

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Senate

TEACHING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held 8 December 2016

Present: Professor J Robinson (Chair)
Mr N Dandy
Mrs K Dodd
Professor B Fulton
Dr S King
Mr E Braman
Dr G Chitty
Mr J Fagan
Professor A Hunt
Ms R Ibrahim (GSA representative)
Ms T Laycock (YUSU representative)
Dr B Lee
Professor T Lightfoot
Dr E Major
Professor G Ozkan
Dr K Selby
Professor D Smith
Professor J Thijssen
Professor R Waites

In Attendance: Mrs J Iddon (ASO, Secretary)
Mrs J Brotherton (ASO, Minute Secretary)
Mr T Banham and Mr A Ferguson (for M16-17/58)

Apologies were received from Professor S Bell, Professor J Hudson, Professor M Ormrod and Dr L Waldorf.

CATEGORY I BUSINESS

M16-17/54 Minutes

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2016 (UTC.16-17/38).

M16-17/55 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Committee **received** an update on matters arising from the November minutes (UTC.16-17/38).

The Committee **received** a verbal update from the Chair of the Attendance Monitoring Working Group (M15-16/109). Members were informed that the Working Group had been in contact with Computer Science and with the International Pathway College. It was **reported** that work was on-going with respect to identifying potential software solutions. The Committee noted the importance of undertaking the work quickly given the implications for the University's compliance with Tier IV monitoring requirements. Andy

Hunt and Ed Braman were thanked for having joined the Working Group. Members were advised that a draft policy on Attendance Monitoring would be submitted for consideration by UTC during the Spring term.

The Committee was informed that ASO had completed the additional analysis (relating to skills development) of the PTES results (M16-17/9). The analysis would be circulated to departments before the end of the Autumn term and would be received by UTC in February as a Category II paper.

It was **reported** that the matter arising relating to the new biology programmes (M15-16/153-154) had been closed subsequent to the circulation of papers. The Department of Biology had submitted the paperwork required for planning approval for the MSc Molecular Medicine and the MSc Biodiversity, Ecology and Ecosystems (including the change to the programme title [the previous proposed title was Agriculture, Biodiversity and Ecosystems]) to the Sciences Faculty Learning and Teaching Group.

[Secretary's post-meeting note: The Chair of the Sciences Faculty Learning and Teaching Group granted planning approval by Chair's action for MSc Molecular Medicine (to start in 2017/18), and the MSc Biodiversity, Ecology and Ecosystems (to start in 2018/19) on 8 December 2016].

M16-17/56 Oral Update from the Chair

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

- Members were thanked for their significant contribution to pedagogy approval events. 17 events had been held to date and a further 16 were scheduled before the end of the Autumn term. The Chair reported that feedback from the implementation of the Pedagogy to undergraduate programmes would be used to inform the processes for the roll-out of the Pedagogy to postgraduate programmes.
- Responses to the consultation on the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) had been considered by the SPA Working Group and a re-draft was being considered by UEB on Tuesday 13 December. Senate would be asked to approve the Student Partnership Agreement at the end of January.
- Anne Phillips, Department of Health Sciences, was congratulated on having been awarded a National Teaching Fellowship by the Higher Education Academy.
- The first volume of the York Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Journal had recently been published (November 2016) and was available for staff to download on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Network website.

M16-17/57 Update from the Student Representatives

YUSU

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

- YUSU had begun discussions with ASO about promotion of the 2017 National Student Survey.
- A student had submitted a policy motion to boycott the NSS and, in line with YUSU policy, a referendum was likely to follow. YUSU would continue with its normal activity in relation to the NSS until the outcome of the referendum was known.

GSA

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

- A forum for postgraduate course representatives had taken place.
- The Vice-President of the GSA had attended the Postgraduate Voice conference.

M16-17/58 Proposal for a Careers-hosted ‘with placement year’ option

Tom Banham and Andrew Ferguson attended for this item

Members **considered** a paper which sought Teaching Committee’s endorsement of the idea of developing a University-wide ‘with placement year’ option, hosted by the Careers department, and which would be available to all undergraduate students (UTC.16-17/39). The paper included a proposed timeline for implementation which outlined the intention for the ‘with placement year’ option to be available for the 2016/17 cohort in July 2018.

