

# UNIVERSITY OF YORK

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ASSESSMENT

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 4th March 2022 at 2.00pm via Zoom online video conferencing.

### Attendance and apologies for absence:

<b>Present:</b>	Dr Patrick Gallimore	(Chair) York Law School
	Dr Jim Buller	Politics
	Dr Kevin Caraher	SPSW
	Matt Johnstone	YUSU
	Ekansh Kapoor	GSA
	Dr Alet Roux	Mathematics
	Dr Katherine Selby	Natural Sciences/Environment and Geography In

### Attendance:

Daisy Bowen	Special Cases
Dr Martin Cockett	Chair of Special Cases Committee
Zara Burford	Representing Online Programmes
Laila Fish	Disability Services
Dr Stephen Gow (Secretary)	Academic Integrity Coordinator
Dr Jasper Heinzen	History
Cecilia Lowe	Head of Learning Enhancement
Claire Pinder (Minutes)	Administration Coordinator (S&AS)
Dr Jen Wotherspoon	Deputy Director SAAA

### Apologies:

Prof. Kate Arnold	Dean of York Graduate Research School
Dr Nicoletta Ascuito	English (on Maternity Leave)
Eddie Cowling	International Pathway College
Robert Simpson	Special Cases Manager

### m21-22/42 Welcome

Apologies were received from Prof. Kate Arnold and Eddie Cowling. It was noted Daisy Bowen would be present to report item 7. Jasper Heinzen was introduced. He was representing the Faculty of Arts and Humanities with a view to become a full member of UTC/SCA.

### m21-22/43 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 28th January 2022. (SCA21-22/29)

### m21-22/44 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

#### ● 21-22/26 Degree Outcome Reports

It was reported that this item had gone to Senate. Senate had requested comparison data from comparator institutions for internal analysis. **[OPEN]**

- **21-22/27 IPC Academic Misconduct**

It was reported that Eddie Cowling and Stephen Gow would meet to discuss further. [OPEN]

- **21-22/19 ECA Policy Proposal**

It was reported that further data regarding self-certification requests would be available in May from Departments for review. [OPEN]

- **21-22/34 Non-Compensatable Items**

It was reported that there was no longer an issue pertaining to non-compensatable items. [CLOSED]

- **Exceptional Circumstances Review**

It was reported that a working group had been formed, led by Mike Bentley. [OPEN]

- **York Online Programmes to Update on Business Analysis**

It was reported that Stephen Gow and Zara Burford would meet to discuss further. [OPEN]

- **21-22/37 24 Hour Recommended Timeframe Examinations**

It was reported that issues raised previously would be discussed today under updated paper (SCA21-22/31). [OPEN]

- **SCA21-22/38 YUSU Proposal Exceptional Circumstances for YUSU Reps** It was reported that the YUSU Elections had concluded, and information about how many YUSU nominees had elected to take EC would be available in time for the May SCA meeting. [OPEN]

### **m21-22/45 Chair's Oral Report**

The Chair **reported** that:

- The Academic Contingency group would allow Departments to run closed exams without PSRB in the Summer term.

**ACTION Jen Wotherspoon to let YUSU/GSA reps know which Departments were electing to run closed exams.**

- Industrial action was continuing. No updates had been received since the January 28 SCA meeting.

### **m21-22/46 Report from Students**

The YUSU representative reported that:

- Industrial Action: Student complaints had been resolved quickly, and within a day in some cases. For example, swift reimbursement had been arranged for students who bought a book for a week that was not taught.
- Industrial Action: Scaling of heavily impacted modules should be considered - It was not yet clear if all classes that had been impacted by industrial action would be scaled, due to student access to pre-recorded lectures for example. It was noted

that lecture recordings can only be given to students with permission of teaching staff.

**ACTION: Issue to be raised with the CBoE Forum.**

- YUSU Elections: A new team had been elected - Debayan Dey would be the new Academic Officer.

