Teaching Committee

COORDINATING GROUP FOR SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMMES

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2011.

Present: Professor T Sheldon (Chair), Ms B Akua-Sakyiwah (GSA), Ms L Booth (CLL), Ms H Stout (York Award), Dr M Ferguson (LFA), Ms J Colclough, Mr P Roberts (CELT), Dr R Grant (RDT), Mr T Wilson (Library), Mr G Osborn (YUSU)

In attendance: Professor J Robinson (PVC for L&T elect), Dr J James (Academic Support Office).

Apologies: Ms M Blake (IT Training for Students), Dr D Jackson (PGCAP)

11-12/1 Welcome
The Chair welcomed Ms J Colclough, who was deputising for Ms M Blake.

11/12/2 Minutes of the Last Meeting
The Group approved the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2011 (CGSP.11-12/1).

11-12/3 IT Training for Students: Pathways and Offerings
Further to M10-11/23, it was noted that further work on pathways through IT training would need to be taken forward (see M11-12/16).

11-12/4 Academic Liaison Section of the Library: Open Door Services
Further to M10-11/25, it was noted that the Academic Liaison Librarian (ALL) service (which encourages students to make an appointment to see an ALL) is marketed centrally via the student skills hub and the Library webpages. The issue would be raised as part of the review being undertaken by the Information Directorate (see M11-12/13). The Chair suggested that the ALLs should consider whether their service could be advertised in Departmental student handbooks. ACTION: ALLs

11-12/5 Academic Liaison Section of the Library: RDT and ALL Workshops
Further to M10-11/25, it was noted that the RDT (as the GTU) and ALLs had, in the past, delivered generic workshops on managing information but the uptake had been poor. In the last year, the RDT and ALL for the sciences had continued to offer to managing information sessions on demand but again the uptake had been poor.

The Chair noted that, from the results of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) survey, it was clear that PGR students wanted more advice and support on reviewing the literature. ACTION: Chair, RDT, GSA, Head of Relationship Management, ALLs to meet and discuss how the University could provide better support to PhD students and their supervisors in this area.

11-12/6 CELT: Course for PGWT
Further to M10-11/26, it was noted that CELT’s course for PGWT had been better targeted this academic year.

11-12/7 Remuneration for Engagement in Peer Support for Teaching

Further to M10-11/27, it was noted that CLL, LFA and CELT were making progress with respect to the implementation of peer support for teaching for staff on fractional part-time contracts. The Chair noted that funding for this activity needed to be built into ongoing budgets. ACTION: PGCAP Programme Director to report on his liaison with CLL, LFA and CELT at the Group’s next meeting.

11-12/8 PGCAP: Probation Sign-off

Further to M10-11/27, it was noted that Human Resources now had a process which involved the PGCAP Programme Director compiling brief reports on staff due to undergo probation sign-off, prior to the information being circulated to the DVC.

11-12/9 CLL: Redundancy Letters for Teaching Staff

Further to M10-11/27, it was noted that teaching staff in the CLL ending a short term contract, no longer received inappropriate redundancy letters.

11-12/10 LFA: Problems with AV Equipment

Further to M10-11/29, it was noted that problematic speakers used in aural examinations could not be replaced due to an asbestos-related issue but been recalibrated. The room in question had, however, not been allocated to LFA this year. Speakers in other rooms could also be problematic and LFA tried to test them out in advance of using them.

11-12/11 York Award: Two tier Proposals

Further to M10-11/32, it was noted that developments to the York Award are currently on hold (see M11-12/20).

11-12/12 Terms of Reference and Membership of the Group

The Group considered its terms of reference and membership (CGSP.11-12/2). Members of the Group agreed that it continued to serve a useful purpose (particularly in terms of networking and ensuring that learning and teaching provided outside mainstream departmental structures was given sufficient profile and support) and that the frequency of meetings should remain at two per year to ensure that actions were followed up.

The Group recommended approval of its terms of reference and membership with the following minor changes:

- the Head of Relationship Management should represent both the ALL and IT Training for Students teams
- membership should be extended to include Katy Mann, Learning Enhancement Officer and Amanda Selvaratnam, the Head of CPD
- the YUSU representative should be the Academic Affairs Officer
- the Careers Education Manager should represent the Careers Service more broadly, not just the York Award.
The Group agreed that reports should be more focused on the needs of the Group, chiefly a description of recent activities of relevance (given the Group’s constituency) and key challenges/future plans. The Group also agreed that there was a need to avoid duplication, particularly with the group coordinating the student skills hub.

The use of the term ‘supplementary’ was also discussed and it was agreed that members should bring forward suggestions for possible alternatives to the next meeting. **ACTION: all**

11-12/13  Academic Liaison Section of the Library and Archives
The Group received a written and oral report from the ALL representative and noted:

- the update regarding the Library refurbishment. **ACTIONS:** (i) As a matter of urgency, the Library should take steps to ensure that the introduction of access barriers does not compromise the open access nature of the Library; (ii) the Library and YUSU should consider whether publicity about improvements to the Library should be staggered, the first phase focusing on the improvements to the fabric of the buildings (including the total spend) and the second phase focusing on the move to 24-hour opening (to avoid student expectations being raised too early given that 24-hour opening will not start until the Summer Term); (iii) the Library should consider whether the dedicated PGR space should be made available to PGT or all students to increase usage
- changes to the Library Catalogue
- improvements to study provision in the Library
- the need to advertise the study areas in the New Building to maximise its use and ensure its continued availability for students, especially given the Heslington East expansion. **ACTION: YUSU/GSA**

