

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

ACADEMIC BOARD

LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2011

- Present: Dr Philip Broadhead (in the Chair), Ms Alison Ahern, Dr Jorella Andrews, Professor Les Back, Ms Francesca Bancarino, Dr Basem El-Haddadeh, Ms Anna Furse, Dr Victoria Goddard, Ms Mary Claire Halvorson, Mr James Haywood, Dr Victoria Korzeniowska, Dr Veronica Lawrence (*vice* Ms Mary Nixon), Dr Tomas Chamorro Premuzic, Dr Juliet Sprake, Dr Anna Traianou, Dr Michael Young, Dr Joanna Zylinska.
- Apologies: Ms Mary Nixon, Professor Len Platt.
- In attendance: Ms Clare Cousins (Secretary), Ms Sue English.

OPEN BUSINESS

1 NEW MEMBERS OF LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Noted:

that the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) welcomed the new members of Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, Ms Alison Ahern and Mr James Haywood.

2 STANDING ORDERS

Received:

the College's Standing Orders (11-307).

Noted:

that point 3.4 regarded absence from meetings and members were reminded that they should send apologies in advance if they were unable to attend a meeting.

3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Received:

the College policy on conflicts of interest (11-308).

4 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Received:

the terms of reference, composition and membership of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee for 2011–2012 (11-335).

Noted:

that the name of the Committee had changed to Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.

5 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noted:

- (i) that Student Committee had been abolished and the business had been absorbed by Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, and the name of LTQC had been changed to reflect the broader remit;
- (ii) that including the additional business would result in larger agendas and therefore some of the quality-related business would be remitted to Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee, which would look in detail at the papers and then report to LTQC, for example Periodic Programme Review reports;
- (iii) that the upgrade of Moodle had taken place during the summer and thanks were expressed to Goldsmiths Learning Enhancement Unit and IT Services;
- (iv) that the Student Centre had been created, which was to be of great benefit for the student experience and congratulations were expressed to all staff involved, including the project team led by the Director of Information Technology, Estates and staff who had had to move offices;
- (v) that some upgrading of teaching rooms had been carried out over the summer;
- (vi) that the Head of Careers had retired and her replacement, Sue Young, who was currently the Head of Careers at SOAS and a Goldsmiths' graduate, would be taking up the position soon and would be attending LTQC;
- (vii) that Alison McGregor had been appointed as Work Placement Manager.

6 MINUTES

Resolved:

that the Minutes of the meetings held on 25 May 2011 and on 1 June 2011 be approved.

7 ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR

The following action taken by the Chair was noted.

University of London International Academy BSc in Computing and Information Systems (CIS)

The Chair had approved, on the recommendation of the Chair of the External System Sub-Committee, new and revised automatic exemptions from certain CIS Level 1 and Level 2 courses for graduates of the HKU SPACE Higher Diploma in Business Systems and the HKU SPACE Higher Diploma in Information Technology. Graduates of each Diploma would be exempt from four courses of the BSc in CIS which would allow them to complete their degree in two years if they studied full time.

8 REVIEW OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES 2010-11 AND REPORT ON QUALITY ASSURANCE DATA

Received:

a paper from the Head of Quality and Standards reviewing the operation of the quality framework in 2010-11 (11-336).

The Committee noted that, following agreement at Academic Board to run a version of the National Student Survey for second-year students, the Head of Market Intelligence had been in discussion with Ipsos-Mori regarding the options.

It was noted that, following the QAA audit in March 2009, Goldsmiths had been informed that, as expected, the mid-cycle review would take place in 2012 and all the papers needed to be submitted in April. This was expected to be a desk-based exercise, for which the College would be required to give concrete evidence that the issues identified at audit had been addressed.

The Committee discussed course evaluations and noted that response rates to online course evaluations were poor across the sector, especially compared with paper-based questionnaires handed out in class. It was suggested that the issue might be the time rather than the mode because online surveys were completed in students' own time. Making online completion possible in class time might improve response rates.

The online method was popular with departments because of the automatic data analysis. The Quality Office had been looking at a commercial survey provider, which produced a tool that would provide data analysis for both paper-based and online surveys. It was noted that the College's existing technology for scanning paper-based forms was old and time-consuming to operate.

It was noted that as part of the Student Voice Programme an annual cycle of surveys would be provided so that students would know when to expect to be asked to complete surveys and to ensure that the process was structured.

