

THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Senate

TEACHING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the exceptional meeting of the University Teaching Committee held on 25th April 2013.

Present: the PVC for Learning, Teaching and Information (Chair), Senior Assistant Registrar (ex officio), Dr I Abrahams, Prof W Bonefeld, Mrs L Booth, Dr A Carpenter, Mr T Clarke, Mr R Davis (GSA Representative), Dr S King, Mr G Osborn (YUSU Representative), Dr M Roodhouse, Dr K Selby, Prof L Siciliani, Dr H Smith, Dr R Vann, Prof A Young

In attendance: Dr Z Devlin (minute taker), Mr R Gill (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from the Deputy Vice Chancellor (ex officio), the Academic Registrar (ex officio), Dr A Kaloski-Naylor, Professor C Thompson and Dr M White

12-13/130 Oral report from the Chair

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

UTC membership

The Chair reported that the Academic Coordinators will be in attendance at University Teaching Committee from the next meeting. If members have any concerns they should contact the Chair.

UTC working group on eLearning and the VLE

The UTC members on the working group are unable to attend the next meeting (3 May, 10.30-12.00). Any UTC members able to attend in their place were asked to contact the Chair.

12-13/131 Consultation on the structure of the academic year

The Committee **received** the results of the consultation on the structure of the academic year (UTC M.12-13/89). The Committee **noted** that the responses received were very divergent, with an equal

split between departments who would like to retain the current academic year structure and those who wish to move to some form of semesters. There was no pattern across subject groupings in terms of how departments responded. The YUSU representative **reported** an additional finding from their consultation that colleges and student societies would like to see an extra week of term after the exams period in any proposed semester structure to allow for extra-curricular activities. The Committee **noted** that the divergent views across the University meant that there was no clear mandate for either of consultation options 1 or 2 and that the concerns expressed by departments for both courses of action needed to be taken seriously. It was **agreed** that any proposal for change would need to be accompanied by a clear rationale and convincing case as to why it is needed. Any further consultation would need to recapture the original rationale for the work in order to move towards a shared understanding of how to address the issues.

It was **agreed** that the Chair and a member of ASO would meet individually with the senior managers of teaching in each department to understand, interpret and discuss that department's responses and engage in further discussion about many of the general themes that arose from the consultation responses. A brief update will be provided to UTC in June and the working group will be reconvened to review the results of the further dialogue and generate a proposal for UTC's consideration in the new academic year. This period of further exploration would be limited to six months and would leave open all options for adjusting the academic year structure. Departments would have a further opportunity for consultation on any proposal. The timetable for taking any proposal to Senate would be reviewed, given the timing of the arrival of the new Vice Chancellor.

It was further **agreed** that the Chair would take steps to address issues with the academic year structure that could not wait for the outcomes of the extended consultation. The Chair will therefore work with the Study Abroad Office to develop assessment requirements for visiting students and will also review departments' use of summer term weeks 1-4 for teaching.

12-13/132 Dates of Next Meetings

The Committee **noted** the dates of the next meetings in H/G15, Heslington Hall:

- Monday 20th May 2013, 1.15pm
- Monday 24th June 2013, 1.15pm