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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Wednesday 31st May 2017

PRESENT: Professor I. Vandewalle (Chair), Ms K. Cox (student representative), Mr G. Donelan, Ms C. Harvey, Dr P. Haughan, Professor G Mair, Professor A. Nagar, Professor K. Newport, Ms M Pearson, Professor N. Rees, Professor M. Ziessler

By Invitation: Mr Jack Johnson (SU President-elect, observer), Mr McLaughlin-Cook

Secretariat: Mr D. Dykins

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received the minutes of the Academic Committee held on 1st March 2017. These were **APPROVED** as an accurate record subject to the following amendments: reference to the PGCert to be given the full title of PGCert LTHE (actum 5ii Education); reference to BSc Electronics and Computer Engineering and Robotics to be labelled as BEng/MEng (LTHE (actum 5ii Science); and the Extension of Tenure for Dr Perry and Dr Reid to be corrected to Extension of *Duties* (actum 6).

2. Terms of Reference

Members reviewed current Terms of Reference, and suggested two amendments: that FEOs be invited to meetings as observers on a rota basis; and the removal of the SAQA.

The amended Terms of Reference were **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL.**

3. Matters Arising

(i) External Examiners – Faculty of Science (actum 2i)

Professor Nagar confirmed that the subject External Examiner who had failed to submit the Faculty External Examiner Report had now been replaced as a subject External Examiner.

(ii) External Examiners – Faculty of Arts & Humanities

Professor Rees confirmed that Dr Ros Stuart-Buttle would be resigning from examining at the University of Limerick at the end of the examining period in June.

(iii) Update on UUK Degree Algorithms Project

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Mr McLaughlin-Cook said that the survey by UUK went beyond the scope of degree classification and at a recent briefing session UUK had been surprised at the diversity of practice amongst different HEIs in relation to degree classification. He said that more focussed discussions would be taking place in June and July, with draft rules produced for feedback from HEIs.

4. Annual Provider Review 2016

Members had received the outcome of the University's submission, which judged that the University was "not at higher risk" with regard to financial sustainability, good management and governance and "meets requirements" with regard to quality and standards. Mr Donelan pointed out that these were the highest possible judgements. Members had also received the University's action plan. The Chair noted that the action plan should be used as a template for Faculty Deans when completing this year's ARE Reports.

Mr McLaughlin-Cook said that the outcome for earlier opportunities for re-presentation of coursework was disappointing. 622 students had failed. Of these 60% re-presented work, with a 42% pass rate and 18% fail rate. 40% did not re-present coursework.

5. Collaborative Provision Sub-Group

The Committee had received for information the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2017. Mr Donelan noted that if the National Society's application to the DfE to be a national provider were approved, the CPD validation agreement with the National Society would cease, though students currently on the programme would follow the exit strategy managed by Ms Cross, who has had previous experience of course closures. He said that predicted numbers for Study Abroad and International Exchange students were promising, though noted that limited numbers of Hope students involved in the scheme also limited the numbers of incoming students under the regulations of the exchange programme.

Mr Donelan drew members' attention to the approval of the University as a Study Abroad Partner for Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego who are expected to send between 15 and 20 students each autumn semester. Professor Newport said that he knew the organisation quite well, and advised that it would provide a good fit for Nazarene students coming into Hope, though it should be noted that such students will have certain expectations when they arrive; if required, further discussion with Dr Cheatle may help preparations. The Chair asked that the University's accommodation availability be monitored to ensure that such numbers could be housed within University Halls.

Professor Rees queried whether students involved in exchange programmes had been surveyed; he was advised that surveys were regularly carried out and that the annual review and enhancement process should take account of the experience of exchange and Study Abroad students.

6. Academic Curriculum

(i) New Programme Proposals

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Members had received documentation to consider allowing the PGCert LTHE to be made available as a 60-credit block sitting within the MEd award. It was noted that as the PGCert LTHE was currently undergoing the re-accreditation process. However, Professor Newport confirmed that there would be no implications for the re-accreditation process. It was therefore confirmed that the 60 Level 7 credits attached to the PGCert in LTHE could be used by a student towards the MEd degree.

Members had also received a rationale for creating a new Masters award, with the suggested title of PGCert SENCo and MA SENCo. Professor Newport explained that the CPD Office has developed two 30-credit modules at Level 7 which were subject to approval as freestanding modules via the Education Faculty Board. Taken together these two modules comprise the learning (both level and range) required for the award of a SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) award in accordance with specific PSRB requirements. It was noted that given the prescriptive nature of the content of the two modules, necessitated by PSRB recognition, a co-design event would not be appropriate, though Professor Newport reassured members that appropriate and full scrutiny of documentation had taken place with respect to these two modules and that this was in accordance with the standard University QA procedures which allow modules of up to 30 credits to be approved at the relevant Faculty Board. This included input from an external examiner. Accordingly, Professor Newport requested that Academic Committee approve the award of a PGCert upon completion of the 2 x 30 credit accredited modules again noting that coherence at Certificate level was assured via PSRB requirements.

