



## SENATE

### TEACHING COMMITTEE

#### Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2015

**Present:** Professor J Robinson (Chair), Mr N Dandy, Ms C Dantec, Mrs K Dodd, Professor C Fewster, Dr J Hardman, Dr S King, Dr T Lightfoot, Mr S Maguire (YUSU), Professor M Matravers, Dr M Roodhouse, Dr Á Shiel, Dr R Vann, Dr R Waites, Professor A Young

**In attendance:** Professor S Bell (Dean, Social Sciences), Professor M Bland (Health Sciences, for M14-15/120), Professor B Fulton (Dean, Sciences), Dr J Grenville (PVC for Students), Mrs J Fox (ASO, Secretary), Mr A Knock (Business Intelligence Unit, for M14-15/120), Mrs L McNeil (Student Recruitment and Admissions, for M14-15/119), Mr R Quayle (YUSU Student Engagement Development Coordinator).

**Apologies:** Ms L Booth, Ms J Horvatic (GSA representative), Mr G Offer (YUSU representative), Professor M Ormrod (Dean, Arts and Humanities), Dr K Selby, Professor J Thijssen, Dr C van Wyhe.

#### CATEGORY I BUSINESS

##### M14-15/110 Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and in particular Sam Maguire, YUSU President, attending as alternate for George Offer with Richard Quayle.

##### M14-15/111 Minutes of the February meeting

The Committee **approved** the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2015 (UTC.14-15/68) subject to the following sentence in M14-15/99 being moved to the preceding paragraph relating to phase 1 of the International Pathway Programmes:

*Members noted that consultation with departments on requirements for entry and progression was due to start.*

##### M14-15/112 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Committee **considered** the matters arising from the Minutes (UTC.14-15/68 **Appendix 1**). With regard to M14-15/95 it was **noted** that the full-time version of the MA Music Education: Instrumental and Vocal Teaching had now been signed-off. With regard to M14-15/96 it was **noted** that following Planning Committee's discussion of the resource plan for the BA in Curating and Art History, the proposal was now back with the Department. The Department would bring the proposals back to the Committee in due course incorporating both UTC and Planning Committee's comments. All matters had therefore been closed.

### M14-15/113 Oral Update from the Chair

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

- Members interested in testing the Research Integrity Tutorial should contact the Chair. The YUSU representative noted the importance of student involvement
- A recent *Which?* report reviewing HE providers' right to change courses had named the University as the only provider that met *Which?*'s best practice criteria for making modifications to programmes
- The NSS response rate was 50.4% which was slightly lower than at the same point last year (51.8%) and lower than the average response rate for institutions with the same start week (58%). The QA Team and YUSU were working with departments to improve the response rate
- PRES had started on 1 March. The response rate was 16%
- UKES would start on 13 April
- Further to M14-15/99, a UTC sub-group had been established to consider the International Pathway Programme proposals for 2016/17. The members were: the Chair, Jacco Thijssen, Jan Hardman, Sabrina Chai (SPSW), Helen Sharples (Electronics), George Offer, Jelena Horvatic, Steve King, and David Gent.

### M14-15/114 Oral Update from the Student Representatives

*YUSU*

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

- The election period for the 2015/16 YUSU officers had finished. Thomas Ron had been elected as Academic Officer. The key academic issues raised during the election were:
  - rolling-out lecture capture. The Dean of Sciences also **reported** support from the Heads of Science departments for lecture capture. The Chair **noted** that further investment in lecture capture had been included in Medium-Term Planning bids but that consideration of these was on hold pending more clarity on the financial situation but also that projects such as responding to the DSA changes may lend extra weight to further roll-out
  - better examination feedback
  - increasing printer credit allowance
  - supervisor consistency, and
  - provision of module evaluation outcomes online.
- Planning for the student-led teaching awards had begun. Nominations would open in the Summer term
- George Offer and Richard Quayle were undertaking work on how to improve the course representative election process
- The Academic Registrar **noted** the student-led campaign 'Why is My Curriculum White?' and asked that YUSU feed back that if students had concerns these should be raised with Departmental Representatives and in APR.

### **M14-15/115 Learning and Teaching Strategy Development**

The Committee **received** a report from the Working Group on Learning and Teaching Strategy Development that updated the Committee on the implementation of the York pedagogy (UTC.14-15/69).

