

# UNIVERSITY OF YORK

## Senate

### TEACHING COMMITTEE

#### Minutes of the Meeting held 10 December 2015

*Present:* Professor J Robinson (Chair), Mrs L Booth, Dr G Cubitt, Mr N Dandy, Ms C Dantec, Professor C Fewster, Ms R Ibrahim (GSA representative), Mr T Ron (YUSU representative), Dr K Selby, Dr Á Sheil, Professor J Thijssen, Dr R Vann, Professor R Waites, Dr T Lightfoot and Dr C van Wyhe.

*In attendance:* Dr A Lee (ASO, Minute Secretary), Professor B Fulton (Dean, Sciences), Professor M Ormrod (Dean, Faculty of Arts and Humanities), Miss Naomi Popple (S&AS Intern).

*Apologies:* Professor Stuart Bell (Dean, Social Sciences), Mrs J Fox (ASO, Secretary), Dr L Waldorf, Mrs K Dodd, Professor John Hudson, Dr J Hardman and Dr S King.

#### CATEGORY I BUSINESS

##### M15-16/60 Welcome

The Chair welcomed Miss Naomi Popple who was attending the meeting as an observer.

##### M15-16/61 Minutes of the November Meeting

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held 12 November 2015 (UTC.15-16/43).

##### M15-16/62 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Committee **considered** the matters arising from previous meetings (UTC.15-16/43 **Appendix 1**). It was **reported** that the following items had been closed subsequent to the circulation of papers to UTC:

- M14-15/34 QAA Mid-Cycle Review: minor amendments were made and the report submitted.
- M15-16/10 and M15-16/11, Mathematics and Electronics Modifications: the restructure of Natural Sciences, which was the result of restructures of partner departments, would now be presented for approval via Chair's action or the full Committee in spring term.

It was accordingly **noted** that all items had been closed, with the exception of the following:

- M14-15/122 Review of Health Economics for Health Care Professionals and MSc in Economic Evaluation for HTA: as reported at the November meeting, work on this issue was ongoing.
- M15-16/36 Review of Compensation, Condonement and Reassessment: further work on the paper and recommendations is to be scoped and conducted and then submitted to a future meeting.

### **M15-16/63 Oral Report from the Chair**

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

- Comments from the strategy meeting on the 3 December 2015 regarding the government Green Paper will be fed into the University's response and the Chair will provide an update to the Committee in the New Year.
- APR reports had been circulated to the Committee on Google drive. Members were asked to complete comment forms by Tuesday 5 January 2016, to raise any problems with Google via [aso@york.ac.uk](mailto:aso@york.ac.uk) and any specific department queries/ APR issues with the relevant QA contact.
- Work on the module catalogue is progressing and departments should be using it for module approval, modification and withdrawal imminently. The aim is to publish module information in the spring term.
- Members were thanked for all their work during the term, recognising the heavy workload.

### **M15-16/64 Oral Report from the Student Representatives**

*YUSU*

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

- Faculty rep positions have been created with new guidelines drafted on how the reps will liaise with course reps. The guidelines are likely to develop into a policy which Mr Ron will bring to a future meeting of the Committee.

*GSA*

The GSA representative had no issues to raise.

### **M15-16/65 Music: BA in Music and Sound Recording**

The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Department of Music for a BA in Music and Sound Recording (UTC.15-16/44) to start in September 2016. The programme had been reviewed in advance of the meeting by Cathy Dantec and Cordula van Whye, and had their support and that of the external assessors.

During the discussion it was **noted** that the proposal was of great importance to the Department's portfolio and that it had strong potential due to market demand and very limited competition from comparator institutions. The Department had appointed an experienced programme leader and the team had used the draft ProPEL programme specification, which was reported to have been a positive experience stimulating reflection on the graduate outcomes. The ASO would continue to work with the Department to refine the programme documentation as the ProPEL specification is finalised.

The Committee **decided** to approve the programme.

