UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of a meeting held on
14 October 2016**

Present:

Professor J Scott (Chair)

Professor H Atkinson	Dr A Cameron
Dr E Clapp	Dr F Deepwell
Dr R Dickinson	Ms L Freeman
Mr G Green	Dr C Hewitt
Dr M Higgins	Mr A Mitchell
Dr B Norman	Ms C Taylor

Dr G Wynn

In attendance: Mr R Fryer, Mr J Hardman and Mr R Wilcock (for item M94) and Mr A Petersen (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Ms R Holland, Dr C Jarvis, Dr D Luckett and Mrs L Masterman

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

16/M92   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

16/M93   **GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY**

The Committee received a paper and a presentation from the Career Development Service (CDS) regarding the range of support provided by the Service, its impact to date and proposals for further developments. The Committee noted a number of achievements such as 8000 unique student interactions in 2015, a range of awards including those from the Association of Graduate Recruiters and being listed as one of the top 25 institutions targeted by Graduate Employers.

The Committee noted that overall there had been an improvement in the measures of students in work or study, and in the subset of 'highly skilled' employment. However, a dip in performance related to the 2013/14 cohort had impacted upon the University's standing in some metrics. Recently released figures demonstrated a subsequent improvement in performance and the University was broadly in line with its published HESA benchmark in this area.

CDS was undertaking a range of initiatives to strengthen students' engagement with employability activities during their studies. The Service contributed significantly to the Fabulous First Year initiative, embedding employability activities throughout the first year. The Service was also engaged through the Curriculum Transformation Project with enhancing careers and employability activities in all of the University's programmes. For 2017 finalists the Service was further expanding the support provided through assigned career coaches, provision of graduate internships and last chance interventions.

The Committee noted that the TEF 2 would include a series of metrics on employability, including the proportion of students proceeding into 'highly skilled' roles. The paper identified that in addition to the measures outline above, there were a number of other initiatives which could help to better prepare students for a competitive jobs market, strengthen the University's performance in employability and support the TEF metrics.

The paper proposed the following:

a) Creation of a new Postgraduate Certificate in Employability. This would be a fully funded scheme introduced from November 2017 and would include employer facing skill development in areas such as aptitude testing and situational analysis. The Committee **approved** this proposal.

b) Leicester Students First. Under such a proposal, it would be stated that University of Leicester students should be considered first for roles which became available within the institution and may be appropriate for students to gain experience or potentially secure more permanent employment. The Committee welcomed this proposal, however noted that it would be necessary to liaise with the Division of Human Resources to consider how this may be implemented.

c) Further embedding consideration of employability in the programme development and approval process. The Committee **approved** this proposal. The Committee noted that CDS was already represented on some College Programme Development Groups, however it would be helpful for this to me more consistent. It was also agreed that CDS should sit on Approval Panels for programmes, including those proceeding through Curriculum Transformation.

d) Engaging with departments to identify where opportunities for student employment already exist, and where there may be possibilities to expand these. It was noted that some limited funding was available through CDS to create such opportunities. The Committee **approved** this proposal, and required that College Academic Committees work with the CDS to identify current provision and opportunities for expansion.

The Committee welcomed the development of the Careers provision over recent years. The Committee welcomed in particular the theme of engagement with academic departments and noted that there were significant opportunities to engage alumni with employability activities. Following this, the Committee noted that it would be helpful to reflect on how an effective balance could be achieved when targeting students in their final year, as in many cases academic departments may have an insight into individual students' circumstances. The Committee requested that CDS reflect on this issue. The Committee thanked CDS for developments to date and **approved** the proposals for further action, subject to the points above.

16/M94   **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting that had taken place on 14 September 2016.

The Committee **approved** the minutes as an accurate record.

16/M95   **MATTERS ARISING**

Arising from M81 the Chair reported that NSS meetings with Heads of Department were ongoing, and the Improving Student Experience Teams were meeting with targeted departments.

Arising from M83 the Chair noted that he would seek legal advice regarding the use of voluntary and therefore unpaid PGR students who undertake teaching and marketing.

Arising from M84 the Chair emphasised the importance of ensuring that responses to student feedback and module evaluations were reported back to students including via Student-Staff Committees, particularly in light of revisions to the structure of the NSS to place greater emphasis on the student voice in the learning experience.

