprenticeship Monitoring Board approval had been

granted. The programme had been reviewed on behalf of UTC by Scott Slorach and Claire Ball-Smith, with input from David Gent (Academic Quality) and the Apprenticeships Team, with thanks from the Committee. It was **reported** that:

1. The programme required accreditation from Social Work England in order to run. This process was in train, with a submission due after UTC. Following Social Work England approval, the University would be able to apply to become an End Point Assessment Organisation for the programme.

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2. The programme shared a small number of modules with the existing (non-apprenticeship) integrated masters Social Work programme. This was in order to support development of a student identity amongst apprentice learners and for the cohorts to learn from each other.
3. The programme required a number of exceptions to institutional policy in order to meet accreditation or apprenticeship requirements and / or to support the development of a student identity.
4. The reviewers recommended approval of the programme subject to a number of conditions. The reviewers had also identified a number of recommendations for enhancement, which would be passed to the programme team by Academic Quality.

23-24/79 The Committee **observed** that:

1. Reviewers had identified the utility of the University investing in an institutional licence for e-portfolio software. This had already been discussed with the Chair, who had raised it at relevant fora.
2. The new Check-In system did not meet the attendance monitoring requirements for apprenticeships; this would be highlighted to the programme team as part of the feedback from UTC.
3. One of the modules was assessed via an online test whereby students would need to achieve 100% but had multiple attempts to pass. The Department of Mathematics had experience of running such assessments. The programme team would be invited to discuss this with Mathematics as part of the recommendations from UTC.
4. The new Nursing and Social Work degree apprenticeships would add between 30 and 50 apprentices to the University by September 2024.
5. It would be important that the experience of students on the new programme was monitored by the School and Faculty.
6. For future new programmes, it would be helpful if UTC could receive the whole programme approval form (including planning elements) in spreadsheet format. This would also show Apprenticeships Monitoring Board approval for apprenticeship programmes.
7. Apprenticeship programmes and other forms of complex provision such as York Online programmes required additional time to review, relative to standard programmes. The deadline for submission of paperwork to UTC for such provision should be extended to three weeks before the meeting. **Action: Duncan Jackson, Head of Academic Quality and Development**

23-24/80 **Resolved:**

1. **To approve the BA in Social Work [degree apprenticeship] programme, subject to resolution of the following conditions, with responses to be passed to Academic Quality for approval by the Chair:**



### **Action: Social Work programme team**

- a. Within the constraints of accreditation requirements, provide assurance to UTC that the pass-mark for the Law and Policy for Social Work module will be 40% rather than 50% and that the assessment criteria for the module will be set so as to be appropriate to Stage 2 students [rather than the current M-level criteria], or apply to

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UTC for an exception to policy on this issue if this is not possible within accreditation criteria.

- b. Within the constraints of accreditation requirements, adjust the module learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the Stage 2 Social Work across the Lifecourse module such that these were distinguished from the Stage 3 module with which it shares teaching; or apply to UTC for an exception to policy on this issue if this is not possible within accreditation criteria.
- c. Review the allocation of notional learning hours across modules, particularly those applied to assessment, and either amend these or provide assurance to UTC that allocations are appropriate; reviewers having identified that the allocation of hours for assessment appeared high in some modules and was inconsistent across the programme.
- d. Provide assurance to UTC that the following elements of Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are assessed in the programme, or adjust the PLOs:
  - i. PLO2: 'across the breadth of social science disciplines';
  - ii. PLO4: 'participation in advocacy';
  - iii. PLO8: 'research methodologies'.
- e. Review and as necessary adjust the timing of submission to the End-Point Assessment Gateway, which was currently set close to the end of the final module, noting the need for all modules to be marked by the Gateway.
- f. Specify whether an Ordinary degree would qualify for accreditation within the programme approval form.
- g. Specify that modules are non-compensatable in the module descriptors of all Stage 1 modules, as this detail was missing at the time of submission.

### **2. To approve the following exceptions to institutional programme design policy:**

- a. That all modules on the programme be non-compensatable.
- b. That the Stage 1 Social Work Practice Skills module be assessed on a pass-fail basis, and include an online test on which learners must achieve 100% in able to pass [noting multiple opportunities to retake the test were permitted].
- c. That the Stage 2 and Stage 3 Practice Learning Placement modules be assessed on a pass-fail basis.
- d. That the Stage 3 Practice Learning Placement module involve a number of learning hours [due to required days in practice] that exceeded the University's norm of 1 credit to 10 hours.

*Secretary's Note: these exceptions were all required to accreditation requirements*

- e. That the Stage 2 Law and Policy module be permitted to share teaching with a similar Masters-level module, to enable the cohorts to learn from each other, subject to the Stage 2 pass-mark being 40% rather than 50%.

## **Section 5: Sub-committee Summaries and Meeting-related information**

### **Standing Committee on Assessment: Annual Priorities [UTC.23-24/46, Open]**

23-24/81 The Committee **considered** a set of annual priorities from Standing Committee on Assessment. Patrick Gallimore, Chair of SCA, spoke to this item and **reported** that:

1. The priorities had been updated since the last meeting, with the removal of the provision of assessment information as a priority for 2023-24: it was thought this needed institutional project management support and would need to be a longer-term priority.
2. The revisions to the Guide to Assessment (as reported above) and Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment procedure remained the key priorities. Most of the other priorities in the document were ongoing or more easily accomplished work.
3. That one of the priorities was around AI and Assessment. This would focus around academic misconduct policy and related guidance, with broader issues considered by the UTC AI Working Group.

23-24/82 The Committee **observed** that:

1. Timescales for the Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment Procedure might need to be revised in light of any revisions to timelines around the Guide to Assessment and staff capacity. UTC should be kept updated as to the status of priorities.
2. It was recommended that SCA disaggregate the review of the Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment procedure from policy work around posthumous and aegrotat awards.
3. The reporting timelines should be captured within the UTC schedule of business. **Action: Claire Pinder, Academic Quality (incoming Assistant Secretary)**

23-24/83 **Resolved: to approve the priorities for 2023/24 for Standing Committee on Assessment.**

### **Faculty Learning and Teaching Groups [UTC.23-24/47-48, Open]**

23-24/84 The Committee **received** notes arising from the meetings of the Arts and Humanities and Sciences Faculty Learning and Teaching Group meetings held in November 2023. The Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning and Students) for Sciences **reported** that FLTG had received positive feedback from students on their experience of semesterisation.

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