11-12/14  Centre for Language Teaching (CELT)
The Group received a written and oral report from the Director of CELT (CGSP.11-12/3) and noted:

- the changes to staffing
- the update on CELT’s English for academic purposes and contract language courses, including the approval of the pre-masters programme
- CELT’s input into the forthcoming learning and teaching focus on internationalisation
- CELT’s move into expanded premises
- CELT’s promotion opportunities
- that CELT was investigating the possibility of running an English language teaching centre in the Middle East and that this had the potential to be strategically advantageous for the University, providing a foothold in the region, research links and international students. **ACTION: Director of CELT to follow up with the VC and to keep the DVC and the Head of the ASO informed as a matter of priority**

11-12/15  Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL)
The Group received a written and oral report from the Head of the CLL (CGSP.11-12/3) and noted:

- the positive impact of the move to the Information Centre for students and staff
- the heavy use of the on-line booking facility
the increase in popularity of leisure learning, including Saturday courses, vis-a-vis accredited programmes
the reintroduction of a 60-credit University Certificate of Lifelong Learning across the board for accredited programmes
the good uptake for study skills Saturdays
proposed work to remind LLL students of progression routes within Higher York
new funded outreach courses in the areas of science, creative writing for adults with mental health difficulties and wildlife habitat protection for probationers
concerns about the lack/poor quality of refreshment facilities for evening courses.
ACTION: Head of LLL to ask Jane Grenville for support in resolving the issue
the lack of capacity in the administrative team
the need for new funding to support pre-existing community outreach
the need to investigate new areas for future growth.

11-12/16 IT Training for Students
The Group received a written report from the Head of Relationship Management (Information Directorate) (CGSP.11-12/3) and an oral report from Ms J Colclough and noted:

- the forthcoming audit of information skills training across the Information Directorate
- the release of online learning materials on Word and Excel for undergraduates on the VLE
- that the role of the IT Academy in providing high level IT training for students was under discussion
- the need to take forward previous discussions regarding pathways through IT training provision. ACTION: Head of Relationship Management and Careers Education Manager

11-12/17 Languages for All (LFA)
The Group received a written and oral report from the Director of LFA (CGSP.11-12/3) and noted:

- the positive impact of changes to staffing (the appointment of a Deputy Director, Teaching Fellow and Administrative Assistant). ACTION: Deputy Director to substitute for the Director at a meeting(s) of the CGSP to gain exposure to the wider University
- the positive impact of the provision of new accommodation
- the encouraging registration figures for courses (especially at a higher level) for 2011/12. ACTION: Director to report on how many students had progressed to a higher level course from a free first year course
- the difficulties associated with providing training, and promoting involvement in peer support for teaching, for part-time tutors including funding, and time, travel and cultural issues for some tutors
- concerns about the timetabling of internal LFA students. Previously students had chosen their LFA slots but this year students had been allocated to LFA slots by the Timetabling Office. Both approaches had advantages and disadvantages and in both cases there was a significant administrative workload resulting from students wanting to change slots. A piece of software was available which would enable students to carry out a change of LFA slot themselves but this would require significant investment.
ACTION: Chair to liaise with Matt Burton of the Timetabling Office to ascertain whether the afore-mentioned software would be worth the investment. LFA and Matt Burton of the Timetabling Office to agree a way forward for LFA timetabling for next academic year

- that the Harry Fairhurst building had had its location label amended from LFA to Library-LFA in order to reduce the potential for confusion.

11-12/18 Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP)
The Group received a written report from the PGCAP Programme Director (CGSP.11-12/3) and noted:

- the update on module 1 of the new programme, including feedback from participants
- the potential development of post-PGCAP CPD activity within the University.

11-12/19 Researcher Development Team (RDT)
The Group received a written and oral report from the RDT’s representative and noted:

- general developments since June 2011, including mapping of provision to the national ‘Researcher Development Framework’
- the support provided for PGWT, including the continuing popularity of the Preparing Future Academics (PFA) programme. ACTION: RDT to try and meet the increasing demand for the PFA programme by increasing the pool of available supervisors rather than restricting access. Chair to raise the issue with the SMG, Academic Coordinators and HoDs Forum, emphasising that academic leadership (such as PFA supervision) is part of the role of a senior academic
- funding for researcher-led projects
- ACTION: RDT to ensure that it has looked at and responded to PRES data relating to the training of PGR students and PGWT.

11-12/20 York Award
The Group received a written and oral report from the Careers Education Manager (CGSP.11-12/3) and noted:

- that developments to the York Award were on hold pending the outcome of the YUSU pilot of the NUS Skills Award
- the success of the ‘Make the most of your time at York’ welcome campaign run by the Careers Service
- the roll-out of the Employability Tutorial and the importance of a careful evaluation of the Tutorial, including the need for baseline data and a clear focus on the impact of the tutorial in changing students’ attitudes and behaviours. ACTION: Careers Education Manager to check that these points have been fully addressed by the Employability Coordination Group.

11-12/21 Annual Programme Review
The Group noted that annual programme review reports for the Group would be considered at the University Teaching Committee APR meeting on 19 December.

11-12/22 Future Meetings
It was noted that YUSU could not be present at the next meeting scheduled for 4 July 2012 due to training commitments. **ACTION: Secretary to reschedule the meeting**