Arising from M87 the Secretary reported that the paper on establishing a 3+1 model of programme delivery would be updated following feedback from the Committee and circulated for final approval. Following this, a business case for the first potential partnerships would be developed.

16/M96   **CHAIR'S REPORT**

The Chair welcomed Dr Wynn to his first meeting of the Committee in his capacity as newly appointed Academic Director for the College of Science and Engineering.

The Chair reported that he had attended the first meeting of the Panel overseeing the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework. Although progress had been made it was noted that there were many areas of operational detail that had yet to be resolved. The Committee noted HEFCE's commitment to publishing the metrics for institutions by the end of October, and that a University level working group had been established to review the metrics and develop the additional contextual submission.

The Chair noted that the role of Dean of Students had been advertised, which would have oversight of a range of themes including personal tutoring, student discipline, complaints, academic appeals and the mitigating circumstances process.

The Chair noted that a number of events and initiatives had successfully run since the start of the new term. These included the Careers Fair which had seen good engagement from students and employers, and also the new peer mentoring scheme for which over 800 students had applied.

The Chair reported that he had taken Chair's action to approve the introduction of the following MOOCs:

a)   Digital Signal Processing for Mechanical Engineers
b)   English Football and Leicester City Football Club

16/M97   **CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION**

The Committee received a paper and a verbal update from Dr Wynn on the Curriculum Transformation Project.

The Group noted that the small number of departments undertaking Curriculum Transformation for 2017/18 had submitted their documentation, and this was due to be considered by an Approval Panel at College level in late October.

The Committee noted that the project team was exploring the operational implications of deferring Curriculum Transformation for the majority of programmes, with particular emphasis upon recently approved Major and Minor Pathways and other joint provision with shared modules. A mapping exercise was underway to explore the range of approaches, with a view to identifying the solution which would result in the minimum possible impact upon returning students. It was however noted that under any solution a small group of students was likely to be impacted, and therefore dialogue with students would be critical. The Committee noted that once appropriate solutions had been identified a proposal would be presented to the Committee for approval.

The Committee noted that the following Sub-Groups had been established to support the delivery of the project:

a)   Module Management – (Chair: Dr Graham Wynn)
b)   Programme Approval – (Chair: Andrew Petersen)
c)   Communications – (Chair: Marie Muir)
d)   Employability – (Chair: Richard Wilcock)
e)   Marketing and CMA (Chair: Amy Costello)
f)   Sustainability (Chair: Dr Sarah Gretton)
g)   New Academic Year (Chair: TBC)

16/M98   **AMENDMENTS TO SENATE REGULATION 11**

The Committee considered proposed amendments to Senate Regulation 11 governing Student Discipline.

The Committee noted that a review of student discipline and associated regulations, policies and procedures had taken place over the course of 2016. The report and recommendations of the review had not yet been finalised as it was pending the publication of the national revised Zellick guidelines which was due shortly. However, it had been agreed that the amendments to regulations should be presented for approval ahead of the main report as they were not contingent upon the outcome of the Zellick report, and it would be helpful to be able to implement these immediately in order to clarify a number of areas in the existing regulations.

The amendments expanded and clarified a number of definitions to confirm that publication in any media that causes offence is defined as misconduct. The amendments also clarified reporting lines within various processes and revised the penalties that could be imposed, particularly in cases of cheating in examinations. Also introduced was the ability for a Head of Department to issue a departmental level warning before escalation to full student disciplinary procedures.

The Committee welcomed all of the amendments. The Committee noted that it would be helpful to amend the wording of SR11.81 to make explicit how the penalties imposed for cheating in an examination should feed into decisions regarding progression and award. The Committee also noted that for clarity, 11.31 should be amended to confirm that only current students, or staff or other members of the University currently employed by the institution could accompany a student as a representative at student discipline hearings or meetings.

Subject to the minor amendments above, the Committee **approved** the amendments for submission to Senate at its meeting in November 2016.

16/M99   **MODULE EVALUATION**

The Committee considered a paper which proposed a revised model for the operation of module evaluation across the institution. The Committee noted that module evaluation was a critical element of closing the feedback loop to demonstrate to students how their voice was taken into account in enhancing provision.

