STANDING COMMITTEE ON ASSESSMENT

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 30 September 2019 at 2.00pm in HG/17, Heslington Hall.

Attendance and apologies for absence:

Present:  
- Prof Mike Bentley  Physics (Chair)  
- Dr Danijela Trenkic  Education  
- Anita Savage Grainge  Health Sciences  
- Simon van der Borgh  TFTI  
- Dr Patrick Gallimore  York Law School  
- Dr Alet Roux  Mathematics  
- Dr Jess Wardman  Management  
- Dr Daniel Baker  Psychology  
- Dr David Clayton  History  
- Dr Martin Cockett  Chair of Special Cases Committee  
- Giang Nguyen  YUSU  
- Jane Baston  GSA

In attendance:  
- Dr Jen Wotherspoon  Deputy Director Student Services  
- Cecilia Lowe  Head of Learning Enhancement  
- Kathryn Lucas  Special Cases Manager  
- Dr Stephen Gow (Secretary)  Academic Integrity Coordinator  
- Dr Angela Ranson  Academic Support Coordinator

Apologies:  
- Claire Shanks  Disability Adviser  
- Valerie Cotter  Dep Academic Registrar/Dir Student Service  
- Dr Nicoletta Asciuto  English  
- Robert Simpson  Special Cases Manager  
- Prof Tom Stoneham  Dean of Graduate Research School

Visitors:  
- Jo Fletcher  Examinations Manager

19-20/01 Welcome
The Chair welcomed new members and noted that the representative from Disability services has not yet been confirmed for the coming academic 2019/20 academic year. In the mean time, the committee expressed its thanks to Claire Shanks for her work on SCA.

19-20/02 Minutes of previous meeting
The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held Friday 5 July 2019.

19-20/03 Matters Arising from the previous minutes
- 18-19/33 Chair’s Oral Report - Mapping for QAA
  The Head of the Learning Enhancement team will submit the mapping for consideration by the Committee at the 1 November meeting. [OPEN]

[ACTION: CL]
• **18-19/35 Annual Report - UG External Examiners**
The Chair requested that this be removed from Matters Arising because it is part of the Committee’s priorities [CLOSED]

• **18-19/86 Annual Report - PG External Examiners**
The Chair requested that this be removed from Matters Arising because it is part of the Committee’s priorities [CLOSED]

• **18-19/87 Exceptional Circumstances Review**
The form will be submitted to the Committee for consideration at the November meeting. [OPEN]  
[ACTION: JW]

• **18-19/97 Consistency of Marking - responding to student complaints**
The YUSU representative will submit further information for consideration by the Committee at the November meeting. [OPEN]  
[ACTION: GN]

• **18-19/98 Exam Errors - report back to departments**
The Chair has not yet circulated the list of errors, but will do so. [OPEN]  
[ACTION: MB]

• **18-19/101 Academic Misconduct Policy, guidelines and procedures**
The Chair requested that this be removed from Matters Arising because it is part of the Committee’s priorities. [CLOSED]

• **18-19/105 Assessment Guidelines VLE 2019/20**
The Head of Learning Enhancement team has met with the YUSU representative and decided on further action. [CLOSED]

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**19-20/04 Chair’s oral report**
The Chair expressed his thanks to Patrick Gallimore, who has been deputizing in the Chair’s absence.

The Chair reported that the sticker scheme, which was changed to flagged marking by SCA last year, has been pulled from the Guide to Assessment on Chair’s Action. This was due to concerns raised by Disability Services relating to implementation. The Chair is looking for further guidance about how markers should respond to the sticker on a piece of work. This will require the development of a set of principles which may be part of the Inclusive Learning and Teaching Policy work now taking place in the University. The Chair is to follow up with Steve King, who is leading on the Inclusive Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy.  
[Action: MB]

The Chair also reported that the electronic submission of PhD theses, which was approved by Chair’s Action, is now in use.

**19-20/05 Report from students**
Both the GSA and YUSU representatives reported that elections are open for student representatives.
19-20/06 Terms of Reference
The Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference and made the following amendments:

- Removal of members who have served their term
- Inclusion of new members: Dr Alet Roux (Mathematics), Dr Nicoletta Asciuto (English), Dr Jess Wardman (York Management School) and Dr David Clayton (History).
- Inclusion of a Deputy Chair position to act with the full authority of the Chair when the Chair is unavailable or out of contact.
- Clarification of attendees from Student Services. They will now include the Director: Student Services, the Deputy Director: Students Services, and the Assistant Registrar: Student Progress
- **Purpose of the Committee**: Added “assessments, marking, feedback and progression of students...” rather than solely of “assessment”.
- **Term 1**: has been amended to include reference to “assessments, marking, feedback and progression of all taught and research students studying on programmes leading to a qualification of the University and to ensure such policies and procedures meet national quality assurance requirements.”
- **Term 12**: been amended to include reference to “items arising from external Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies...”