In introducing the report, the Head of ASO highlighted the following:

- that departmental teams had responded well to the intentions of the new pedagogy, the potential of the review methodology, and the availability of support from the UTC project team. During discussion, members also praised the project team
- that through the nine pilots the project team was learning that there was a need to apply the methodology with a degree of flexibility. The need for a flexible approach to reflect departmental practices was further emphasised in feedback from a member of the Committee who was from a pilot department
- a need for further clarification around the concept of key programmes learning outcomes had been identified
- that student engagement with the Assessment Experience Questionnaire and focus groups had been a challenge in some departments
- that next steps included the development of a software solution to programme visualisation and development of a programme leaders course
- the importance of UTC involvement in the impact evaluation of the pilots.

During the course of discussion, it was **noted** that:

- identifying an appropriate time and opportunity to request student feedback for the project was difficult and required careful consideration with pilot departments and for the roll-out in 2015/16
- the challenge of student engagement identified by the project team reflected a wider issue of student engagement with their programmes. The project offered an opportunity to reflect on how 'contact events' engaged students and ensured that they felt the value of attending. The Chair also **noted** that a report on attendance monitoring that would be considered at the next meeting offered an opportunity to discuss whether students should be required to attend
- it was important to be clear about the meaning of terms used in the project and wider Strategy. For example, not all departments had 'programme leaders' or did not use this specific term to describe the role. The Chair **noted** that the principle of programme leadership would be discussed at the next meeting when the draft Learning and Teaching Strategy would be considered
- there was a perception in one pilot department that the definition of the pedagogy was still unclear.

### **M14-15/116 National Student Survey Reporting Process**

The Committee **considered** a revised process for analysis and reporting on the National Student Survey (UTC.14-15/70). The process included an opportunity for departments to provide initial feedback on the results prior to the NSS report being written in order that responses and plans for actions could be incorporated into the report and shared across departments. The revised process had been developed in the light of feedback from a department and had been considered by the NSS Task Group.

It was **noted** that the proposal to request the response from the Departmental Management Team (DMT) was pragmatic given the time of year when the request needed to be made (September). Members had concerns that the DMT was not the appropriate group.

The Committee **decided** to approve the revised process subject to further consideration, and re-wording, of who would receive the request and be responsible for ensuring a departmental response.

**Action: Chair**

Additionally, it was **noted** that:

- it may be useful to include confidence intervals or error bars in the NSS analysis to help guard against over-interpretation of small changes in results
- the Ordinances and Regulations did not make clear the responsibilities for responding to requests such as these. It was **noted** that draft terms of reference for Boards of Studies would be considered at the Committee's June meeting which would help to address this issue in part.

#### **M14-15/117 Policies on Study Abroad and Placements, and Physics: year in industry programmes**

The Committee **considered** revised policies on study abroad and placements, and a proposal from the Department of Physics to establish 'year in industry' programmes (UTC.14-15/71).

##### *Policies*

During the course of discussion members **noted** that:

- the introductions to the policies should make reference to the *University Strategy* (key objective 2: We will give our students opportunities to gain experience that will prepare them better for employment or further study) and the preference for additional years of study abroad/in industry
- SCA was currently reviewing Departmental Statements on Assessment. References to these documents may need to be amended in due course
- the sections on the UTC approval processes should make clear that the streamlined processes only applied where a three/four year version of the programme at York had already been approved by the Committee
- consideration should be given to the placement policy allowing for the possibility of departments/schools not having to undertake full vetting processes if another department already had a similar placement arrangement in place with that provider (for example, if Natural Sciences wished to use a placement provider that already offered placements to one of its contributing departments)
- the extent of the coverage of the placement policy was not clear for research degree students who might be undertaking research visits in the same way as academic staff. The policy seemed excessive for such visits. It was suggested that a revision should be made to state that when research degree students visited another institution or work place in the normal course of their research activity then this was covered by the University's insurance policy

- the Committee delegated the decision about whether to retain the good practice section to the ASO.

The Committee **decided** to approve the revised policies for implementation for 2015/16, subject to consideration of the points above and the suggested edits in **Appendix I**.

[**Secretary's note:** it was noted after the meeting that the paper proposed implementation for 2015/16 but that where arrangements had already been put in place that there should be no requirement on departments to revise arrangements in the light of the policy. For reasons of equity this will be strengthened to say that *wherever possible* the policies should be implemented for 2015/16]

**Action: QA Team to edit for final approval by the Chair**

*Physics: 'year in industry' programmes*

The Committee **considered** proposals for 'year in industry' programmes in the Department of Physics. It was proposed that the following new programmes would be available from 2015/16:

- BSc/MPhys Physics with a Year in Industry
- BSc/MPhys Physics with Astrophysics with a Year in Industry
- BSc/MPhys Theoretical Physics with a Year in Industry

The programmes would be available for students to transfer on to rather than as admissions routes.