The model proposed the introduction of a standard template and process which would demonstrate consistency and enable clear judgements to be made about quality assurance, encourage reflection and engage students more effectively. Under the model module evaluation would take place for all modules annually and incorporate a series of standardised metrics, a commentary from the module convenor and an action plan for changes where required. Student feedback specifically would be gathered by questionnaire a minimum of alternate years. A draft template for module evaluations and for student questionnaires was included, and it was noted that the latter mapped closely to NSS questions.

The Committee welcomed the proposal to standardise processes across the University. There were however a number of areas where the Committee felt the proposal could benefit from further development and clarification. The Committee agreed that it would be helpful to expand the narrative in the introduction and emphasise through accompanying materials the vital role that module evaluation played in enhancing the learning experience for students. The Committee also agreed that it would be helpful to present a flowchart which set out visually the timeline and process for module evaluations. Following this, the Committee also agreed that it would be helpful to clarify in the paper precisely what information would be expected to be published to students as it may be necessary in places to redact identifiable personal details.

The Committee also proposed that the model could be enhanced by adding more clear information to students on what action would, or had previously, been taken in response to feedback. This could include the introduction of a section on the questionnaire which stated how the information would be used, and potentially have a process whereby new cohorts were informed of specific actions taken in response to feedback from their peers in former cohorts.

The Committee considered the issue of promoting student engagement with questionnaires. It was noted that there were a number of potential technical options to promote student engagement with feedback mechanisms. The Committee agreed that a group should be formed to examine options and draft a specification for a system to support the process of module evaluation.

The Committee agreed that the paper should be amended in line with the above and circulated to College Academic Committees for comment. Final proposals would then be considered by the Committee for approval and implementation.

16/M100   **NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY**

The Committee received the revised structure for the National Student Survey, which would be implemented for the first time for students graduating in 2017. The Committee noted in particular the creation of new question sets around Learning Opportunities, the Learning Community and the Student Voice.

Overall, the Committee noted the increased emphasis upon the opportunities for students to be partners in designing and managing their own learning. The Committee agreed that the new format further enhanced the importance of ensuring that the opportunities for students to contribute through feedback were highlighted, and that actions taken in response to feedback received were clearly published to students.

The Committee **agreed** that the revised question sets should be referred to College Academic Committees, to be considered alongside NSS planning for the coming year.

16/M101 **SUPPORT FOR PROCESS OF ACCREDITATION**

The Committee considered a paper which proposed enhancing the central support available to programme teams undertaking external accreditation exercises.

The Committee noted that the majority of the work to prepare and facilitate accreditation submissions currently took place at departmental level. Many of the submissions required a level of contextual information regarding the institution which could potentially be standardised. Additionally, the institution currently maintained oversight of the list of accredited programmes, however did not play an active role in supporting the submission process or monitoring outputs.

It was proposed that a central bank of resources could be developed to feed into future accreditation submissions. It was also proposed that a community of staff drawn from across departments could be established as a network of critical friends to provide support for departments going through accreditation exercises. Finally, it was proposed that accreditation outcomes should be received at University level to allow a level of oversight and monitoring of any requirements which may be set by accrediting bodies.

The Committee welcomed the document and agreed that it would be helpful to establish a more formal framework for the support of accreditation activities. It was further noted that in addition to the mechanisms set out in the paper it may be helpful to provide more formal oversight of accreditation documentation before submission, through a governance framework and process of approval. Overall, the Committee noted that the proposals needed to feed into a wider strategic consideration regarding the resourcing of accreditation activities across the institution, and this would need to be considered in a future planning round.

16/M102 **PERIODIC DEVELOPMENTAL REVIEW**

The Committee considered the final responses to the following Periodic Developmental Review Reports:

a)   Department of Geography

The Committee considered the final response to the report of the Periodic Developmental Review of the Department of Geography that had taken place in May 2015. The Committee was pleased to note the positive approach taken by the Department in terms of developing its curricula with specific relation to embedding further employability content in line with the recommendations of the review Panel.

The Committee **approved** the final response.

b)   School of History

The Committee considered the final response to the report of the Periodic Developmental Review of the School of History that had taken place in May 2015. The Committee noted that since the review the restructuring with the College had seen the School combine with the Department of Politics and International Relations, and this had provided an opportunity to consider the recommendations of the Panel in detail. The Committee was pleased to note that the School had revised its governance structure and was engaging effectively with the revised processes for Personal Tutoring.

