SENATE

TEACHING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2012

Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor T Sheldon (Chair), Dr H Altink, Ms B Akua-Sakyiwah (GSA Representative), Dr TT Arvind, Prof W Bonefeld, Mrs L Booth, Mr N Dandy, Dr S King, Mr G Osborn (YUSU Representative), Dr A Parsons, Ms E Roberts, Prof L Siciliani, Dr H Smith, Prof C Thompson, Dr R Vann, Dr R Waites

In attendance: Dr K Clegg (M11-12/128 and M11-12/130), Dr Z Devlin, Mrs K Dodd, Ms C Lowe, Ms C Moore (Secretary), Prof J Robinson

Apologies: Prof W Bonefeld, Prof P Drew, Dr R Ogden, Mr B Saynor, Dr M White

11-12/117 Minutes and Action Log
The minutes of the meeting on 16th January 2012 were approved.

The UTC action log was considered and it was noted that:

- that the GSA will work with the ASO to identify themes in the GSA’s academic and welfare cases and report to the next meeting. ACTION: GSA & ASO
- that discussions on how and whether to carry out deep analysis of degree classifications still need to be held, given the impact of the new modular scheme. ACTION: Chair
- that departments had provided details of the perceived barriers to internal programme transfers and the Secretary would take this forward with the incoming PVC for Learning and Teaching. ACTION: Secretary
- that the Director of PGCAP is clarifying which departments are not giving staff undertaking the PGCAP programme a reduced teaching load while they are enrolled on the programme and will be asked to report to the next meeting. ACTION: Secretary
- that the PVC for Students and the Assistant Registrar: Student Progress are considering how best to monitor the occurrence of TAP meetings and will report to the May or June meeting.
The following actions were noted as closed:

- to investigate the light cleaning of blackboards. (M10-11/201). *The Blackboard Action Group has met and that the minutes of the meeting will be sent to Campus Services.*
- to consider possible solutions to alleviate the reported concentrated nature of the Common Assessment Period (M11-12/48) *This is being taken forward by SCA*
- to remind and help departments to start planning activities for the weeks 8-10 summer term period in 2011/12 (M11-12/48). *Guidance has been provided via web pages: [http://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/programme-development/programmes/weeks8-10/](http://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/programme-development/programmes/weeks8-10/)*
- to discuss the extension of the successful academic writing module piloted in TYMS (M11-12/67). *The review by the Learning Enhancement Team in ASO of the Understanding Arguments in Management module is continuing, with the writing of current students being compared with that of students who have not taken this module to identify whether there has been improvements in standards of essay writing. The Committee also noted the problems associated with marks being announced before they were moderated.*
- to give examples of assessment information and module descriptors which are difficult for international students to understand due to assumed background knowledge of the UK system to the Academic Registrar. (M11-12/68) *Students will be encouraged to feed this into the APR process in departments where this is perceived to be an issue. It was noted that discussions are scheduled as to how to tighten the link between the departments’ APR meetings in the Autumn Term and the summer for a organised by GSA.*
- to raise with HEFCE the University’s concerns that the KIS does not display enough contextual information (M11-12/72). *HEFCE have allowed some URL links in the KIS.*
- to review the balance between central and local provision of training and development for PGR students (M11-12/99). *This is being taken forward by the Director of the RDT.*
- to send the report on post-PRES Focus Groups to the 6 departments from where students participated (M11-12/100). *The report has been sent to departments.*
- to report on the new QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (see UTC.11-12/65 and M11-12/128)
- to review the Academic Misconduct Policy to ensure that it is still fit for purpose (M11-12/110). *This is being taken forward by SCA: the review of Academic Misconduct procedures is being restarted under the direction of Cecilia Lowe, Steve King and Linda Perriton.*
11-12/118 Centre for Women’s Studies: Master in European Gender and Equality Studies (EGALES)
Further to M10-11/210, it was noted that the matters raised by the Committee have been addressed and so final approval has been granted.