[**Secretary's note:** having received both Planning Committee and UTC approval, the programme may now be advertised].

### **M15-16/66 History of Art: BA in Curating and Art History**

The Committee **considered** a revised proposal from the Department of History of Art for a BA in Curating and Art History (UTC.15-16/45) to start in September 2017 that received in principle approval at the February 2015 meeting (M14-15/96 refers) (UTC.15-16/45). The programme had been reviewed in advance of the meeting by Áine Sheil and John Hudson, and had their support and that of the external assessors.

During the discussion it was **noted** that the proposal included an internship module that will be non-compensatable but reassessable. The Committee also noted that this programme is strongly motivated by the employability agenda and has the firm support of Careers, with the newly appointed Director of York Art History Collaborations having a pivotal role in the development of internships.

The Committee **decided** to approve the programme including the special assessment rules for the internship modules, subject to the addition of an appropriate statement in programme documentation provided to students explaining what contingencies would be in place should an internship not be available.

**Action: Department of History of Art/ David Clarke**

[**Secretary's note:** having received both Planning Committee and UTC approval, the programme may now be advertised].

### **M15-16/67 Politics: BA in International Relations**

The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Department of Politics for a BA in International Relations (UTC.15-16/46) to start in September 2017. The programme had been reviewed in advance of the meeting by Jacco Thijssen and Cordula van Whye, and had their support and that of the external assessors.

During the discussion it was **noted** that the proposal used the draft ProPEL programme specification and that further work was needed on the programme specification and that the ASO would continue to work with the Department to refine the programme documentation as the ProPEL specification is finalised. The reviewers **reported** that the Department is in the process of reviewing programmes in the context of the York Pedagogy and is undertaking a review of assessment strategies across its programmes. Both of these will inform the development the proposal and so the reviewers were content that questions relating to the diversity of module optionality and the conservatism of the assessment methods used were likely to be addressed in due course. This was likely to be further enhanced by the appointment of new International Relations specialists into the Department.

The Committee **decided** to approve the programme.

[**Secretary's note:** having received both Planning Committee and UTC approval, the programme may now be advertised].

### **M15-16/68 Centre for Lifelong Learning and Archaeology: MA in English Building History**

The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for a three year distance learning MA in English Building History (UTC.15-16/47) to start in September 2016, which would introduce a new model of inter-departmental partnership for the delivery of a

programme. The first two years of the programme would be delivered by CLL with the third year comprising an ISM being delivered by the Department of Archaeology. The programme had been reviewed in advance of the meeting by Roddy Vann and Áine Sheil, and had their support and that of the external assessors.

The Committee **decided** that the Archaeology Board of Studies discussion and approval of the programme was important to obtain in advance of a final decision by Teaching Committee.

During the discussion it was **noted** that:

- The Director of CLL had liaised with the Chair of the Archaeology Graduate Board in developing the programme and had their support and that of the HoD of Archaeology
- The programme would include a PGCert and PGDip as exit awards only
- CLL would govern the taught modules comprising the PGDip and Archaeology would govern the ISM leading to the award of the full masters, but there would be close liaison between the two Boards of Studies to ensure effective overall programme governance
- As the Centre hoped to use this partnership model to develop further programmes with other departments in the future, to share its expertise in distance learning and departments' expertise in delivering ISMs, the proposal would set a precedent
- CLL was requesting the Committee's approval ahead of Archaeology BoS approval as the Centre needed to be able to advertise and undertake the preparation of materials in good time for the proposed start
- CLL had been very responsive to reviewer feedback and worked quickly to make suggested improvements, this included working with Archaeology to provide the reviewers with an initial draft of the ISM module to offer reassurance of what was envisaged.

The Committee expressed its support for the proposed model of delivery that could help to expand the University's distance learning provision, drawing on the expertise CLL has developed. The Committee also recognised that in keeping with CLL's ethos, the non-standard admissions requirements for this programme were appropriate.

