

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of a meeting held on
16 October 2015**

Present:

	Professor J Scott (Chair)	
Professor A Cashmore		Dr Roger Dickinson
Ms L Freeman		Dr S Gabbott
Ms R Holland		Dr D Lockett
Mrs L Masterman		Dr B Norman
Dr R Parry		Ms L Patrick
Ms C Taylor		Professor T Yeoman

In attendance: Mr A Petersen (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Professor S Hainsworth

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

15/M101 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

15/M102 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2015.

The Committee **approved** the minutes as a correct record.

15/M103 **MATTERS ARISING**

Arising from M92 the Committee noted that:

- a) The Chair had met with the Director of the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) and the Head of the College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities to discuss the potential development of in-house proof-reading services.
- b) The Chair and the Leicester Learning Institute had agreed a process for the support of academic staff seeking to achieve HEA fellowship. The University was aiming for 65% of teaching staff to achieve such accreditation by the end of 2015/16, and 85% by the end of the following academic year.

Arising from M97 the Committee noted that the Chair was leading a Working Group that had been co-ordinating the University's approach to the requirements of the new Consumer Rights Act.

15/M104 **CHAIR'S REPORT**

- a) Response to the National Student Survey (NSS)

The Chair reported that as part of the University's response to the recent NSS results all staff had been sent a communication regarding best practice in the area of assessment

and feedback. It was noted that the actions proposed were not intended to represent an additional workload for staff, but rather to confirm standard expectations in this area. It was further noted that heads of department and directors of teaching would be required to report on the implementation of the actions. The Chair also reported that he was meeting with the Heads of those Departments where particular development requirements had been identified, and that specialist Improving Student Experience Teams would commence working with those departments shortly.

b) Schedule of work and themes for 2015/16

The Chair reported that the primary themes of work for the 2015/16 academic year would be

- i) Enhancement of the Personal Tutoring system through the provision of revised information for students and training for staff regarding the role of personal tutors;
- ii) Consideration of assessment design in order to standardise assessment loading where possible and reduce the use of traditional written examinations. The Committee noted in particular that Programme Approval Panels would be tasked with challenging the detail of proposed assessment patterns to ensure that there was not an overreliance on examinations;
- iii) Enhancing student engagement with feedback.

The Committee noted that it would specifically be considering University Lecture Capture Policy at its next meeting.

15/M105 **UNIVERSITY LEARNING STRATEGY**

The Committee considered a further draft of the University Discovery Led and Discovery Enabling Learning Strategy. The Strategy was designed to ensure that student benefit was at the heart of all decisions regarding education and the student experience.

The Committee noted that the broad strategic objectives developed through the initial drafting phase had been focussed into more specific themes articulated through a range of priorities, commitments and accompanying measures of success. The Committee noted the Strategy covered a period of 5 years, with a number of performance criteria to be assessed after 3 years.

The Committee welcomed the development of the Strategy, in particular the recognition and reward of excellent teaching within the institution. The Chair invited further comments directly to him by the end of the month. The Committee noted that the final version of the Learning Strategy would be presented to Senate and Council for approval in November 2015.

15/M106 **ANNUAL REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISION WITH OTHERS**

The Committee considered a report which analysed the operation of the Code of Practice for the Management of Higher Education Provision with Others over the 2014/15 academic year. The Committee noted that 2014/15 had been the first full year of implementation for the Code of Practice. The policies and procedures with regard to the management of collaborative provision were in place, and the Committee noted that as the cycle of monitoring and review became fully embedded over the course of 2015/16 there would be further development of University processes in this regard.

The Committee welcomed the report and noted that the implementation of the Code provided an effective framework for the detailed consideration of potential collaborations. The Committee welcomed in particular the proposals for additional training and information for staff developing collaborative links to ensure that they were able to access the appropriate support at an early stage in the development process.

The Committee noted the mapping of the University's processes against the requirements of Chapter B10 of the Quality Code, which demonstrated that the University met the indicators of sound practice.

The Committee **approved** the report and noted a copy of the report along with the agreed actions from the Committee would be reported to the meeting of Senate in November 2015.

15/M107 **CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL AND MODIFICATION OF TAUGHT PROVISION**

The Committee considered a draft revised Code of Practice for the Development, Approval and Modification of Taught Provision. A number of amendments had been proposed to the Code in order to reflect a number of recent internal policy developments and external statutory requirements.