11-12/119 Politics: Politics Mundus MAPP (Erasmus Mundus Programme)
Further to M11-12/20, it was noted that this programme was submitted to the meeting of Senate on 1 November 2011, having been given conditional final approval by UTC. The Consortium met in February and is confident that NVAO accreditation will be granted in April. Further work on the conditions has taken place, in particular the production of an action plan relating to visas, accommodation, student records etc and the development of the assessment rules pertaining to the programme, which will be circulated to the Committee in due course. Following the outstanding work on the assessment rules and the development of module descriptors, and following consultation with the University’s legal advisor, the Committee can consider for full approval the draft written agreement between the University of York and ISS and CEU.

11-12/120 Theatre, Film and Television: ‘in principle’ approval of a BSc in Interactive Media TFTV
Further to M11-12/74, it was noted that the matters raised by the Committee have been addressed. The Committee also noted that while TFTV have met with the Department of Sociology, they also need to involve the Departments of Computer Science, Electronics and Music in their ongoing discussions. Full approval for the programme will be sought from UTC in October 2012.

11-12/121 Mathematics: MSc in Statistics and Computational Finance
Further to M11-12/75, it was noted that the matters raised by the Committee have been addressed and so final approval has been granted.

11-12/122 Computer Science: MSc in Large Scale Complex IT Systems
Further to M11-12/76, it was noted that the matters raised by the Committee have been addressed and so final approval has been granted. The Committee also noted that Computer Science has received financial assistance with marketing, including the naming of their degree programmes.

11-12/123 Computer Science: MSc in Cybersecurity
Further to M11-12/77, it was noted that the matters raised by the Committee have been addressed and so final approval has been granted.

11-12/124 Biology: BSc in Biomedical Sciences
Further to M11-12/78 it was noted that the matters raised by the Committee are still to be addressed. Following the decision of Planning Committee, new teaching labs
will not now be built as quickly as the department hoped. The BSc in Biomedical Sciences will not now be able to start in 2013/14, and full approval for the programme will be sought from Teaching Committee nearer the actual start time.

11-12/125 Theatre, Film and Television: Major modification to BSc in Film and Television Production
Further to M11-12/79 it was noted that the matters raised by the Committee have been addressed and so final approval has been granted.

11-12/126 Oral Report from the Chair
The Committee received an oral report from the Chair, as follows:

The Department of Social Policy and Social Work has been awarded 10 Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholarships for the Masters of Public Administration - International Development programme for 2012/13.

QAA Institutional Review
The University has received the outline findings of the QAA’s Institutional Review Team. The tabled paper summarised the activities of review week and the outline findings of the panel. The University has met QAA expectations in the areas of threshold standards and the quality of student learning opportunities, and will be commended for the enhancement of student learning opportunities. The Committee acknowledged the work done by Mr N Dandy, the ASO and the student representatives, Mr G Osborn and Ms K Diaconu and congratulated them on the outcome.

Russell Group
The University of York has been invited to join the Russell Group of universities from August 2012. This will be advertised within the student portal and to applicants who have been made offers.

The National Student Survey 2012
The NSS opened on 23 January and will close on 30 April. Response rate as of Friday 9 March was 55% (same time last year 45%). Most departments are now above the threshold for publication (50%) – those that have not reached 50% are Biochemistry, Electronics, Maths, Music, Philosophy, Sociology, Social Policy and TFTV, although they are all above 40%. YUSU have promoted the survey in a variety of ways and will be getting student ambassadors to promote the survey on the ground in weeks 9 and 10.

Library refurbishment
The refurbishment of the J.B. Morrell library is now complete and 24-hour opening will commence from Summer term week 0.
11-12/127 Oral Report from the Student Representatives

The Committee received an oral report from the student representatives, as follows:

**YUSU representative:**
YUSU will shortly be organising meetings with departmental administrators and Chairs of Boards of Studies to discuss the plans for next year’s course rep elections, consider whether the procedure needs to be altered and ensure that good relationships are maintained.

**GSA representative:**
The GSA are looking into the support given to Postgraduates Who Teach (PGWTs) to identify areas that could be improved and will submit a proposal to the Committee. The GSA are also meeting with the chaplains based at the University, York St John’s University and York Elim Pentecostal Church to establish joint events to provide support and tackle the isolation sometimes experienced by PGR students.