The Committee **decided** to approve the new programmes.

It was **noted** that new 'years in industry' with no associated changes to previously approved three/four year programmes at York would normally be approved by Chair's action (as set out in the revised policy). However, given recent discussions about the information on which the Committee should make decisions about placements it had been decided that it would be useful to receive these proposals alongside the draft revised policy on placements.

#### **M14-15/118 PRDU: MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs modification**

The Committee **considered** proposals from the Post-war and Reconstruction Development Unit for modifications to the MSc in International Humanitarian Affairs (MIHA) (UTC.14-15/72) to be implemented in September 2015. The proposals had been reviewed in advance of the meeting by Roddy Vann and Tracy Lightfoot, and had their support and that of an external examiner.

A revised version of the proposal was **tabled** at the meeting, which reflected the outcome of discussions with the two UTC reviewers and comments from the Chair of the Distance Learning Forum.

The UTC reviewers **noted** that this was a successful part-time distance learning Masters programme. The modifications reduced the duration of the programme from 3 to 2 years

and included substantially revised modules. The programme team had addressed most of the issues raised by the reviewers in the tabled document.

During discussion, the Committee **noted**:

- that the modifications proforma did not provide all the necessary prompts/questions for changes to distance learning provision
- the importance of involving staff with experience of distance learning when considering distance learning programmes and modifications
- that the fee levels needed consideration by Planning Committee
- some concerns about whether the Politics Board of Studies was the appropriate place for consideration of PRDU programmes
- that the programme was due for review in 2015/16. The review would proceed in late Summer 2016 and cover the current and new versions of the programme (also see below regarding governance).

The Committee **decided** to approve the modifications, subject to:

- a) further work by the programme team on outstanding issues raised by the UTC reviewers (including clarification on study skills arrangements, diversity in assessment and entry requirements)
- b) Planning Committee approval
- c) the Chair of Board of Studies in Politics confirming approval of the revised version of the proposals.

The Committee **decided** to delegate authority to the UTC reviewers and Chair to agree final sign-off to the proposals.

In addition, the Committee **decided** that:

- following completion of the distance learning consultation process the paperwork for modifications should be revisited to ensure it was appropriate for distance learning provision  
[Secretary's note: QA Team noted for development in due course]
- the governance/oversight of PRDU teaching and learning matters should be considered as part of the review of MIHA in late Summer term 2016.

### **M14-15/119 Widening Participation**

Liz McNeil, Widening Participation Manager attended for this item.

The Committee **considered** an update on widening participation activities (UTC 14.15/73).

In introducing the report, the WP Manager **noted** in particular:

- that the WP Team used to report annually to the Committee but since the introduction of the new fee regime WP work had been overseen by the University's OFFA Monitoring Group

- that the last ten years had seen a rise in the percentage of BME entrants from approximately 6% to 12.5%
- that the slight shift in the gender distribution noted in the report reflected a general pattern in the sector
- the changes to the school curriculum that meant students would be entering the University having had a linear (rather than modular) learning and assessment experience at school
- that the WP Team were keen to work with departments and administered a Department Initiative Fund for WP activities
- that the WP Team would welcome more academic colleagues' involvement in the various WP activities.

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

- the University's approach to widening participation was across the student lifecycle. Discussions emphasised the importance of the University supporting students to be successful in the job market and of the strong aspiration to redress any difference in advantage at admission by the time of graduation
- there appeared to be a contradiction between the University's commitment to not discriminate for or against students according to the practice in their school or college and that all information available to the University on the UCAS application would be taken into account. The WP Manager **noted** that the implications of changes to the school curriculum and issues such as these were regularly discussed at Admissions Tutor meetings. It was suggested that a member of the WP Team might usefully attend the next Admissions Tutor meeting to highlight this possible contradiction
- the issues of transition (in particular given the changes at AS/A-level) and preparation for the job market should be considered as part of the York pedagogy discussions and embedded in learning outcomes. The work of the Student Experience Committee, the Employability Strategy and wider University Strategy also had a role to play in helping all students to be socially mobile after graduation.

The Committee thanked the WP Manager for the update and **decided** that it would like to receive an annual update on WP activities and issues.