The Assistant Director of Careers explained that the proposal to develop a ‘with placement year’ option was part of the University’s strategic commitment to increasing the number and range of work experience opportunities to students. The ‘with placement year’ option was not intended to compete with current ‘year-in-industry’ programmes but rather complement current provision. In particular it would provide a route for students, studying in departments without capacity and expertise in placement-learning to undertake a placement as part of their programme (rather than having to take a Leave of Absence to take up such opportunities). Members were very supportive of the proposal and **endorsed, in principle**, the development of a University-wide ‘with placement year’ option.

Whilst Teaching Committee endorsed the development of a University-wide ‘with placement year’, members identified a number of considerations for the Working Group to address as it now sought to operationalise the proposal. These were:

- Management of students’ expectations: Members noted that it would need to be explicit that the onus was on the student to secure their placement and that the placement year was not guaranteed. It was reported that this was standard practice and it was already the case that placements were not guaranteed for current University year-in-industry programmes.
- Placements that fail: It was noted that there could be instances where placements ended, for reasons outside of a student’s control, before completion of the required number of weeks. The Committee requested that this scenario and its implications be given careful thought.
- A break between years 2 and 3 could be problematic for some programmes in terms of their academic design; for instance, where preparation for the dissertation began in the Summer term of year 2. Thought would need to be given to ensure appropriate support was provided for a student’s transition back to the final stage of the programme.
- Departments which already offered a ‘year-in-industry’ were often already heavily exploiting industry contacts in order to provide suitable placements. There was concern that departments’ industry contacts might prefer to accept students on the Careers-hosted ‘with placement year’ route rather than the ‘year-in-industry’ route which may well place higher demands on the placement provider.
- Resourcing: Members highlighted the significant workload involved in co-ordinating and supporting placements and that students taking the ‘with placement year’ option

would be entitled to access University welfare resources. Teaching Committee requested that consideration be given to the implications of the proposal for support services such as the Open Door Team.

- Financial implications: It was noted that the current fee for a 'year-in-industry' (and Year Abroad) was 15% of the standard annual tuition fee. Members queried how departments which already offered a 'year-in-industry' might be asked to contribute financially to the scheme.
- Progression: Members requested that the timing of the start of placements be given careful consideration to ensure alignment with the re-sit timetable and the progression cycle.
- Tier IV implications: Members noted that the current visa rules would make it very difficult for a student studying on a Tier IV visa to take advantage of the 'with placement year' option since it would require the student to return to their home country and re-apply for a new visa. Members noted that the University had no latitude in this area and had to comply with the regulations stipulated by UK Visas and Immigration.

UTC **agreed** that the Working Group should give further thought to the issues raised (as outlined above) and that Tom Banham and Andrew Ferguson should be invited to attend Faculty Learning and Teaching Group meetings (at the request of the faculties) as appropriate.

The Chair thanked Tom Banham and Andrew Ferguson for presenting the paper.

M16-17/59 Reports of the meetings of Faculty Learning and Teaching Groups

The Committee **received** reports of the meetings of Faculty Learning and Teaching Groups (FLTG) held in October and November (UTC.16-17/40). The Chair explained that in future the regular FLTG reports to UTC would typically be considered within the scope of Category II business. In the light of the FLTGs having been established at the beginning of the 2016/17 academic year, the Chair had requested that the first FLTG reports to UTC be included in Category I business.

Members who had attended meetings of the newly-established FLTGs were invited to share their initial views on the operation and benefits of the Groups. FLTG members reported that the meetings had provided a valuable opportunity for those engaged in learning and teaching to share experiences with colleagues in departments who faced similar issues and challenges. Members queried how views that were expressed during the FLTG meetings would be taken forward. The Chair explained that the most effective mechanisms for connecting UTC and FLTG had not yet been determined and that work was ongoing between the Chair and the faculty Deans to clarify the relationship between UTC and FLTG.

Teaching Committee considered the reports of the minutes of the FLTG and during discussion it was **noted** that:

- the Arts and Humanities FLTG had discussed, in detail, the consultation paper on the policy implications of the proposed Student Partnership Agreement. The Chair reported that feedback on the possible threshold standards was also considered through the consultation process and would inform a draft inclusive teaching and

learning policy to be considered by UTC during the Spring/Summer term of 2016/17.