11-12/128 Chapter 11: Research Degrees, from the new QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education

The Committee considered the draft for consultation of Chapter 11: Research Degrees, from the new QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (UTC.11-12/65). Dr K Clegg, Director of the Researcher Development Team, reported on her tabled paper of additional suggested revisions to the Draft Code. The Committee approved the ASO’s suggested list of edits to the draft code with the following alterations:

- to omit “on page 3, ‘Graduate schools and centres for doctoral training’, it is rather misleading to refer to research students as being in a ‘cohort’ in view of the individual nature of this type of work” as it was felt that cohorts were important for research students within some disciplines;
- to add the suggestion that, under ‘Progress and Review Arrangements’ there should be some reference to the assessment of taught material as a point of progression and review;
- to add the suggestion that consideration should be given to informal ways of dealing with a breakdown in the student/supervisor relationship, before recourse to student complaints and appeals;
- to add the suggestion that Indicator 7 and Indicator 14 should cross-reference each other and be more closely linked to avoid the appearance that they contradict each other;
- to add the suggestion that, on page 19, teaching skills should be pulled out as an indicator, e.g. “Where research students have teaching roles, they should receive appropriate training, support and mentoring, for their own benefit and to safeguard the experience of the students they are teaching”.
11-12/129 Fitness to practice policy
The Committee considered a proposal for a fitness to practice policy (UTC.11-12/66).
The Committee noted that the draft would benefit from a clearer structure in terms of separating out the preamble, policy and process. The Committee also noted the concerns of the students’ unions regarding the intention to hold the academic misconduct and fitness to practice issues at one hearing (1.4 and 2.12), due to problems with the way some departmental academic misconduct hearings have been conducted in the past. The Committee recommended that the hearings should be separated by a few days to enable a student time to indicate their intention to appeal against the academic misconduct decision.

In addition, the Committee noted that there were several further points that needed amending:

- that while the policy reflects parity across the university as a whole in terms of approach, the specific requirements of the PSRBs will be taken into account by the particular fitness to practice panel;
- that in 1.3, the distinction between the fitness to practice policy and the possible departmental policies needs to be made clearer (i.e. does the fitness to practice policy represent the procedure that should be applied while the departmental policies cover the specific PSRB requirements?);
- that in 1.4, amendments should be made in line with the review of the Academic Misconduct policy, if needed;
- that in 2.11 and 2.19, it should be made clear that the Chair of Board of Studies should not be a member of the fitness to practice panel;
- that in 2.13, “reasonable notice” should be defined and the paragraph should be amended to state that extra documentation should only be submitted on the eve of or day of the hearing in exceptional circumstances (whether by the student or by the department);
- that in 2.7, reference should be made to clients as well as to patients;
- that in 2.16, “severity of behaviour” and “unacceptable risk” should be explained, and consideration should be given to whether the panel should also take into account the stage of the programme;
- that in 2.17d, there should be reference to possible exit routes so that a student might leave with an academic qualification;
- that in 3.1, “three working days” is unrealistic and should be lengthened;
- that in 3.2, it should be made clear who pays for the medical specialist.

The Committee decided that the draft should be revised in light of the above points and with assistance from Mrs K Dodd and should be considered again by the Committee. ACTION: Ms H Shay and Mrs K Dodd
11-12/130 Inductions for PGR students in 2012/13
The Committee considered a proposal for Inductions for PGR students in 2012/13, from the Researcher Development Team (UTC.11-12/67). The Committee approved the proposal that the inductions should be mandatory and attendance would be monitored through the TAP. The Committee recommended that supporting resources should be provided on the VLE so that students who fail to attend can have an alternative means of accessing the information. The Committee also recommended that the RDT ensure there is no unintended overlap between the induction events, the Introduction to Learning and Teaching and the PGWTs’ residential training, and that they work with departments to ensure that the central induction complements departmental provision. It was also suggested that the RDT should consider changing the title from “Starting your PhD” as it was felt this may more accurately reflect the kind of material that departments would be delivering. The RDT are asked to review the new provision and report to the Committee after the first year of delivery.