The Committee noted the common themes emerging from programme monitoring. With reference to learning resources, it was noted that JISC had provided funding for another university to put together learning and teaching resources similar to Goldsmiths Research Online (GRO) and that this was something that Goldsmiths might wish to consider.

It was noted that the Library was aware of concerns about noise. Complaints were thought to be primarily in relation to particular computer rooms where certain areas were configured to encourage discussion. It was agreed that there should be a campaign by the Library, academic departments and the Students' Union to remind students of the need to observe silence in the quiet study areas.

The Committee noted the revised Section 4 of the QAA code of practice on external examining arrangements and the proposed mapping exercise.

The Committee was supportive of the proposal to use the VLE for the Annual Programme Review process. A similar process was already being used for Periodic Programme Reviews.

The Committee noted the common themes emerging from Periodic Programme/ Departmental Review reports in 2010-11.

Following College-wide consideration of feedback, a similar consideration of assessment criteria might be useful and might also address issues raised in the National Student Survey. It was thought that significant attention was given to assessment criteria with first years but that this could with benefit be reiterated in subsequent years.

Resolved:

- (i) that departments continue to use either paper-based or online course evaluations;
- (ii) that GLEU be asked to encourage departments to adopt consistent use of the VLE;
- (iii) that departments be asked to remind students of the details for contacting their personal tutors;
- (iv) that Estates be notified of issues with specific teaching rooms;
- (v) that the Head of GLEU be informed of the JISC-funded project;
- (vi) that the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) would organise a group of interested parties, including the Education Officer and library staff, to

discuss a campaign to raise awareness of the need for quiet study areas in the Library;

- (vii) that the VLE be used to facilitate the Annual Programme Review process;
- (viii) that the panel composition for Periodic Programme/Departmental Reviews be modified to replace an internal academic staff panel member with a student panel member and that a Departmental Student Co-ordinator be invited to fulfil this role;
- (ix) that a meeting with the Head of the Careers Service or a report from the Head of the Careers Service be included in PPR schedules;
- (x) that the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) would discuss with the Head of GLEU a potential review of assessment criteria.

9 CAREERS SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

Received:

the Careers Service Annual Report (11-337).

Noted:

- (i) that the report had been produced by the former Head of the Careers Service before she retired;
- (ii) that despite the increase in the use of the Careers Service, the figures still indicated a relatively low level of usage by students;
- (iii) that there was a need to ensure that students were making the best use of the Service and departments should be encouraged to engage with the Careers Service;
- (iv) that the DLHE results were similar to the previous year and that a slightly higher percentage of students were in work both at undergraduate and postgraduate level;
- (v) that the Students' Union was involved in a partnership with GMB regarding internships so that students knew their rights in the workplace;
- (vi) that the Work Placement Manager and the work of the Careers Service were aimed at postgraduate students as well as undergraduate students.

10 ANNUAL PROGRAMME REVIEW 2009-10

Received:

a supplementary paper from the Quality Administrator on the Annual Programme Review process in 2009-10 (11-338).

Noted:

- (i) that this was the third report summarising undergraduate reports;
- (ii) that the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) would be reminding departments of the importance of completing Annual Programme Review reports;
- (iii) that it was important to emphasise that this was a useful diagnostic tool which enabled departments to reflect in a holistic way upon individual programmes.

11 LEARNING AND TEACHING QUALITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL AND ACADEMIC BOARD

Resolved:

that the draft Learning and Teaching Quality Committee Annual Report to Council and Academic Board (11-339) be approved.

12 STUDENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL AND ACADEMIC BOARD

Resolved:

that the draft Student Committee Annual Report to Council and Academic Board (11-340) be approved.

13 SCHEDULE FOR PERIODIC REVIEWS IN 2011-12

Received:

from the Head of Quality and Standards the schedule for Periodic Reviews in 2011-12 (11-341).

14 INSTITUTIONAL APPROVAL: LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS SINGAPORE

Noted:

the responses to the two outstanding matters from the Institutional Approval (11-345).

Recommended:

that the matters be regarded as addressed.

15 EXTERNAL SYSTEM SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

Received:

the minutes of the External System Sub-Committee's meeting on 11 April 2011 (11-342).

16 LIBRARY USER GROUP MINUTES

Received:

the minutes of the Library User Group's meeting on 2 June 2011 (11-343).