The Committee **approved** the final response.

16/M103   **PROGRAMME APPROVAL REPORTS**

The Committee considered the reports of the following Programme Approval Panels:

a)   College of Science and Engineering bolt on model for industrial placements

The Committee considered the report of the Programme Approval Panel that had taken place on 15 September to consider the introduction of a bolt-on model for the support of industrial placements within the College. The model proposed a number of standardised processes for the support of students undertaking a placement, and harmonised administrative processes across departments. The Committee welcomed the development however noted from the report the potential for the team to engage more effectively with the Career Development Service in order to further enhance the model and benefit from the experience available centrally.

The Committee **approved** the report, however agreed that in order to retain oversight of this development the final response from the programme team should be circulated to the Committee for approval.

b)   MA Media and Public Relations by distance learning

The Committee considered the report of the Programme Approval Panel that had taken place on 1 September to consider the introduction of a new MA Media and Public Relations, by distance learning.

The Committee approved the report and authorised the Chair to approve the programme for introduction in September 2017, subject to receipt of a satisfactory response.

16/M104   **REPORTS FROM COLLEGE ACADEMIC COMMITTEES**

The Committee received the minutes of the meetings of the College Academic Committees held on the following dates:

College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology, 28 September

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, 6 September and 4 October

Arising from the above, the Committee congratulated Dr Norman on his award of a Principal Fellowship of the HEA.

The Committee noted that the September meeting of the College of Science and Engineering Academic Committee had been deferred as the new Academic Director had not been appointed at that time.

16/M105   **REFLECT LECTURE CAPTURE**

The Committee received an update on the implementation of the REFLECT Lecture Capture policy and process. Since the start of term over 2700 events had been captured and there had been over 4000 hours of student viewing of captured material.

There had been a small number of issues raised with either the hard- or software supporting the Lecture Capture process, and also some misconceptions regarding the process itself. However these had been largely resolved and updated FAQs would be circulated to all staff shortly to address some of the points raised. A full report of the roll out is included as 16/M105 App A.

16/M106   **APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

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

College of Science and Engineering

Department of Informatics

Dr Henrik Nilsson, University of Nottingham
Period of Office: October 2016 to September 2020
Programme(s):   BSc Computer Science, BSc Computing, MComp Computer Science, BSc Computing with Management (including all year in industry and year abroad variants)

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

School of Arts

Professor Danielle Clarke, University College Dublin
Period of Office: October 2016 to September 2020
Programme(s):   BA English, BA English and History, BA English and American Studies, (including all year abroad variants)

Dr Gregory Leadbetter, Birmingham City University
Period of Office: October 2016 to September 2020
Programme(s):   BA English, BA English and History, BA English and American Studies, (including all year abroad variants)

School of Media, Communication and Sociology

Dr Nick Stevenson, University of Nottingham
Period of Office: October 2016 to November 2020
Programme(s):   MA Media, Culture and Society

Dr Olga Guedes Bailey, Nottingham Trent University
Period of Office: October 2016 to November 2020
Programme(s):   MA Global Media and Communication

The Committee noted that Chair's action had been taken to approve the following external examiner appointments:

College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology

Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology

Professor Richard Emes, University of Birmingham
Period of Office: October 2016 to November 2020
Programme(s):   MSc Bioinformatics and Molecular Genetics

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

School of Arts

Professor Robert Eaglestone, Royal Holloway, University of London
Period of Office: October 2016 to November 2020
Programme(s):   MA Modern Literature

Dr Tom Whittaker, University of Liverpool
Period of Office: October 2016 to September 2020
Programme(s):   Undergraduate programmes in Spanish

School of Media, Communication and Sociology

Professor Steven Wainwright, Brunel University
Period of Office: October 2016 to November 2020
Programme(s):   MA Contemporary Sociology and MSc Social Research

16/M107 **EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR VCLL PROGRAMMES**

The Committee considered proposed External Examining arrangements for the teach-out of programmes in the Vaughan Centre for Lifelong Learning. The Committee noted that due to the exceptional circumstances it was proposed that examiners be permitted to serve one further year, to make a maximum term of six years, in order to ensure consistency during the teach-out phase. The Committee approved the proposed arrangements, and authorised the Chair to take action on behalf of the Committee to approve those arrangements where examiners had not yet responded.