11-12/131 Student Representation Policy
The Committee noted that a revised version of the Student Representation Policy, first considered in October (M11-12/17 refers), has been postponed to allow input from the incoming PVC for Learning and Teaching on the issues raised by Senate and to allow for any recommendations in the QAA Institutional Review report (UTC.11-12/68). Redrafting will take into account the need for greater clarity on the issue of the form of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and how much flexibility there is in this, and will take into account the revised chapter of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

11-12/132 Health Sciences: Certificate of Higher Education for Support Workers
The Committee considered a proposal for a Certificate of Higher Education for Support Workers from the department of Health Sciences (UTC.11-12/69). The proposal had been considered in advance of the meeting by Dr H Altink and Mrs L Booth. The Committee approved the proposal on condition that:

- more information is provided on the assessment tasks;
- consideration is given to how best to support the transition of students into the university, as the programme is targeted at students with non-traditional qualifications;
- 1.12 of Curriculum Document 1 is amended to include the full details of re-assessment from the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback;
- 1.12 of Curriculum Document 1 is amended to include reference to the possibility that student can progress up to the existing Nursing programmes;
- in 3.2 of Curriculum Document 1, more information should be provided on the scope of the “verbal assignment preparation”;
in 3.3 of Curriculum Document 1, the phrase “Assessments are usually formally assessed against the marking criteria” should be amended to “Assessments are formally assessed against the marking criteria”;

section 11 of the Terms of Acceptance should cross-reference the fitness to practice policy, when approved;

the phrase “which you are strongly recommended to read at the start of your course” is deleted from the first paragraph, page 15, of the Terms of Acceptance (i.e. regarding the student handbook).

The Committee also noted that the response to section 32 ‘Ethical considerations’ on the new programme pro forma did not cover any possible ethical concerns that the programme might raise and request that this is given further thought.

11-12/133 Physics: Four year PhD programme in Plasma Science and Fusion Energy

The Committee approved a proposal for a four year PhD programme in Plasma Science and Fusion Energy from the department of Physics (UTC. 11-12/70). The proposal had been considered in advance of the meeting by Dr A Parsons and Professor C Thompson. The Committee noted that this proposal was developed in response to an EPSRC Doctoral Training Centre grant which would support 10 students in each of two annual intakes distributed among five institutions. The grant is potentially renewable for a further five years. Students cannot transfer between institutions but there are potential opportunities for co-supervision.

The Committee also noted that at the end of the first year the following re-assessment rules would apply:

- if a student fails either the taught or the research component they can be re-assessed;
- if a student fails the re-assessment of the taught component, they will fail the programme
- if a student fails the re-assessment of the research component they will have the opportunity to transfer to the MSc by Research.

11-12/134 Education: BSc Psychology in Education

The Committee considered a proposal for a BSc in Psychology in Education, from the department of Education (UTC.11-12/71). The proposal had been considered in advance of the meeting by Dr H Smith and Dr R Waites. The programme was approved subject to the following issues being addressed:

- further thought needs to be given to developing the module content in relation to the Committee’s concern that some of the modules appeared to be under-theorised
when this has been done, new module descriptors need to be submitted to the Committee, which also clarify workload and assessment information and make sure that hours are matched to credit weightings

comments from an additional External Assessor should be obtained, preferably someone with experience of similar degrees in the UK, and experience of the BPS accreditation process. The department should consider involving one of the educational psychologists from the Institute from Effective Education in this process. In particular, the External Assessor should be asked to comment upon the degree title in relation to the content, in response to concerns raised by the department of Psychology

a new programme specification should be submitted with more information about:

- what will take place during the additional teaching week between the two four-week blocks shown on the course structure diagram
- the decision to make ‘Understanding psychology in education in practice’ and ‘Research methods in psychology and education II’ optional rather than core modules. In particular the Committee was concerned that not taking the latter might disadvantage students during their dissertation. The Committee recommends that these modules be made compulsory
- the progression through the degree programme, as the modules at different levels have similar-sounding titles.

11-12/135 SPSW: MA (or MPA) in Comparative Applied Social and Public Policy, Evaluation and Research (CASPPER)
The Committee considered a proposal for an MA (or MPA) in Comparative Applied Social and Public Policy, Evaluation and Research (CASPER) from the department of Social Policy and Social Work (UTC.11-12/72). The proposal had been considered in advance of the meeting by Professor P Drew and Dr R Vann. The Committee noted that the department would prefer this to be an MPA and suggested they consult with Professor A Webster with regard to his review of the MPA structure at the university.

