



## SENATE

### TEACHING COMMITTEE

#### Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2014

**Present:** Professor J Robinson (Chair), Professor W Bonefeld, Mr T Clarke, Mr N Dandy, Ms C Dantec, Mrs K Dodd, Dr J Grenville, Dr J Hardman, Dr S King, Dr M Roodhouse, Dr K Selby, Dr A Shiel, Professor C Thompson, Dr J Thijssen, Dr R Vann, Dr R Waites, Mr D Whitmore (YUSU Representative), Dr C van Wyhe, Ms X Yang (GSA Representative), Professor A Young

**In attendance:** Professor S Bell (Academic Co-ordinator, Social Sciences), Mrs J Fox (Secretary), Ms L Stead (ASO), Professor B Fulton (Academic Co-ordinator, Sciences), Dr J James (for M13/14/118) Professor M Ormrod (Academic Co-ordinator, Arts and Humanities), Dr Julian Richards (for M13-14/118)

**Apologies:** Mr B Saynor (York College)

#### **M13-14/111 Minutes**

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2014 (UTC.13-14/72) subject to a correction to the item 'Year Abroad and Year in Industry' (M13-14/103). The minute should read 'Following discussions with departments existing programmes in Biology, Biochemistry and Maths, and the combined Maths and Physics programmes would retain with a year in Europe'.

#### **M13-14/112 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Committee **considered** the matters arising from the minutes (UTC.13-14/72 **Appendix 1**) and noted that some actions related to the NERC Doctoral Training Programme: PhD in Adapting to the Challenges of a Changing Environment (ACCE) from Biology had not yet been completed (M 13-14/87) but were underway and would be completed over the coming weeks.

Similarly actions related to Computer Science, EPSRC Doctoral Training Programme: PhD in Intelligent Games and Game Intelligence (M13-14/88) were underway and would be completed over the coming weeks.

#### **M13-14/113 Oral Report from the Chair**

The Committee **received** an oral report from the Chair as follows:

- *National Student Survey*: The NSS response rate stood at 35% on 27 February ( 2% lower than in 2013).
- *INTO proposal* **FOIA EXEMPT**

### **M13-14/114 Oral Report from the Student Representatives**

*YUSU*

The results of the recent elections had been made public and George Offer would be the new Academic Officer.

YUSU would assist with the promotion of the NSS in week 10.

*GSA*

There was no business to report.

### **M13-14/115 Health Sciences: Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing Practice**

The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Department of Health Sciences for a Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing Practice with Professional Registration (Adult) (UTC.13-14/73) to start in March 2015. This included the Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate in Care Related Studies (as exit awards only) and a Masters in Nursing Practice ('top up' only). The programme had been approved by Planning Committee.

The proposal had been **considered** in advance of the meeting by Lesley Booth and Tim Clarke, and had their strong support and that of the external assessor. The programme would be subject to a Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) desk-top approval event on 7 April 2014.

It was **noted** that the NMC normally required pre-registration programmes to be no less than three years but had permitted Health Sciences to offer a two year route for those who could evidence prior learning before commencing the programme. This 'APL' of NMC requirements to gain admission to the programme differed from the University's policy in that no credit was involved.

The Committee **approved** the programme(s) including:

- the requirement for all modules to be non-compensatable due to professional expectations
- the practice modules being pass/fail.

It was also **noted** there would be no direct recruitment to the Masters as it would be available as a CPD route for those who had completed the PG Diploma to 'top-up' to a Masters. Students would APL their 120 credits and undertake an existing ISM to achieve a Masters.

The Committee **approved** the exception to the University's APL policy, which did not permit APL from a York qualification to another York qualification at the same level and in a similar subject. This would be recorded in Appendix I of the APL Policy (Special cases and exceptions). The Department had been asked to supply details of all its exceptions for the APL Policy.

#### **ACTION: Health Sciences**

It was recognised that the innovative nature of the programme would result in considerable workload for staff and students and should be carefully monitored by the Department and reported to the Committee in the APR reports for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

[**Secretary's note:** having received both Planning Committee and UTC approval, it may now be advertised (subject to NMC approval).]