The Committee **decided** that its degree of comfort with the proposal was such as to allow it to delegate final approval to the reviewers and Chair, which would be done following Archaeology's consideration. Furthermore, the Committee's approval was subject to:

- Satisfactory clarification of the supervision arrangements for the ISM
- Further consideration of the extent to which practical skills of building assessment are incorporated into the curriculum
- A programme lead being appointed with sufficient authority and position on both Boards of Studies

Further, the Committee **recommended** that CLL explores opportunities to work with the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum due to their expertise in this discipline, and that in the programme specification it expresses the educational aims so as to provide a more overarching statement of the programme's intentions.

The Committee requested that following revision and approval by the Archaeology Board of Studies the programme reviewers confirm their approval to the Chair of their final satisfaction with the programme to inform his Chair's Action sign-off of the full proposal.

**Action: CLL/ Archaeology/ David Clarke/ Roddy Vann and Áine Sheil**

## **M15-16/69 Physics: Modifications to the Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes**

The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Department of Physics to make major modifications to its undergraduate and integrated masters programmes, including combined degrees Physics with Philosophy and Physics and Mathematics (UTC.15-16/48) to start in September 2016 for stages 1 and 4 with rolling implementation for future cohorts. The programme had been reviewed in advance of the meeting by Katherine Selby and Chris Fewster, and had their support and that of the external assessors.

During the discussion it was **noted** that:

- The changes to stage 4 would affect current students
- Applicants to the programme starting in 2016 would need to be contacted about programme changes to affect them
- The Department had engaged a proportion of the current students in consultation about the proposals but that it was not felt a sufficient proportion of the student body had been directly informed about and consulted on the proposals
- The Department of Mathematics had some concerns about the use of Mathematics' modules as options for Physics students that would lead to some inequity in treatment and that since the papers had been submitted to the Committee agreement had been reached whereby the modules would be offered as electives and not options, thus addressing the concerns raised.

It was **noted** that further work was needed to:

- Assess and mitigate for the implications of the changes and rolling implementation of new structures on students undertaking years abroad/ in industry and to propose a suitable solution that accounts for students starting the current version of the programme and returning from years out to undertake new versions of the later stages
- Update some programme structures, including defining a route to accommodate the Stage 4 80-credit industrial project and removal of 'General Relativity and Quantum Field Theory' from Stage 4 as an option
- Update all programme specifications for current students.

The Committee **decided** to approve the modifications subject to: undertaking a full, direct consultation with all current students to be affected of whom an overwhelming majority would need to show support for the proposal; the satisfactory resolution of issues arising for students returning from placements to a revised curriculum; the resolution of uncertainty as to how to accommodate stage 4 industrial placement credit; completion of programme specifications and module descriptors on the advice of the QA contact for Physics (in the context of the imminent introduction of the online module catalogue).

**Action: Department of Physics/ David Gent**

## **M15-16/70 Environment: Modifications to Stage 4 of the Integrated Masters Programmes and Postgraduate Taught Programmes**

The Committee **considered** a proposal from the Department of Environment to make major modifications to its integrated masters programmes and postgraduate taught programmes (UTC.15-16/49) to start in September 2016. The programme had been reviewed in advance of the

meeting by Tracy Lightfoot and Richard Waites and had their support and that of the external assessors.

During the discussion it was **noted** that:

- The changes would affect current students and applicants, both of whom would need to be contacted to confirm the programme changes to them
- The Department had consulted current students and who showed support for the proposals
- The proposals would reduce optionality, but provide greater coherence and efficiency to programmes and to the delivery of teaching, as well as provide awards whose content more appropriately matched their titles
- The Department had provided the reviewers with an acceptable justification for apparent similarities in assessment load between modules of different credit volume based on the appropriateness of the assessment task to the sub-disciplines within the programmes.

It was also **noted** that some further work was needed to fully complete module descriptors and that the QA contact for Environment could offer advice in this regard (in the context of the imminent introduction of the online module catalogue).

The Committee **decided** to approve the modifications.