**ACTION: Stephen to invite Debayan Dey (Deb) to a forthcoming SCA Meeting**

The GSA representative reported that:

- Industrial Action: GSA is monitoring issues such as: disruption to teaching schedules; marking delays; and student dissatisfaction. The GSA is having regular meetings with the University. It was reported that: students do not view recorded lectures as a sufficient alternative to face to face teaching; the student representative structure is providing good support to students.
- The GSA had been talking to Departments about Modularisation and Semesterisation Consultation to ascertain the different approaches which Departments were taking in relation to proposed changes.

**ACTION: Ekansh to alert the SCA Committee to any information regarding assessments which may arise from discussions with Departments**

- Pastoral supervision issues were being monitored by the GSA, in collaboration with the University's monitoring process. Committee updates would be considered in the next UTC meeting.

#### **m21-22/47 Proposal from SCC to amend ECC request-rejected template**

The Committee is asked to **consider** this proposal from SCC to deliver a more responsive service to students, and avoid the need for an appeal to be submitted. The following points were noted:

- This proposal represented an addition to the EC process whereby students would have the opportunity to submit an additional EC Claim, with an additional three weeks (tbc) to provide evidence if their first EC Claim was rejected on the grounds of lack of evidence.
- This proposal would replace the current process of students submitting an appeal if their first EC Claim was rejected on the grounds of lack of evidence.
- It was anticipated that this proposal would result in a lower number of appeal submissions, and therefore a lower administrative burden on the Special Cases Committee to consider appeals, and also on Departments when processing appeals data.
- It was anticipated that this proposal would be welcomed by students, as it created a more productive route by which students could approach their submission if their first EC Claim was rejected on the grounds of lack of evidence.
- It was noted that although some departments do already consider evidence after the decision of the first EC Claim being rejected on the grounds of lack of evidence being made, some do not. Therefore, this proposal would create an equitable pathway for all

students for whom their first EC Claim was rejected on the grounds of lack of evidence.

SCA Committee Members approved the proposal, with the following comments:

- It was noted that several Departments already provide students with time to collect evidence and welcomed this proposal.
- Department assessors of EC Claims should ensure that where students are offered approved EC Claims subject to submission of appropriate evidence, within a specific timeframe, that only appropriate evidence is approved.
- Departments should ensure that students are informed, with careful and specific wording, of the potential consequences on their marks/ progression, and information about how to proceed, if their EC Claims which after being assessed, are approved subject to submission of appropriate evidence, and the student then fails to meet the requirement to submit appropriate evidence within the specified (three weeks -tbc) timeframe.
- YUSU and GSA supported this proposal but queried that some types of evidence may take longer than three weeks to obtain.
- It was noted that appeals generate a lot of work for Special Cases Committee and Departments, and were not in the student's best interests. This proposal was welcomed as a suitable alternative for students whose EC Claim was first rejected due to lack of evidence.
- It would be important to carefully consider how this proposal would be communicated to Departments prior to implementation.

**ACTION: Communicate this proposal approval to EC committees and CBoE Forum.**

**ACTION: Communicate this proposal approval to Mike Bentley who was leading a working group on EC process, for consideration by the group.**

**ACTION: Find information EC committees in Departments about their current process for students whose claims are rejected due to lack of evidence.**

**ACTION: SCC and Departments to potentially implement this proposal in the Summer Term.**

**ACTION: Special Cases Committee to report to the SCA Committee on which Departments were causing appeals based on rejection of EC Claim due to lack of evidence.**

## **m21-22/48 Proposal to Allow Specific Timeframe for Online Examinations Without Need for SCA Approval**

The Committee was asked to **consider** the proposal to allow Specific Timeframe for online examinations without need for SCA approval. This item is an amendment of the proposal (**SCA21-22/24**) that was considered at the 28 January SCA Committee Meeting. The following points were noted:

- The original paper (**SCA21-22/24**) was not intended to be used as a cause to debate the pros and cons of 24 hour exams, nor to be a cause for referendum about 24 hour exams.
- The amended paper (**SCA 21-22/32**) proposed that Departments would be able to implement the assessment method for online examinations which best suited the disciplinary, and academic integrity requirements of each module, as well as Departmental consideration of timetabling and student well-being. Departments would, therefore, be able to consider Specific Timeframe examination types, without the requirement for SCA approval. This would be in addition to Recommended Timeframe 24 hour examination types for which no SCA approval was currently required.
- VLE restrictions initially predicted for Specific Timeframe examination types actually are not needed. It was noted that a timetable would be used to avoid clashes, and an overburdening of the system.