#### **M13-14/117 Chemistry: Wellcome Trust funded PhD (4 years)**

The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Department of Chemistry for a four year PhD funded by the Wellcome Trust for one student (UTC.13-14/74) to start in October 2014. The programme had been approved by Planning Committee. The proposal had been **considered** in advance of the meeting by Roddy Vann and Richard Waites and it was **noted** that the Department was considering their feedback to clarify/consider revisions as follows:

- revise the title of the PhD
- confirm the Graduate School Board had approved the proposal
- clarify supervision and TAP arrangements at both institutions
- confirm that the training elements equate to 6 months
- clarify the nature of the 'award' referred to for time spent at the NIH
- clarify the apportionment of fees
- clarify proposed exit awards
- elaborate on how the training would be collaborative/interdisciplinary.

The Committee **approved** the proposal subject to the issues above being addressed to the satisfaction of the Chair and the UTC reviewers.

#### **ACTION: Chemistry**

It was **noted** that the intention was that in future the University should be careful in developing new PhDs so they have sufficient flexibility to allow one-off versions of this kind to be approved by Chair's action.

#### **M13-14/118 Cotutelles**

The Committee **considered** a guidance note for cotutelles (dual or joint PhD programmes) involving international collaborations, and an initial proposal for a cotutelle with the University of Aarhus, Denmark (UTC.13-14/75).

Dr Julian Richards (Archaeology) and Dr Juliet James (ASO) attended for this item.

*Guidance note*

It was agreed that all such collaborations should be considered at a strategic level and partnerships should only be developed with institutions of good standing. The initial proposal with Aarhus would act as a pilot for the process and the required documentation would be further developed as the University gained practical experience of establishing and running joint or dual PhDs. The guidance notes, supplementary to the University's general guidance on collaboration, were **approved** subject to the following:

- the addition of specific guidance on funding arrangements (4.7)
- consideration being given to the inclusion of an additional strategic-level of approval by the Senior Management Group

[**Secretary's note:** following further consideration it was felt that Planning Committee was the appropriate forum for strategic academic considerations].

- the amendment of 5.3.1 to note that Planning Committee should approve the business case. It was confirmed that University Research Committee did not have a role in the process at present but this should be reconsidered in the future
- the addition of further prompts for full UTC approval in the list under 5.3.2. (e.g., to include roles and responsibilities of the primary supervisor/co-supervisor, interim and final assessments, types of training provision).

It was also **noted** that departments would need to be mindful about visa requirements, particularly outside Europe, noting in particular attendance monitoring requirements. There would also need to be liaison with Registry Services on how to arrange suitable graduation hoods.

It was agreed that a set of Frequently Asked Questions would be a useful appendix once the guidance was further developed.

It was confirmed that students would be expected to study for a minimum of one year at York (4.6) and joint degrees would be favoured over dual degrees (4.8).

The updated guidance notes would be brought back to the Committee in May 2014.

**ACTION: Juliet James**

*Initial proposal for a cotutelle with the University of Aarhus*

The Committee **considered** and **approved** the proposal for outline (Stage 1) approval for a joint PhD programme between the University and Aarhus University in Digital Heritage. Julian Richards confirmed that the Department of Archaeology had a long standing

relationship with the University of Aarhus, the programme had support at a strategic level and there was a commitment and willingness to engage which would benefit the University reputationally though the venture was cost neutral.

During the discussion it was **noted** that the two reciprocal studentships would commence from October 2014. The lead (primary) supervisor would be based in York and a named co-supervisor at Aarhus. A member of Aarhus staff would sit on the Thesis Advisory Panel. It was confirmed that students would receive an equivalent training experience and the individual student agreement would detail arrangements for changing topics.

It was **noted** that Danish legislation did not require a viva as part of the assessment for a PhD. This would not be problematic from a regulatory aspect as the QAA UK Quality Code (B11) did not specify this specific mode of assessment but it would require an exception to the University's rules.

Stage 2 of the proposal would be considered for approval at the next meeting and the Committee would be asked to consider i), a draft overarching agreement which would set out the broad terms and conditions for the joint PhD programme, and ii), a draft individual agreement which would set out the expectations of an individual joint PhD student. These would be undertaken by a project group with representatives from relevant interested parties to ensure that the standard and quality of the student experience would be secured and all practical arrangements considered.