**Action: Department of Environment/ David Gent**

#### **M15-16/71 HYMS: Proposed MSc in Physicians Associate Studies**

The Committee **received** for information and as an opportunity to comment on, the proposed introduction by HYMS of a two year full-time MSc in Physicians Associate Studies (UTC.15-16/50) that would be delivered from September 2016 in partnership with the Department of Health Sciences (York) and Faculty of Health and Social Care (Hull).

The Committee was informed that this programme:

- Would be approved by the HYMS Joint Senate Committee but that it welcomed Teaching Committee's comments on the proposal and in the context that Health Sciences modules would be used as part of the programme
- Was proposed as a response to the growing demand in the NHS for Physicians Associates, as relatively new role in the NHS providing diagnostic assessment and treatment management within a clearly defined scope of practice
- Included a large component of clinical placements alongside intensive academic study, which followed a national curriculum leading to a national assessment in order to register to work as a Physicians Associate.

During the discussion the Committee questioned if the start date was realistic given the work needed to develop the programme and the Dean of Sciences informed the Committee that consideration is already being given to a possible later start. The Committee also **noted**: the difficult funding situation that HYMS is working in with regards to the commissioning body requirements and NHS workforce context. The Committee further **noted** concerns that the MBBS students have of how the programme could impact on their learning experience, particularly on placements. The School is well aware of MBBS students' anxieties and the need to clearly

communicate the programme developments to them. The Committee **noted** the degree of external comment that there had been already on the proposal and suggested that further external input on the revised programme proposal would also be helpful.

[**Secretary's note:** The Committee's comments were forwarded to the Chair of the HYMS Board of Studies and to the Dean of HYMS following the meeting].

### **M15/16-72 Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning**

The Committee **considered** a policy on Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)<sup>1</sup> (UTC.15-16/51) which was proposed as an update to the 2010 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) Guide to Policies and Procedures and to reflect developments in the sector concerning credit transfer and RPL. It was proposed that the new policy and procedures would be implemented in summer 2016 for use in that academic year and during the admissions cycle for 2017 entrants.

During the discussion it was **noted** that:

- The principles and policy would be complemented in due course by revised procedures to be developed in consultation with appropriate administrative services
- The aim was to provide a clear and transparent policy applicable across the University and types of taught provision whilst enabling a suitable degree of departmental autonomy
- The handling of credit transfer/ RPL applications relating to interim awards had been expanded and made clearer.

The Committee **decided** that:

- All departments should be consulted on the draft principles and policy before final approval could be given
- SCA should be consulted on the draft principles and policy before final approval could be given
- That the proposed proportions of awards eligible for credit transfer/ RPL required amendment with a greater proportion of credit for awards being obtained by undertaking taught modules at York
- That the proposal appropriately balances departmental autonomy with the need for University oversight to ensure a consistency of approach.

The Committee **decided** to approve the principles and policy to enable development of the procedures, subject to:

- Inclusion of Graduate programmes in the principles and policy and subsequent procedures
- Ensuring that the principles and policy are applicable to combined programmes
- Revision of paragraph A2 to read 'studying some required modules...'
- Revision of paragraph C8 to clarify the intention
- Revision of Table 1 to: show the proportion of credit that can transferred or recognised as prior certificated or experiential learning, as distinct from credit to be obtained from completing taught modules; to clarify the proportion of taught modules to be taken at York for honours awards and to record that 100% of credit for IPC programmes is to be obtained

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<sup>1</sup> RPL is used as an overall process/ concept with RPEL and RPCL being used when appropriate to specifically refer respectively to distinct process or policy relating to experiential or certificated learning.

- from modules taught at York
- Revision of paragraph C26 to clearly explain the implications of credit transfer/ RPL on fees and the ability to take alternative modules for academic interest/ audit
  - Revision or removal of paragraph C34
  - Clarification of paragraph C37 to show how credit transfer/ RPL is accounted for in calculating final awards and classifications
  - Revision of paragraph C45 to reflect the appropriate intention of 'reasonable opportunities' to apply for RPEL
  - Revision of paragraph C10 to require at least two people in departments to be responsible for the assessment of any individual application for credit transfer or RPL.