The SCA Committee approved the proposal to allow Specific Timeframe examination types for online examinations without need for SCA approval.

**ACTION: Note the change to be added to the Guide to Assessment 22/23.**

## **m21-22/49\*Deferred from January: Academic Misconduct Data**

The Committee was asked to **consider** the report and make recommendations. The following points were noted:

- There was a reported sector wide increase in cases of Academic Misconduct, which correlated with the years of the Covid pandemic. It was noted that although cases had been rising steadily, the per capita increase had not increased, and the increase was in line with a rise in student numbers.
- Academic Misconduct was due in 33% of cases to a requirement for additional academic skills support, rather than academic mispractice (e.g. cheating/plagiarism). This was evidenced by the increase in PGT Academic Misconduct cases by international students which could be linked to poor academic practice (e.g. referencing issues). It was noted that Departments, Module Leaders, and the Skills and Writing Centre, could work to enhance student awareness of academic skills support throughout the first term in addition to during induction week.
- Academic Misconduct cases per capita had the potential to further rise in key areas such as apprenticeships, where students did not have a traditional academic background, or had a

gap in education, for example. The University should identify those key areas and consider additional promotion of academic skills support to students in those key areas.

**ACTION: Departments who have a high ratio of occurrences to be notified. ACTION: UTC Committee to be notified of the report.**

### **m21-22/50 Guide to Assessment: Non-Compensatable Assessment Components**

The Committee was asked to consider this amendment to the Guide to Assessment whereby departments may request assessment components to be non-compensatable. The following points were noted:

- The Department of Physics had identified an issue with compensation. They noted there appeared to be no process to make components of assessment non-compensatable - despite this being practiced in some limited cases in SPSW and Health Sciences.
- The amendment included both the addition of the relevant wording to the Guide to Assessment, and how this process should work with Modularisation and Semesterisation.

The Committee approved the amendment.

**ACTION: Note change for addition to the Guide to Assessment 22/23**

**ACTION: Discuss current practice with the Departments of Social Policy and Social Work and Health Sciences, and liaise with Tracy Lightfoot about future implementation.**

### **m21-22/51 \*Deferred from January: Updates on priority areas and Chairs of Boards of Examiners Survey**

The Committee was asked to **update** the Committee about priority areas. The following points were noted:

- Item 2: The review of the structure of the Guide to Assessment had been approved by SCA, and had the support of the Chair of Board of Examiners Forum regarding tying the item with the M&S review.
- Item 5: An analysis of data on self-plagiarism would be conducted.
- Item 6: Tableau Data would be presented to CBoE Forum on Monday 7 March

**ACTION: Item 6: Stephen Gow and Daniel Baker would discuss development of tools and guidance for exam boards and report back to the SCA.**

- Item 7: An item about the Award Gap would be brought to the July SCA meeting. It was noted that a canvas of Chair of Board of Examiners Forum (CBoE) opinion indicated that 23 CBoE Chairs wished to have a hybrid approach to exam types. 4 CBoE Chairs wanted a return

to closed exams, and 3 CBoE Chairs did not want to return to closed exams at all.

## **CATEGORY II**

Note: approval of Category II business will be assumed unless a member indicates that they wish to bring forward an item to Category I business.

### **Chair's Approvals:**

No matters of Business were brought forward via Chair's Approvals

### **Date of the next meeting**

To **note** the date of the next meeting TBC via Zoom online video conferencing.

## **RESERVED BUSINESS**

### **Individual Examination Arrangements**

The Committee **noted** that individual examination arrangements for 312 students have been approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

### **Appointment of External Examiners**

The Committee **noted** the appointment (or extension to appointment) of external examiners (UG and PGT), approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

### **Results Lists**

The Committee **received** notification of recommendations for the award of degrees approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.