DURATION OF MEETING: Two Hours and Twenty Minutes

Reflect Service Launch – September / October 2016

Go-live update for APC

The Reflect service fully launched across campus on the 26th of September; with a smaller scale soft-launch to support medical teaching in CfM on the 5th of September.

The initial scope of Reflect covers the capture of teaching events across ~170 mainly centrally timetabled and managed rooms. These were the subject of a summer programme of works to deploy the hardware and an automated recording solution. Some events types are captured automatically based on CMIS timetabling data; for other events which are not captured automatically, manual capturing can instead be initiated by teaching staff.

Since the service went live a total of 2672 events have been recorded (either automatically or manually) with 3295 hours in total captured. 3966 hours of content have already been viewed by students.

The service launched across campus with one restriction in 29 of the supported rooms – this includes four lecture theatres in Engineering and Physics. Due to delays with completing the programme of building work needed to install camera equipment; these areas could not be fitted with cameras as designed and launched with more limited video capture capability (webcams mounted on teaching PCs.) The decision earlier in the summer to not record video by default meant this limitation was not widely communicated. Building works have now completed and the full camera solution rollout for these rooms commenced overnight on 13 October.

Just after launch, one issue with the service was identified following reports from the Medical School that some student feedback sessions had been incorrectly recorded. This was traced to be due to the urgent rollback of the CMIS timetabling system that was needed the week of the 19th September, to resolve a major incident which prevented timetables from being viewed. Unfortunately that rollback reversed the change which implemented filtering of events to control which were recorded. That change was re-implemented to prevent inappropriate recordings being made in future; and recordings of all teaching events outside the scope for automated recording (as advertised on the LLI website) have been deleted.

In total, 83 other incidents have been raised with LLI and the IT Service Desk from users reporting issues using the service since the full launch. These have highlighted a mix of teething problems (to be expected); as well as issues with other processes or working practices that are now manifesting through Reflect but which need to be addressed at source and are not problems with the Reflect service itself.

Issue/Theme	Number	%age
Data quality or course mapping	34	41%
Other	15	18%
User understanding or expectation issue	11	13%
General hardware or software failure	10	12%
Specific failure of indicator light	7	8%
Manual recorder clashing with scheduled recording	4	5%
Upload Issues	2	2%

Data quality or course mapping. The largest single source of issues arises from data quality issues. These include cases where information was not supplied by departments to Registry (despite extensive chasing by the Reflect Project and Project Executive) to allow Blackboard course sites to be mapped to events in the timetabling system; or where that information is simply not available, as the events do not relate to courses present in SITS. Without that data, manual intervention is needed by IT Services operational staff to move recordings when requested to.

User understanding or expectation issues. These include cases where users have expectations of the service which it is not currently able to meet; this includes using laptops or tablets in teaching rooms with the equipment connected to the Reflect enabled PC (when asked during briefing sessions, staff were told while this might be possible, it could not be supported centrally at launch); or expecting the video cameras to successfully record the content of whiteboards with sufficient fidelity for students to be able to read them during playback. Visualizers are provided in as many rooms as possible (where budget permitted) to provide equivalent digital capability; although limitations in some teaching rooms where only single projectors are installed (again due to budget constraints and a historical lack of strategic investment in teaching spaces) impose limits on how some academic colleagues would like to teach using Reflect.

General hardware or software failure / Specific failure of indicator lights. This includes cases where the Reflect hardware or software has not worked as expected – e.g. due to failure of the PC in the teaching room. Included in here are cases where the indicator light has not worked reliably; this is an issue which has been acknowledged by Panopto who are redeveloping their product to improve the reliability of this feature. The earliest we can anticipate a fix for this would be the next release of Panopto at Christmas.

Manual recorder clashing with scheduled recording. The decision to not record video by default generated a new requirement for those staff who wished to have video captured to run the manual recorder and use that to make a recording which would replace the scheduled automatic recording. Whilst we tested this scenario prior to the launch of the service and confirmed that it worked, a small number of users have experienced errors when running the manual recorder which is preventing this from working in some circumstances. Panopto are urgently investigating this issue for us to identify the root cause and suggest a workaround.

All other reported issues (under the "Other" theme) are individual and unrelated to each other; and do not indicate any systematic problems with the service.

CJT/NG/13.10.16