- the Science FLTG had asked UTC to consider the timing of the Learning and Teaching Conference. The Chair explained that the timing of the Conference was the remit of Learning and Teaching Forum; members' comments from UTC's November meeting regarding the Conference date (M16-17/43 refers) had been passed on to the Chair and Secretary of Forum.
- the Science FLTG also raised concerns about the timetabling of exams and the Common Assessment Period. The Chair reported that work to mitigate the congestion during the Common Assessment Period was ongoing and a range of options were being considered including amending the modular rules to permit the assessment of Autumn term modules in the Summer term.

M16-17/60 BA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

The Committee **considered** a proposal for a new BA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to be introduced in September 2018 (UTC.16-17/41). The programme would be full-time, delivered over three years and was designed to embed the Trinity College London Certificate in TESOL (Level 5) within it; thereby providing graduates with an internationally recognised TESOL qualification. The programme included the introduction of five new modules and it had been designed to be compliant with the principles of the York pedagogy.

The programme had been reviewed in advance by Prof. Gulcin Ozkan and Prof. John Hudson. It had their support subject to some minor amendments. The proposal had also been reviewed by two external assessors and had their support, with a suggestion from one of the external assessors that the IELTS requirement be revised to raise the minimum of 5.5 for each skill component to 6.0. In the light of the programme's specific focus on producing English Language teaching professionals, the UTC reviewers were supportive of this suggestion. Two further substantive issues raised by the UTC reviewers were:

- The title of the programme: given that the programme was built largely from existing modules (alongside five new modules) the UTC reviewers requested that the Department gave consideration as to whether the title BA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages was appropriate (or whether BA in Education and TESOL might more accurately reflect the content). The Department had confirmed that the new modules did offer specialist TESOL content, and whilst one of the external assessors suggested changing the module titles, neither external had queried the appropriateness of the programme title.
- Opportunities to satisfy the practice hours' requirement: The Committee noted that practice-based learning was central to the programme's distinctiveness and to the award of the Trinity College London Certificate of TESOL. The proposal articulated that the practice opportunities would be created through advertising (via the Departmental website and the local press) free English classes to students for whom English is an additional language and also through advertising classes to current students from the International Pathway College (IPC) and the York Management School. The UTC reviewers expressed concern with respect to the reliance on volunteers for teaching practice opportunities and highlighted the risk of a shortfall of volunteers. Whilst it was reported that the IPC had agreed to advertise the English language classes and that

other University students may well volunteer to participate, the Committee was, nevertheless, concerned about the relatively informal nature of the practice opportunities. It was noted that, without sight of the planning documentation, which had been considered by the Faculty Learning and Teaching Group, members did not know the recruitment target (and therefore the number of associated practice opportunities needed). The Committee agreed that the IPC should not be relied upon, particularly as IPC students would not be in York during August when the teaching practice was due to be reassessed.

During discussion members of Teaching Committee queried several further aspects of the proposal:

- The articulation of Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO)
 - PLO 3 referred to multicultural students and it was suggested that this be amended to “students of different cultures”
 - PLO 8 suggested that by achieving “heightened awareness of their own communication style and a focus on clear, coherent speech and writing” students would “ensure mutual understanding among learners and colleagues in multicultural settings”
- Modules
 - Stage 3 Spring option modules should normally be assessed during weeks 5-7 of the Summer term
 - Section 7a: the entry for TESOL Theory and Practice module assessments was different to the entry for that module in the *Overview of Modules by Stage* table
 - The contribution of each assessment to the module mark had not been included in the *Overview of Modules by Stage* table
- Section 10b referred extensively to 'placement provider', which appeared erroneous given that the Department was responsible for providing the practice opportunities (and therefore is the 'placement provider').
- 11.f Transfers in/out
 - Transfers in: the Department had entered 'yes' in this field, however the additional details section indicated that students would not be able to transfer in from other relevant programmes
 - Transfers out: further details were required regarding the circumstances under which transfers to other programmes were permitted. For example, it was not clear whether the reference to 'fail to progress' meant fail at the first attempt or fail at the re-sit. It was noted that “...they can transfer to either...” should be qualified with the required number of credits for transfer.
- Trinity Certificate TESOL: members queried the relationship between the requirements of the Trinity Certificate and those of the University; specifically whether there were any additional assessment (or other) constraints applied because of the embedded Trinity Certificate and, if there were, the nature of the award (i.e. York Award without the Trinity Certificate) given to students who break those constraints. Furthermore, Teaching Committee requested more information on the ways in which Trinity rules (for example on assessment, re-sits, attendance, cohort size) may conflict with York rules and the associated implications for students.