#### **M14-15/120 Degree Attainment and entry profiles: undergraduate 2012/13 and 2013/14 - CONFIDENTIAL**

#### **M14-15/121 International Pathway Programme**

The Committee **received** an oral update from the Academic Lead on the International Pathway Programmes as follows:

- the agreement would be signed shortly for a small number of international students to study on foundation programmes or Graduate Diplomas in London in 2015/16 with University places guaranteed at York for 2016/17 if requirements were met
- tender bids had been received and were being considered for a private partner to undertake the recruitment and marketing of the University's international pathway programmes from 2016/17

- the Academic Lead would be talking to departments about the development of the international pathway programmes to ensure they prepared students for success on their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

#### **M14-15/122 Health Economics for Health Care Professionals and MSc in Economic Evaluation for Health Technology Assessment: Review**

The Committee **considered** the report of the review of the Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma in Health Economics for Health Care Professionals and the MSc in Economic Evaluation for Health Technology Assessment (UTC.14-15/75).

The Chair of the review **reported** that the panel had gained a very positive impression of the programmes and that from a student's point of view they were working well. The recommendations in the report focused on the management and governance of the programmes. It was **noted** that some of the issues might need to be revisited, across the University, as a result of the distance learning consultation. Following discussion of recommendation 3.3 regarding the Steering Group, it was **decided** that, if DERS and CHE were in agreement, the Dean of Social Sciences would be asked to help to get the Steering Group on a firm footing with an independent chair.

The Committee also **decided** to request a formal response to the report from DERS and CHE for consideration by the Committee Chair and the review panel.

**ACTION: Review Secretary**

### **CATEGORY II BUSINESS**

#### **M14-15/123 Standing Committee on Assessment**

The Committee **received** a report on the minutes of the meetings of the Standing Committee on Assessment on 5 December 2014 and 6 February 2015 (UTC.14-15/76) and **noted** that the Chair had approved the co-option of Professor Tom Stoneham (Dean of the York Graduate Research School) to the Standing Committee on Assessment for 2014/15.

#### **M14-15/124 HEFCE: Future of Quality Assessment in Higher Education**

The Committee **noted** the response submitted to HEFCE's discussion document on the future of quality assessment in higher education (UTC.14-15/77).

#### **M14-15/125 Complaints Report**

The Committee **noted** that the Chair had received a report on formal complaints received by the Registrar's Office in 2013/14 (and summary data of all complaints since 2004). The report highlighted where issues fell under the Committee's remit. It was decided that no issues or patterns required further action by the Committee.

#### **M14-15/126 Modifications and Withdrawals**

The Committee **received** a report on modifications to, and withdrawals of, programmes of study approved by Chair's Action between January and February 2015 (UTC.14-15/78) as follows:

*Economics:* Approval of the withdrawal of the BA Economics and Economic History with effect from October 2015

*Electronics:* Approval to withdraw the Stage 4 10-credit 'Electron Devices' module with effect from 2015/16.

Approval for the M-level ISM module 'Design Exercise' to be made re-assessable within the limits for ISM modules, with effect from 2014/15.

*English:* Approval of modification to MA in Medieval Literatures and Languages, from 2015/16. The 10 credit core module in Autumn term was replaced by an additional 20 credit option module. To accommodate this, the number of compulsory 10 credit skills modules was reduced from three to two.

*Environment:* Approval to combine two current 10-credit optional modules into a new 20-credit module on 'Land Use Management', to be available on all undergraduate programmes as an option from 2015/16.

Approval of a modification to the BSc / MEnv Environmental Science programmes, so that students would be able to choose as a core option a new 20 credit module 'Pollution Monitoring, Assessment and Control' instead of two 10-credit modules in 'Environment and Health' and 'Environmental Monitoring and Assessment', which would be withdrawn from all programmes at H-Level, the 'Environment and Health' module being revised to M-Level. As a consequence, the Level 7 'Pollution, Control and Waste Management' would be withdrawn from all programmes, and replaced on the MSc Environmental Science and Management programme by the 'Environment and Health' module, with all changes to take effect from 2015/16.

Approval to withdraw two 10-credit option modules at Stage 3 of all undergraduate and integrated masters programmes from 2015/16.

Approval to rename the Level 6 module 'Coastal Geomorphology' to become 'Coastal Environments', and to change the assessment from coursework to exam, with effect from 2015/16.

Approval to withdraw the 'Sea Level Change' and 'Protected Areas' module from the 'Global Change' stream of Stage 4 of all MEnv programmes, and to introduce a new module in 'IPCC Science', with effect from 2015/16.

Approval to restructure Stage 3 of the BSc / MEnv Environmental Geography programmes, so that a new module in 'Environmental Hazards' replaces 'Glaciology and Volcanism in Iceland' as an optional core module, the latter moving to optional only.