Proposed amendments included incorporation of references to the role of College Programme Development Groups, approval processes for Major and Minor Pathways and inclusion of separate processes for the approval of CPD provision, all of which had been previously approved by the Committee. The Committee also considered and approved amendments to the processes regarding the approval of changes to programme titles and the monitoring of cumulative modifications.

The Committee noted that further comments should be sent to the Secretary by 23 October, after which point a final approved version of the Code would be circulated.

15/M108 **PROGRAMME APPROVAL REPORTS**

(i) Major and Minor routes in Global Studies

The Committee considered the report of the Programme Approval Panel held on 28 May 2015 that had considered the introduction of Major and Minor Pathways in Global Studies. The Panel noted that as this was a new subject area the proposal had been through the full programme approval process. The Committee **approved** the report of the Panel and **approved** the pathways for introduction in 2016/17.

(ii) BA Criminology with a Year Abroad

The Committee considered the report of the Programme Approval Panel held in May 2015 that had considered the introduction of a year abroad variant to the BA Criminology programme. The Committee noted that the year spent abroad was experiential and would not count towards the degree classification, and that the initial suite of proposed partners had been approved. The Committee approved the report of the Panel and **approved** the programme for introduction in 2015/16.

- (iii) Certificate of Higher Education in Management (International Year 1)

The Committee considered the report of the Programme Validation Panel held on 18 June 2015 that had considered the introduction the Certificate of Higher Education in Management programme, which would be delivered by Study Group and validated by the University. Following successful completion of the programme at the required level students would be guaranteed entry to the second year of BA Management Studies at UOL.

The Committee noted that the programme had been developed in partnership between Study Group and the School of Management, to ensure parity of academic standards and learning experience for students on the IY1 and level 1 of the current BA Management Studies programme. It was noted that the majority of the academic content for the programme had been developed in full and reviewed by the School of Management and the Programme Validation Panel, and that a detailed operational handbook had been developed to govern the management of the link.

The Committee **approved** the report of the Panel and approved the introduction of the programme from January 2016.

The Committee received the reports of the following Programme Approval Panels and noted that Chair's action had been taken on behalf of the Committee to approve the introduction of the programmes.

- (i) MSc Occupational Psychology and MSc Psychology of Work
- (ii) Addition of a year in industry to undergraduate programmes in Mathematics
- (iii) MA Education: Learning and Teaching by distance learning
- (iv) BA International Relations and History with a year abroad

15/M109 PERIODIC DEVELOPMENTAL REVIEW

- (i) Department of Engineering

The Committee considered the report and initial departmental response for the Periodic Developmental Review of the Department of Engineering which had taken place in May 2015

The Committee noted the contents of the report including the requirements and recommendations for action. The Committee noted that these were wide ranging, however welcomed the positive and pro-active response from the department to the findings of the review and the work that had been undertaken to date in addressing these.

The Committee **approved** the Panel report and the initial response.

- (ii) Department of Geography

The Committee considered the report and initial departmental response for the Periodic Developmental Review of the Department of Geography which had taken place in May 2015

The Committee welcomed in particular the commendations relating to peer observation of marking, the successful operation of the personal tutor system and the value of exit interviews in support student employability. The Committee referred these examples of

good practice to the College of Science and Engineering Academic Committee for consideration and wider dissemination.

The Committee also noted the recommendations made by the Panel, and in particular referred the points raised around careers support for postgraduate research students and the use of telephone interviews for PGT applicants to the College Academic Committee.

The Committee **approved** the Panel report and the initial response.

(iii) School of History

The Committee considered the report and initial departmental response for the Periodic Developmental Review of the School of History which had taken place in May 2015.

The Committee noted the report and welcomed the range of commendations, in particular the engagement of the School with the Career Development Service and the considered review of undergraduate provision. The Committee referred these commendations to the College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities Academic Committee for dissemination, and also referred the recommendations regarding the revisions to the personal tutor system and the provision of feedback on examinations to the CAC for consideration.

The Committee noted the role of the Annual Developmental Review (ADR) process in supporting Schools to reflect upon issues such as the personal tutor system, and noted that the alignment of the ADR process with the revised University planning schedule would take place during the 2016/17 academic year.

The Committee **approved** the Panel report and the initial response.

(iv) School of Modern Languages

The Committee considered the final response to the report of the Periodic Developmental Review of the School of Modern Languages which had taken place in March 2014.