This programme was approved subject to the following amendments:

- that consideration is given to increasing the amount of formative assessment particularly at the start of the programme;
- that assessment is introduced for the placement module, such as a reflective portfolio;
- that reassurance is given to the Committee that staffing for this programme is included in the department’s Medium Term Plan;
- that minor errors in the assessment breakdown are corrected.
11-12/136 Natural Sciences Degree
The Committee received a proposal for a Natural Sciences Degree (UTC.11-1-73). It was noted that Planning Committee had approved the proposed programme to be taken forward to the next stage of development and that a development group would be formed and a “champion” appointed. The Committee were invited to consider the project report and forward any comments to Dr Z Devlin in the ASO.

11-12/137 Health Sciences: MSc Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
The Committee considered a major modification to the MSc Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to replace three Stage 2 option modules with one mandatory 30 credit module that covers the majority of the same content and to withdraw the ‘Clinical Leadership and Supervision’ and ‘Research Methods’ modules (UTC.11-12/74). Relevant aspects of ‘Clinical Leadership and Supervision’ would be incorporated into other modules and ‘Research Methods’ would be replaced by selected elements of an existing 20 credit research methods module. The modification had been considered in advance of the meeting by Dr M White and Ms C Moore. The Committee noted that the programme will shortly be withdrawn due to the loss of funding from the Strategic Health Authority and the proposed modification is to enable the department to manage a small cohort of eleven students, currently in Stage 1. The Committee also noted that the department had consulted with the affected students who were happy with the proposed changes once they were assured that they would still be able to apply for accreditation. The department had also agreed to provide two streams in the mandatory 30 credit module: child and adolescent mental health, and adult mental health. The Committee approved the modification.

11-12/138 Standing Committee on Assessment
The Committee considered a report from the Standing Committee on Assessment (UTC.11-12/75) and approved recommendations concerning:

i) Dyslexia Protocols – interim arrangements for assessments for students who have undertaken a University screening test with a positive result and who are awaiting a full psychological test; and the removal of the requirement that a post-16 test should be no more than four years old (SCA.11-12/40)

ii) Marginal Fails for ISMs – the application of Section F.9 of the Guide to Assessment to Integrated Masters Programmes where the ISM is greater than 40 credits (i.e. that ISMs of over 40 credits receiving a grade of between 40-49 can be resubmitted after a period of no more than two months with changes made and including a cover sheet indicating what changes have been made)
Any comments on these issues should be forwarded to the Chair of SCA. The Committee noted that consideration of agenda item 15 (iii) – Section 8, Code of Practice on Research Degrees – was postponed until the May meeting of UTC.

**11-12/139 Politics (PRDU): MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs by online distance learning**

The Committee considered a revised proposal for an MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs by online distance learning from the department of Politics (UTC.11-12/77), which is intended for launch in January 2013. The proposal was considered in advance of the meeting by Dr R Ogden and Ms E Roberts. The Committee noted that a good deal of effort had gone into addressing the Committee’s previous comments (UTC.11-12/105), including amendment and clarification of module descriptions; further work in relation to programme content and delivery; confirmation that the necessary arrangements are in place with internal and external partners and that arrangements are on course for the launch of the programme; and confirmation that the programme has the wider support of the department. The Committee also noted that the staff resources had been increased, advice had been taken from the E-Learning Development Team, modifications had been made to the delivery of the programme and to the ISM and the synchronous elements had been removed.

The Committee approved the programme on condition that:

- a strong project management framework is put in place to oversee final development and delivery, to set regular milestones, and to provide updates to UTC.
- the finalised content for Module 1 be provided to its June meeting.

**11-12/140 York International Foundation Programme (YIFP)**

The Committee noted that the agreement between the University and York College regarding the York International Foundation Programme (YIFP) has been renewed for a further five years.

**11-12/141 York International Foundation Programme (YIFP)**

The Committee noted that the units that comprise the YIFP are now accredited by Ascentis instead of the Open College Network.