The Committee **agreed** to approve the programme subject to the following:

- Raising the IELTS requirement to a minimum of 6.0 for each skill component (and an overall score of 6.5).
- Further assurance that the required teaching practice opportunities would be available and of the arrangements to provide sufficient opportunities should there be too few volunteers from the IPC and the York Management School.
- Clearer articulation of PLOs 3 and 8.
- Specific queries relating to transfers in/out (above) being addressed and the programme design document being amended as appropriate.
- Confirmation of the relationship between the rules (in particular those relating to assessment) for achieving the Trinity Certificate and the University's rules and the implications for students with respect to their entitlement to an award.

Teaching Committee **decided** that the proposal should be refined accordingly and be subject to final sign-off by the Chair, following additional scrutiny by the Chair of SCA and by Professors Hudson and Ozkan as UTC reviewers of the programme proposal.

[Secretary's post-meeting note: UTC received the Social Sciences FLTG November synopsis report (UTC.16-17/40f) which reported that the BA TESOL had been granted planning approval subject to clarification and confirmation of consideration of three issues. Following the meeting of UTC it was confirmed that the three issues had not yet been clarified and therefore the proposal did not have full planning approval. The Department would therefore be advised that the programme must not be advertised until planning approval had been granted]

M16-17/61 Teaching Excellence Framework Provider Submission

Freedom of Information Act Exempt: Minute Commercial in Confidence

CATEGORY II BUSINESS

M16-17/62 Modifications and Withdrawals

The Committee **received** a report of modifications and withdrawals that had been approved by the Chair:

- The introduction in 2017-18 of new 3 + 1 with Year Abroad routes in BA History of Art, and BA Curating and Art History. The additional year will take place between Stage 1 and Stage 2, and had been approved for an initial period of 2 years. The first students will go abroad in 2018/19 and the second in 2019/20.
- The renaming of the 'Physics with a year in Europe' programmes to 'with a year abroad' (also applying to Theoretical Physics, Physics with Astrophysics and Physics with Philosophy), with effect from 2014/15 entrants onwards.

M16-17/63 Pedagogy Approval Panels

The Committee **received** a report on the decisions of York Pedagogy Approval Panels approved by Chair's action between 2 November and 18 November 2016 (UTC.16-17/43).

M16-17/64 Periodic Review of the Department of Chemistry

The Committee **received** an updated action plan arising from the Periodic Review of the Department of Chemistry (UTC.16-17/44).

M16-17/65 Annual Provider Review

The Committee **received** an update on the Annual Provider Review Process (UTC.16-17/45).

M16-17/66 Periodic Review: External assessors

The Committee **noted** that the Chair had approved the following assessors:

- Professor Alvin Birdi (University of Bristol) and Professor Tim Worrall (University of Edinburgh), for the Periodic Review of the Department of Economics and Related Studies.

M16-17/67 Exchange agreements

The Committee **noted** that the Chair had approved an agreement between the University of York and Peking University China for University-wide student exchanges.

M16-17/68 QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: Psychology

The Committee **noted** that the QAA had published a new Subject Benchmark Statement for Psychology (QAA, 2016). The Department of Psychology had reviewed the benchmark statement and was content that its programmes were aligned to the benchmark.

M16-17/69 Dates of Future Meetings

The Committee **noted** that the dates of future meetings in the 2016/17 academic year were as follows (all at 9.30 am in HG21, Heslington Hall, unless stated otherwise)

Thursday 9 February 2017

Thursday 16 March 2017 (HG15, Heslington Hall)

Friday 19 May 2017

Thursday 22 June 2017