The Chair is to agree new wording on Chairs action for approval by UTC.  

[Action: MB]

19-20/07 Annual cycle of business
The Committee confirmed their annual cycle of business.

19-20/08 Priority areas for action for 2019/20
The Committee **considered** and **agreed** the assessment matters which require the Committee’s attention this year. These will be arranged in a spreadsheet and members will be assigned to priorities and a schedule of business arranged for the November meeting.

19-20/09 Secure Papers
The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Examinations Team to class all papers as secure in the Common Assessment Period (CAP), meaning that papers cannot be removed from the exam venue. This proposal was in response to increasing requests from departments for CAP papers to be printed as secure papers as they wish to reuse questions from the papers. Moreover, secure papers are printed on pink paper, which causes problems for students with certain disabilities. If all papers were secure, they could all be printed on white paper. Note, all papers in the Resit period are already secure.

After in depth discussion of the proposal, the Committee **rejected** this request as there were significant potential academic implications for assessment and transparency, and the YUSU Academic Officer raised concerns. It was **agreed**, however, that the practical problem for the Examinations Office comes from administering examinations on a large scale which have both secure and nonsecure papers. The assessment team will investigate other solutions for this issue.
It was **agreed** that no changes should be made this year. However, departments will be consulted on the issue of secure vs. non-secure papers, since this will inform future policy in this area. The results reported to the Committee for further consideration. The matter could also be considered in the priority project which will review the assessment guidance and information provided to students. The Chair will consult with CBoE forum and relevant parties on how to resolve this matter.

**[ACTION: MB/SG]**

**19-20/10 Proposal to cease the provision of calculators in examinations**
The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Examinations Team to cease providing calculators in examinations and instead publicise a short list of approved, non programmable calculators which students can bring to exams. The University currently provides calculators in examinations at a significant cost which is out of line with the sector, and the calculators recently purchased have now been discontinued by Casio. This means students can no longer purchase the calculators provided in examinations in order to familiarise themselves with the functions.

The Committee **noted** the significant problem caused by this situation and highlighted key issues related to how the new calculators may affect assessment. The proposal to stop providing calculators for all students in exams in 2019/20 was **approved**, subject to a consultation with Departments to ensure that neither this change, nor the specific calculators chosen, would cause academic issues.Due to the complex nature of the issue, it was **agreed** that an interim measure was essential in which calculators must still be available at the examination venue in case students, having got used to the previous arrangement, arrive without one. It was **agreed** the Chair will liaise with the Examinations Team to ensure that the interim solution is workable and to provide an addendum to the Guide to Assessment. This will need to be approved by UTC.

**[ACTION: MB/JF]**

**19-20/11 Resubmission, compensation and distinction in Multiple ISMs (Masters)**
The Committee **considered** and **approved** the updated wording to the Guide to Assessment to provide a single rule regarding compensation and resubmission on multiple module ISMs in order to solve progression and reassessment problems identified in a review of departmental approaches in 2018/19. The change clarifies that where departments have more than one ISM, reassessment for a marginal fail may only apply on one occasion.

**19-20/12 Requirement by UKSCQA to produce a Degree Outcomes Statement**
The Committee **considered** the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment’s **Statement of Intent** to protect the value of degrees in higher education. The Committee also **considered** the preparation of the University’s ‘Degree Outcomes Statement’ articulating the results of an internal institutional review, including quantitative trends, application of common sector reference points, the rationale for degree algorithm(s) institutional use of Advance HE’s external examiner professional development programme and subject-specific calibration activity, or providing alternative arrangements. The Chair noted that this requirement could require a significant amount of work. However, as guidance and notification of whether this is a compulsory requirement is pending, the Committee should start scoping the data required and be prepared to act swiftly once the nature of the requirement was made clear by the UKSCQA, and guidance was provided. The Chair will lead a working group with the Deputy Head of Student Services, AQ and LE
teams to start a brief scoping of these areas. [Action: MB/JW/JI/CL/SG]

19-20/13 Chair’s Approvals
The Committee noted the Chair’s approvals.

19-20/14 Individual Examination Arrangements
The Committee noted the number of individual examination arrangements.

19-20/15 Appointment of External Examiners
The Committee noted the external examiners appointed since the last meeting.