17 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Noted:

that the next meeting would be held on **Wednesday 16 November 2011** at 2.00pm in room 110, Deptford Town Hall Building and that the two remaining meetings for the academic year 2011-12 would take place in room 110 DTHB on:

Wednesday 15 February 2012 at 2.00pm

Wednesday 16 May 2012 at 10.00am.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

18 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2011

Received:

a paper from the Quality Administrator and the Director of Quality, Planning and Academic Governance on the College's results in the 2011 National Student Survey (11-344).

Exemption 41 of the FOI Act (Information provided in confidence) applies to the paper (due to inclusion of comparative data from other universities).

The Committee noted that the College had had an improvement in overall satisfaction in 2011 from 4.0 to 4.1 and had improved in a range of categories. The hard work in a number of departments had led to these improvements and these departments were to be congratulated. However, the current position left the College below others in the 1994 group and at a time of sector improvements and it was important for the College to address this. It was noted that the NSS was a significant survey despite its shortcomings because it was available to potential students and contributed to various league tables, which also influenced potential students' decisions, and so the College needed to do well. Goldsmiths had had a response rate of 64%. It was noted that the scores for the Departments of History and Visual Cultures were combined and in disaggregating them, it was not possible to include joint degrees not housed in those departments.

Thanks were expressed to the Quality Administrator and the Director of Quality, Planning and Academic Governance for producing a very useful report. It was noted that the new traffic light system made the reports easier to look at and drew attention to the upward trajectory.

The Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) was meeting the Head of each academic department to discuss their results. The focus was going to be on improving the student experience rather than the NSS specifically, which was thought to be a more constructive approach, but actions would need to influence NSS results.

Goldsmiths needed to achieve incremental improvement to 4.2 then 4.3 in the next couple of years to represent accurately the student experience and maintain its position in the mission group. It was noted that the NSS was not the only aspect that prospective students considered but Goldsmiths had a strong brand and there was a need to demonstrate the College's strengths. Goldsmiths was not where it would expect to be in the table of London institutions or the competitive set.

It was noted that, with reference to academic support, the Students' Union was keen to expand its academic advice unit. It was noted that students expected to get more academic support from within their departments and therefore it was important for students to know who their personal tutor was and to ensure that advice given was consistent.

Assessment and feedback was a category in which most institutions had lower scores. Addressing this could result in overall improvement. A number of measures were now in place. The feedback policy had only been approved by Academic Board shortly before the NSS opened but was now being embedded in every department. Departmental Student Co-ordinators and other student representatives should ensure that departments were following the policy. Implementation of the feedback policy was to be one of the key messages at the senior staff away day. Some good departmental scores in the assessment and feedback questions were highlighted and it was noted that the Learning and Teaching Forum would provide an additional opportunity to identify and share best practice.

It was noted that the NSS scores did not always reflect the feedback from course evaluations and programme monitoring. The survey was about students' satisfaction with their whole programme and individual experiences might influence the overall impression. Although the main focus and action plans were for academic departments, other areas such as the Library and Information Services contributed to students' experience and improving the overall student experience was something that all areas would be working towards. For example, student comments often referred to aspects unrelated to courses, such as office opening hours.

The Committee noted the need to ensure that Visiting Tutors were fully familiar with the policies and practices of academic departments.

Although individual departments needed to focus on specific areas, the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) had identified four areas where a difference could be made across College. These were feedback, employability, joint degrees and organisation and management.

It was noted that the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) was to set up a consultation on response times to student emails with a view to introducing a College-wide policy. This suggestion was welcomed by the Director of Student Services because the current situation of having a system in some departments created expectations of students in other departments. The need to use College rather than private email was emphasised and that students should close with their name rather than their initials. There was the need to ensure that VTs could be contacted by students and that there was a person on the staff who could answer queries when VTs were not available.

It was agreed that it was desirable to provide timetables earlier as this would enable students to plan their other commitments but the timetables would not include rooms.

The discussion of learning and teaching needed to be embedded in departments as well as sharing of best practice. The planning of the new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy had begun. GLEU would be setting up a webpage for people to provide feedback on the plans.

It was suggested that a wider strategy for communication was need on the larger vision. The Students' Union President and the Dean of the Graduate School had set up groups to talk to students about what was happening in the sector and the approach of turning students into consumers.

It was noted that further analysis of the NSS data was being carried out and that actions needed to be undertaken straight away in order to make a difference for 2012 and maintain the upward trajectory.

CC
October 2011