**ACTION: Archaeology, Juliet James**

The Committee gave its permission for the advertisement from the end of March 2014 (wording to be approved by the Chair) of two joint PhD programme studentships in Digital Heritage (Archaeology) to commence in October 2014.

### **M13-14/119 National Survey of Student Engagement**

The Committee **received** a progress report on departmental participation in the HEA pilot of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) question set (UTC.13-14/76).

It was reported that the Chair of UTC agreed (M13-14/35 refers) that the University should participate in the pilot to gain insights into the use of the questions and to enable some comparisons with the other 36 piloting institutions. These data would be aggregated and released only to participating institutions. Findings from this should prove useful, and as part of the consideration of student engagement, would help inform the next Learning and Teaching Strategy. Three departments (Mathematics, SPSW and TFTV) had agreed to take part and the surveys would be carried out with first and second year students on single degrees, towards the end of the Spring Term and would cover around 840 students. Progress would be reported to UTC later in the year, to inform a decision on whether the

NSSE-based questions could usefully be rolled out more widely, with a view, for example to enhance programmes and curriculum development.

During discussion there were concerns from some members that similar information was collected through other surveys and any future commitment to continue would add to workload. However, it was acknowledged that the survey focused on student engagement rather than satisfaction and as a question set could add value to departments' evaluations and assist the University in its understanding of learning gains during stage 1 and 2. It was noted that outcomes from the national pilot may impact on the NSS (now in its tenth year). There were mixed views about some of the questions, in particular the second set of statements. It was agreed that the analysis of the pilot outcomes would provide answers to some of the Committees questions about the survey.

### **M13-14/120 Learning and Teaching Strategy Development Group**

The Committee **received** a progress report from the Learning and Teaching Strategy Development Group (UTC.13-14/77).

The Chair reported that he had been asked to provide the VC with a paper setting out options for how the developing vision for the Learning and Teaching Strategy might be incorporated into the University Strategy.

This progress report was intended to bring the Committee up to date on developments. It outlined the proposals from an earlier discussion paper (M13-14/11), and provided a review of the feedback from SMG, Council and the Working Group, and concluded with a summary of the current position. The report highlighted that the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2015 should be focused on institutional pedagogy and develop and confirm a distinctive York model of learning and teaching.

During the course of discussion, the following points were **noted** that:

- there were some concerns about a lack of clarity regarding exactly what was going to be asked of departments and the associated impact on workload and morale. For example, was the expectation that all programmes would need to be revised in the light of the Strategy?
- some members questioned whether the Strategy should aim to set out goals for excellence as a university rather than have a specific focus on York's distinctiveness
- there was general support for the three things that all York degrees should have (paragraph 7). However, there were concerns about how departments might be encouraged to sincerely embrace this approach and how departments/staff could deal with students who were disengaged and happy to be so, as long as they got a degree
- the AWARD model (paragraph 9) should take into account student specialisms and differences between and within departments.

The Chair would report the Committee's comments to the Development Group.

**ACTION: Chair**

### **M13-14/121 New Teaching Building**

The Committee **received** a report on the development of the new teaching building (UTC.13-14/78). The Steering Group had met since the last oral update from the Chair (M13-17/84 refers). The paper explained that a budget of £12 million was now available and that plans for teaching space on Heslington East had been developed in conjunction with the foundation college plans.

The Chair confirmed that issues concerning pedagogical matters, such as functionality and economies of scale would be raised at the next steering group. Discussions would include the size of lecture theatres (300+), the inclusion of a language hub and the general need for more flexible, suitable teaching space as student numbers continued to grow.

### **M13-14/122 Natural Sciences**

The Committee **received** a progress report on actions from the Natural Sciences Development Group (UTC.13-14/79) and **noted** that the UTC sub-group would meet on 11 March 2014 to consider the programmes in full. It was **noted** that the UTC sub-group would make a recommendation regarding full academic approval to the Committee in the Summer term.

The Programme Director reported that the UTC sub-group had provided useful guidance for the governance, management and ethos of Natural Sciences and a revised governance proposal would be considered on the 11 March.

As a result of direction from the sub-group, interdisciplinary specialists had been identified and interdisciplinary modules would be included in stage 3. Work was ongoing to resolve issues identified by the Committee including a skills catalogue.