The Committee was satisfied to allow the QA team to revise the principles and policy document and to consult departments before submitting a revised version to SCA. It was also content to allow work to begin on the procedures for credit transfer and RPL without the requirement to return to the Committee for their approval unless points of principle arose.

**Action: Adrian Lee**

### **M15-16/73 Periodic Review: Department of English**

The Committee **considered** a report, external assessors' reports and an action plan arising from the periodic review of the Department of English (UTC.15-16/52).

The Chair **reported** that the content of the action plan and departmental response to it had been the matter of some protracted discussion. He summarised that the need to move from tacit understanding of expectations and norms to written ones was the strongest recommendation of the review and emphasised by the externals. He noted that this perspectives is supported by this year's NSS results where the Department is back in the top quartile on the teaching dimension but is still in the bottom quartile on both assessment and feedback and organisation. A clear statement of what students can expect, and then meeting that expectation, will boost those two dimensions.

The Committee **noted** that a number of proposed actions had open-ended or long-term deadlines and that this was not felt to reflect the perceived urgency of address of the recommendations.

The Committee **decided** that the Department of English should be asked to revise their response to the action plan by providing more specific and timely completion dates to recommendations of concern to the Chair and that an update on actions should be resubmitted to the Committee at its meeting in June 2016 to monitor progress made.

### **M15-16/74 Commendation of Thanks**

The Committee offered its gratitude to Mrs Jo Fox for her work as Secretary of the Committee and Head of the QA Team on her departure from the University.

## **CATEGORY II BUSINESS**

### **M15-16/75 Standing Committee on Assessment**

The Committee **received** a report on the minutes of the meeting of the Standing Committee on Assessment (SCA) held 30 October 2015 (UTC.15-16/53) and **approved** a proposal to allow

students who have Mitigating Circumstances claims accepted with reference to an August assessment to be allowed to progress and 'sit as if for the first time' in the following academic year as long as they meet the progression criteria based on the existing (damaged) attempt. The award calculations would then be amended to use the 'best attempt' rather than the most recent attempt, for the purposes of award classification.

### **M15-16/76 Annual Report on E-Learning**

The Committee **received** the annual report on E-Learning services in support of teaching and learning (UTC.15-16/54).

### **M15-16/77 Modifications and Withdrawals**

The Committee **received** a report on modifications to, and withdrawals of, programmes of study approved by Chair's action in November 2015 (UTC.15-16/55), as follows:

*Electronics:* Approval to withdraw the MSc Digital Signal Processing with effect from 2016/17.

Approval to modify Stage 2 of the BSc Music Technology and BSc Music Technology with Applied Electronics programmes to replace the 'Maths and Programming', 'Maths for Electronics' and 'Java Programming' modules with two new 20-credit modules 'Programming for BSc' and 'Maths for BSc' covering largely the same content, with effect from 2016/17.

*Health Sciences:* Approval to re-instate the previously suspended Postgraduate Certificate and BSc/ Graduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Programme, from January 2016.

*Mathematics:* Approval to allow the individual section of the report and the poster components of the MMath Group Project to be re-assessable (previously the module as a whole was not re-assessable), with effect from 2015/16.

*Physics:* Approval to withdraw the Graduate Diploma in Physics with effect from 2016/17.

*TYMS:* Approval of a change to the assessment submission dates for Governance and Audit, second year undergraduate module (MAN00005I), with immediate effect but on the condition that the deadlines are clearly communicated to the students from the start of the module.

### **M15-16/78 Dates of Next Meetings**

The Committee **noted** that the dates of next meetings (all at 1.00pm in HG21, Heslington Hall except where stated below) were as follows:

Thursday 4 February 2016

Thursday 10 March 2016

Thursday 12 May 2016

Thursday 16 June 2016.