The Committee welcomed the progress made in the majority of areas, in particular noting the review of the Committee structure within the School and the review of assessment timing. The Committee requested additional information on the actions that had been taken in response to a number of the points regarding the structure of PGT provision within the School and the Secretary confirmed that further responses on these points would be circulated following the meeting.

Pending approval of the additional information referred to above, the Committee **approved** the final response.

(v) School of Archaeology and Ancient History

The Committee considered the final response to the report of the Periodic Developmental Review of the School of Archaeology and Ancient History which had taken place in March 2014.

The Committee welcomed in particular the work that the School had undertaken to consolidate its provision and make most efficient use of teaching resources. The

Committee also noted the work that had taken place to enhance feedback and engagement processes for students at all levels and in all modes of study.

The Committee **approved** the final response.

15/M110 **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS MANAGEMENT GROUP**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Collaborative Partnerships Management Group held on 8 October 2015.

15/M111 **STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Student Recruitment and Widening Participation Committee held on 8 July 2015.

The Committee considered a draft Admissions Policy document which underpinned the recently approved Code of Practice on Admissions. The Committee welcomed the development of the document, however agreed that a number of points remained unclear, and the language in the document could be altered so as to make it more student-facing. The Committee agreed that the draft policy should be referred back to the Director of Admissions for further development before resubmission to the Committee.

15/M112 **CHAIR'S ACTION**

The Committee noted that Chair's action had been taken to approve an amendment to Senate Regulation 10 governing appeals with relation to deviation from standard timescales for resolution, in line with the requirements of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

The Committee also noted that Chair's action had been taken to approve minor amendments to the appeals regulations for Fitness to Practice procedures, relating to who may accompany an appellant during an appeal hearing. The Committee agreed that the final agreed wording should be relayed to the College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology Academic Committee to ensure that it was accurately reflected in all documentation.

15/M113 **QAA CHARACTERISTICS STATEMENTS**

The Committee noted the publication of new Characteristics Statements for Foundation Degrees and Masters degrees.

15/M114 **RESERVED MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee considered the reserved minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2015.

The Committee **approved** the minutes as a correct record.

15/M115 **APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

The Committee considered and **approved** the appointment of the following external examiners:

College of Science and Engineering

Department of Geology

Professor Richard Pattrick, University of Manchester
Period of Office: September 2015 to September 2019
Programme(s): BSc and MGeol Applied and Environmental Geology

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

Department of Economics

Professor Ray Indrajit, Cardiff University
Period of Office: September 2015 to November 2019
Programme(s): Microeconomics elements of UG and PGT programmes in Economics

Professor Karl Taylor, University of Sheffield
Period of Office: September 2015 to November 2019
Programme(s): Econometrics elements of UG and PGT programmes in Economics

School of History

Professor Jon Pendlebury, University of Newcastle
Period of Office: September 2015 to November 2019
Programme(s): MA Urban History and MA Urban Conservation

Professor Anita Prozmowska, London School of Economics
Period of Office: September 2015 to November 2019
Programme(s): MA History, MRes History

Department of Media and Communication

Professor Helen Kennedy, University of Sheffield
Period of Office: September 2015 to November 2019
Programme(s): MA New Media and Society

School of Modern Languages

Dr Charlotte Baker, Lancaster University
Period of Office: September 2015 to September 2019
Programme(s): Undergraduate programmes in French

Mr Timothy Chapman, Goldsmiths, University of London
Period of Office:
Programme(s): BA International Communications and Culture, BA Modern Languages with Management and English as a foreign language, BA Translation and Interpreting

The Committee noted that Chair's action had been taken to approve the following External Examiner appointments.

College of Science and Engineering

Department of Mathematics

Ms Mary Hall, University College Dublin

Period of Office: September 2015 to September 2016 (extension for fourth year)

Programme(s): BA Mathematics and Actuarial Science

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

School of Education

Dr Peter Gates, University of Nottingham

Period of Office: September 2015 to September 2017

Programme(s): Postgraduate Certificate Effective Middle Leadership,
MA Education: Learning and Teaching by DL (2015/16 only)

Professor Daniel Muijs, University of Southampton

Period of Office: September 2015 to November 2016 (extension for fourth year)

Programme(s): MSc Educational Leadership

Department of Sociology

Professor Larry Ray, University of Kent

Period of Office: September 2015 to September 2016 (extension for fourth year)

Programme(s): BA Sociology

DURATION OF MEETING: Two hours