The Natural Sciences Development Group had considered the University's Undergraduate Framework for Programme Design and the maximum number of modules that should be studied at any one time (and noted assessment loadings) and intended to request exceptions to this rule at the next sub-group meeting and would provide a rationale. Unfortunately the modelling of the assessment timetable had been delayed due to staff changes in Registry Services but when done would highlight 'pinch points' and clashes that would need to be addressed.

### **M13-14/123 Standing Committee on Assessment**

The Committee **received** a report from the Standing Committee on Assessment (UTC.13-14/80) from its meetings on the 6 December 2013 and 7 February 2014.

*Proposed additions to the Policy on Research Degrees*

The Committee **noted** SCA's proposed additions to the University's Policy on Research Degrees, which would be considered by the UTC sub-group revising the policy in the Summer term:

- a) *"Where the thesis has met the requirements for the degree, but the candidate is permanently unable to present themselves for viva examination for medical or compassionate reasons"*. The Committee agreed this was relevant in extreme cases.
- b) *"Students should bring a copy of their thesis to the viva examination, and this may be annotated, but no additional material may be brought to the examination. No new material should be presented for examination at viva"* The Committee noted this was absent from the current policy.
- c) *"Where an examiner must be replaced between an initial examination and a re-examination of the same thesis (for example due to a substantial change in the health or employment circumstances of an examiner), the second examination will normally have the same status as any other re-examination under the regulations. The new examiner should have access to the original examiners' reports in order to inform their assessment, but the primary measure of success should be the academic judgement of the examiners as to whether the standards of the award have been met, rather than whether the corrections outlined by the original examiner have been made. Exceptionally, where the examiners agree that the change of examiner may have resulted in conflicting views about the nature of appropriate corrections, they may recommend (to the Standing Committee on Assessment) a further referral of the thesis."* The Committee agreed that the requirements from the student's original examiner should override all other views.

#### *Pass marks for Taught Postgraduate Programmes*

The Committee **approved** the proposal to clarify the *Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback* at the beginning of Section P4 as follows:

"In order to be awarded a Postgraduate Award, a student must achieve at least 50% in one of two ways:

- As a credit weighted mean of all first attempt taught module marks and any ISM
- Where a student does not achieve at least 50% as the credit weighted mean of all first attempts, the credit weighted mean of all best attempts will be used, and this mean will be capped at 50%."

#### *Merits and Distinctions for PGTs with failed modules*

The Committee **approved** the proposal (to be implemented for students registering from 2014/15) that the criteria for Merits in taught postgraduate programmes be amended to

remove the requirement for 'no failed modules'. This should be replaced with 'no more than 20 credits of failed modules'. The criteria for distinctions were unchanged.

**ACTION: SCA Secretary and Chair**

*QAA Quality Code Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning*

The Committee **noted** actions by SCA to produce a guide to the powers and processes of the Boards of Examiners and an explicit policy on programme transfers, and **considered** accountabilities for oversight and responsibility for the University's APL Policy. It was agreed that UTC should have oversight of the policy and receive a regular report on its fitness for purpose. It was also agreed that the Directors of SRA and Registry Services should be asked to clarify the administrative leadership in relation to APL policy and its application.

**ACTION: UTC Secretary**

**M13-14/124 Teaching Performance Expectations**

The Committee **received** and **noted** a draft statement on teaching performance expectations for University staff (UTC.13-14/81).

**M13-14/125 Modifications and Withdrawals of Programmes**

The Committee **received** a report on modifications to, and withdrawals of, programmes of study approved by Chair's action between February and March 2014 (UTC.13-14/82) as follows:

*Biology:* Approval for 2014/15 of modifications to Biology's MSc Bioscience Technology, MSc Post Genomic Biology and MSc Ecology and Environmental Management. These include two new core modules: Data Analysis and Professional Skills for all programmes. The module, Sequence and Structure will be core for the MSc BT programme and will be an option for MSc EEM. The module, Sequence and Structure with Case Study will be core for the MSc PGB. Modules; Statistical Modelling and Field and Laboratory Experimental Skills will be core for MSc EEM and Multivariate Analysis will be an additional option. The ISM Placement has been increased to 60 credits for the MSc EEM.

*Centre for Eighteenth Century Studies:* Approval of the immediate withdrawal of the MA in Eighteenth Century Studies: Global Eighteenth Century pathway agreed by the Departments of English and History and confirmed by Planning Committee.