**11-12/142 Erasmus student exchange with Science Po, Universitat Autonoma, and Universität Konstanz**

The Committee noted that the Chair has approved undergraduate Erasmus exchanges between the Department of Politics and Science Po, Paris, France; the Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain; and Universität Konstanz, Germany.

**11-12/143 Modifications to, and Withdrawals of, Programmes of study**
The Committee received a report on modifications to, and withdrawals of, programmes of study approved by Chair’s action between January and March 2012 (UTC.11-12/76). The Committee noted that the Chair, acting on behalf of the Committee, had approved modifications to, and withdrawals of, programmes of study as follows (further details are available from the Academic Support Office):

**Archaeology:** Approval from 2012/13 to offer two HYMS modules (offered on the MSc in Human Evolution), Hard Tissue Biology and Functional and Musculoskeletal Anatomy, as optional modules on the MSc in Bioarchaeology.

Approval to increase the contact hours from one hour-long lecture and one hour-long seminar per week, to one hour-long lecture and one two-hour seminar each week in the stage two, optional core modules: Themes in Historical Archaeology and Themes in Prehistory (30 credits, at I level). This will take effect in 2012/13, impacting upon current students.

**Centre for Medieval Studies (CMS):** Approval to continue to manage and administer module assessment at programme level, rather than module level, for the current cohort.

**English and Related Studies:** Immediate approval for the 10 credit, Graduate Training Programme (assessed through a dissertation proposal) to be assessed on a pass/fail basis. This applies to all graduate programmes in the Department, excluding the MA in Medieval English Literatures (which does not have this graduate training module attached), MA in Eighteenth Century Studies: The Global Eighteenth Century and Eighteenth-Century Studies: Representations and Contexts 1750-1850. Approval for a 100 credit ISM for MA in Eighteenth Century Studies: The Global Eighteenth Century and Eighteenth-Century Studies: Representations and Contexts 1750-1850 approved in October 2011.

**Environment:** Approval of a modification to modules on the MSc, Diploma and Certificate in Environmental Science and Management to take effect for students entering in 2012/13.

**Health Sciences:** Approval of the request to withdraw the MSc in Health Sciences (Cancer Epidemiology), with immediate effect.

Approval of the request to withdraw the PG Cert/PG Dipl/MSc in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, with immediate effect.
**Language and Linguistic Science:** Approval from 2012 to change ‘Translation: methodology and practice’ from a core module to an optional core, stage three module, on all of the four-year language degrees. Students will now have to choose 20 credits from a small list of optional language modules (in the student’s target language), of which ‘Translation: methodology and practice’ will be one option. This will be alongside studying the core module, ‘Language and Society III’.

Approval to change the degree names French and Linguistics (with a year in Europe) and German and Linguistics (with a year in Europe) to French and Linguistics and German and Linguistics bringing the titles in-line with the Spanish and Linguistics four-year degree. These degrees do not have three-year equivalents and as the study of languages is such that a year studying/working in the target-language is a requirement of language degrees, the degree also offers opportunities for students to study in a French/German-speaking country, which can be outside of Europe.

**Psychology Department:** Approval of the request for the temporary suspension for 2012/13 entry, of the MSc in Developmental Disorders of Learning and Cognition.

**Centre for Women’s Studies:** Approval of a first undergraduate module in Sexuality, Culture and Technology.

**11-12/144 Distance Learning Forum**
The Committee noted that the minutes from the Distance Learning Forum held on 6 February 2012 are available online.

**11-12/145 Coordinating Group for Supplementary Programmes**
The Committee noted that the minutes from the meeting of the Coordinating Group for Supplementary Programmes held on 13 December 2011 are available online.

**11-12/146 Membership**
The Committee noted that Professor T Sheldon was standing down as Chair and welcomed Professor J Robinson. The Committee acknowledged Professor T Sheldon’s leadership and work as Chair since 2004. Professor T Sheldon thanked the Committee for their effort and commitment.

**11-12/147 Date of the Next Meeting**
The Committee noted the date of the next meeting:

- Monday 21 May 2012, 14:15, room HG15, Heslington Hall.