*Health Sciences:* Approval for the following modifications to the MSc in Nursing Practice / PG. Dip. with Professional Registration (Adult) Nursing, with effect from March 2015:

changes to the sub-titles, learning outcomes and assessment type of the 'Co-operative Learning Group 2' and 'Group 3' modules; changes to the word-count of assessments for the 'Caring for Individuals with Long-Term Conditions' and 'Safety and Risk in Adult Care' modules; change in the format of exams for the 'Knowledge and Skills for Nursing Practice' and 'Supporting Individuals with Acute and Complex Care Needs' modules; and assessment changed to an essay on the 'Individual and Public Health Policy' module.

*Preparing Future Academics:* Further to M14-15/77, the Chair approved a change of PFA's name to University of York Learning and Teaching Award (YLTA) from October 2015. At its February 2015 meeting the Academic Practice Board of Studies resolved to change the name as advised by UTC at periodic review. The name change is in line with similar programmes in the sector (e.g. Durham University Learning and Teaching Award, and University of Leeds Teaching and Research Award). Additionally, the Chair approved structural changes to the programme and a change to the teaching requirements.

*Psychology:* Retrospective approval to modify the MSc Applied Forensic Psychology and MSc Forensic Psychology Science to increase the 'Forensic and Generic Skills' module from 10 to 20 credits and withdraw the 'Transferable Skills' module, with effect from 2014/15.

#### **M14-15/127 Withdrawals and Suspensions Proforma**

The Committee **noted** that a revised proforma for proposals for programme withdrawals and suspensions had been approved by the Chair and was available at <https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/programme-development/programmes/withdraw/>

#### **M14-15/128 Student Surveys and Confidentiality**

The Committee **noted** that the Chair had approved a policy on student surveys and guaranteeing confidentiality of feedback. The policy stated that where no minimum was set (e.g., by external bodies such as HEFCE) the normal minimum threshold for releasing data would be ten students from a given category (e.g., programme, department) except in cases where the minimum threshold would not be sufficient to protect the identity of individuals.

#### **M14-15/129 Periodic Reviews: Self-Evaluation Document Guidance**

The Committee **received** updated guidance on writing a self-evaluation document that was being piloted in 2014/15 (UTC.14-15/79), and **noted** that the Chair had approved a revised structure for panel reports. The report structure focussed on issues discussed on the review day and included an overview of key issues identified by the department as an appendix.

#### **M14-15/130 Periodic Reviews: External Assessors**

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

- for the Periodic Review of the Department of Electronics: Dr Bruce Wiggins, University of Derby.

- for the Periodic Review of the Centre for English Language Teaching: Ms Olwyn Alexander, Heriot-Watt University. The Chair had agreed that only one external was required for this review.

#### **M14-15/131 Subject Benchmark Statements**

The Committee **noted** that the QAA had been consulting on the subject benchmarks for Accounting, Dance, Drama and Performance, Economics, Finance, Master's Business and Management, Mathematics, Statistics and Operational Research, and Optometry. The relevant departments had been alerted to the consultations.

#### **M14-15/132 Future Meetings**

The Committee **noted** the dates of the next meetings (all at 1.00pm):

- Thursday 14 May 2015 in HG15, Heslington Hall
- Thursday 18 June 2015 in HG21, Heslington Hall (*note room change*)

## **Appendix 1: Study Abroad and Placements Policies – suggested edits**

### **Study Abroad Policy**

Paragraphs 16 and 17 – 16 refers to flexibility and 17 to mapping curricula – can the two be brought more in line with each other?

Paragraphs 17 and 23 - make explicit that the processes described are meant to be different and why (i.e., lighter touch for additional credit)

Paragraph 19 - Students usually receive two transcripts for their year abroad – check with Registry Services

Paragraph 35 - is the reference to departmental ownership necessary? What does it mean in practical terms?

Paragraph 42 – site visits should be appropriate to provide oversight of the institution (rather than ‘regular basis’)

#### *Annex 1*

Should be more specific about the expectation/responsibility of students

Penultimate bullet on page 14 – the University should provide access to language preparation (rather than just advising on it)

Page 15 – it was felt that this understates the role of the CGP. Would like to see more references to ‘managing’ and ‘monitoring’

#### *Annex 2*

Point 2 bullet point 1 – ‘reasonable expectation’ (not guarantee)

Point 2 bullet 2 – reword to: The department should have a *reasonable expectation* that they will attract an *equal* number of students.....

#### *Annex 3*

Remove the capitals for ANYONE (not felt to be in the style of the rest of the document)

Point 1 – this has now been changed for the US - check with Centre for Global Programmes

### **Placements Policy**

Paragraph 13, third line should read placements (not programmes).