*Education:* Approval for 2014/15 of a modified version of the PGCE to be run as part of School Direct Red Kite, which will principally be made up of Economics and Geography, and will also include those specialising in English and History, and approval to develop an 11-16 (with post-experience) Mathematics programme.

Approval of the assignment submission date for first year undergraduates moving from Friday to Thursday, with effect from Summer term 2014. The Department will use a range of communication channels to ensure all students are aware of the change.

*Environment:* Approval for 2014/15 for the MSc in Corporate Social Responsibility with Environmental Management as follows: Business Information systems module is replaced with International Political Economy of Business and an additional option, Social and Ethical Marketing is included in the Autumn term. Corporate and Social Responsibility and Risk has been renamed Corporate and Social Responsibility I. The ISM increased from 60 to 70 credits. The MSc in Environmental Economics and Environmental Management has moved a core module Biodiversity and Conservation Biology to the autumn term and removed optional modules (Marine Ecosystems, Wildlife Management, Climate Science Change and Fisheries, Ecology and Management).

Approved for 2014/15 for stage four of the MEnv in Environmental Science, Environmental Geography and Environment, Economics and Ecology programmes. Ocean, Coasts and Climate Change option module moved from Autumn to Spring term in the Global Stream and Biodiversity and Conservation Biology option moved from Spring to Autumn term in the Marine Conservation stream and Ecology and Diversity stream. From 2015/16 the Sea Level Change Autumn term option module, (revised from level 6 to 7) will be included in the Global Change stream.

*Health Sciences:* Approval of the immediate withdrawal of the Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Leadership.

Further to M13.14/22, approval of the following changes to assessment rules for all currently enrolled part-time undergraduate and graduate CPD pathway students. The existing rules will remain for students who commenced their final module in 2012/13.

1. Removal of compensation from all part-time undergraduate and graduate single stage level 5 and level 6 CPD programmes (DipHE, BA/BSc and GradDip) – making all part-time undergraduate modules non-compensatable;
2. Increasing the number of credits that can be failed and reassessed at first attempt in the part-time 'top-up' BA/BSc single stage level 6 CPD programmes from 40 to 60 credits.

Originally UTC gave approval of the above for new students only. The approval has been extended to include currently enrolled students following a wide consultation with all affected students. One student raised concerns. These were discussed with the student and no further concerns remain.

*History of Art:* Approval for 2014/15 of the withdrawal of two 40 credit long-thin Stage 3 undergraduate modules. Students on the combined BA in History and History of Art would

be able to choose from a wider range of 40 credit option modules, studied in either the Autumn Term or Spring/Summer.

*Management:* Approval of a change to the assignment word count for the Masters module Continuity Change in Organisations (from 2000 to 3000 words) with immediate effect.

*PEP:* Approval that current PPE second years (2012 entrants) will be required to take a minimum of 20 credits in each of the three subjects and one PEP module in stage 3 (this is a change from the modification approved in UTC M12-13/26, which required a minimum of 30 credits in each of the subjects). Information previously received by students indicated that the choice would be a minimum of 20 credits. The Board of Studies will consider in week 7 whether it wishes the choice to be a minimum of 20 credits for future cohorts too.

#### **M13-14/126 Exchange Agreements**

The Committee **noted** that the Chair had approved a worldwide exchange with the Chemistry Department and University of Mumbai, Department of Atomic Energy, Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences.

#### **M13-14/127 External Assessors and Review Panels**

The Committee **noted** that the Chair had **approved** Professor Ray Land (Durham University) and Professor Ian Willis (Liverpool University) as External Assessors for the Periodic Review of Academic Practice on 7 May 2014.

#### **M13-14/128 Register of Postgraduate Research Collaborations**

The Committee **received** an updated register of Postgraduate Research Collaborations from 2013/14 (UTC.13-14/83).

#### **M13-14/129 NSS Actions**

The Committee **received** a report summarising progress made on NSS actions (UTC.13-14/84).

#### **M13-14/130 Dates of Next Meetings**

The Committee **noted** the dates of the next meetings (all at 1.00pm in HG15, Heslington Hall unless otherwise stated):

- Monday 19 May 2014
- Monday 23 June 2014