He further requested that Academic Committee approve in principle co-validating these 2 x 30 credit modules within the MA structure to form an MA SENCo. Mr McLaughlin-Cook noted that the award title would create constraints on possible dissertation topics; Professor Newport said this would be captured in the programme specification. It was agreed that the title may be changed to MA Special Educational Needs (with SENCo) for further clarity. Professor Newport said the proposal was for a September 2017 start with part-time option only.

Academic Committee agreed in principle that the PGCert SENCo and MA Special Educational Needs (with SENCo) should be **ENDORSED** for consideration by Rectorate Team noting that it would then need to proceed to formal approval as new award of the University.

Members sought clarification on the process for receiving and signing off documentation at various points in the validation process. Dr Haughan said that certain elements were not yet ready online, and this had created uncertainty in relation to process. Once the process in its entirety is online, there should be no gaps in the process.

Professor Rees noted that a proposal for an MA in African Christianity was currently being developed. Discussions were ongoing concerning the development of a Doctor of Ministry degree and an MA in European Affairs.

(ii) Programme Withdrawals

Professor Rees noted that the MA Mental Health had been withdrawn

(iii) Programme Suspensions

Professor Nagar noted that three MSc programmes had been suspended: Applied Exercise Physiology; Exercise and Ageing; and Sport & Exercise Nutrition.

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(iv) Process for Suspension and Withdrawal of Programmes

Members had received Professor Vandewalle's document which served to clarify current practice and procedure, particularly at very late stages prior to course start dates where correct reporting had not always taken place. In such cases, Deans will need to seek Chair's action from the Academic Committee, who will then inform the Committee Secretary. The Committee Secretary will inform Student Administration and External Relations and note actions for reporting at the next Committee meeting. If there are students with offers for such a course, The Director of Student Administration will liaise with the Head of Department over contacting and advising students as to their options. Mr McLaughlin-Cook noted that Departments would need an exit strategy to manage any continuing students on withdrawn courses.

(v) Departmental Reviews

Professor Vandewalle noted that four reviews had taken place during the year: Disability & Education; Education Studies; Health Sciences; and Social Sciences. The closure reports for the reviews would be received at future meetings of Academic Committee, twelve months after the review.

(vi) Curriculum Overviews

Members had received updated overviews for 2017-18 and 2018-19 for each Faculty.

a) Arts & Humanities

Professor Rees confirmed the overviews were accurate.

b) Education

The Chair confirmed that the BA Early Childhood had not yet been signed off, but should be received in time for Senate Approval on 14th June 2017. Mrs Harvey noted that PGCE Classics should now be included in provision for next year.

c) Science

Professor Nagar expressed concern that programmes that had been approved at Senate had not been included in the University's promotional material. For example, the BSc Computer Science (Year in Industry), had not been promoted; he requested this be taken off the 2017/18 overview, but included in the 2018/19 overview. Mrs Harvey noted that for a programme to be promoted, it was necessary for some indicative content to be made available.

The other amendment in the 2018/19 overview was to remove the duplicated MSc Robotics Engineering to leave just one instance. It was agreed that the suspension for the BSc Human Biology Single Honours be lifted to allow delivery in September 2017.

Mr Dykins agreed to send all amended overviews to key personnel after each Senate.

7. External Examiner

Members had received for consideration the following new nominations:

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Subject	Name	Institution	Commence	Comments
BA Social Work	Dr Terry Murphy	University of Teeside	April 2017	RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
BA Social Policy; MA Social Policy	Professor Tony Fahey	University College Dublin	April 2017	RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
PGCE Secondary	Ms Joanna Thomas	Swansea University	June 2017	RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
BSc Sports & Exercise Science; BSc Sports & Physical Education	Dr Damian Alan Coleman	Manchester Metropolitan University	Sept 2017	RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
BSc Sport and Physical Education; BSc Sport Psychology	Dr Neil Weston	University of Portsmouth	Sept 2017	RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

It was noted that Professor Fahey had not completed the section on examining experience. Given Professor Fahey's considerable experience and seniority at his own institution, it was agreed that he would be suitable as external examiner for the programmes agreed.

The Education Faculty requested an extension of duties/tenure for the following External Examiner which was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**.

Subject	Name	Nature of Request
BA SEN (Major), BA (Single Hons) and MA Disability Studies	Professor Katherine Runswick-Cole	Extension of Tenure

8. Standing Sub-Committee on Assessment

- (i) Members had received for information the minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2017. Mr McLaughlin-Cook confirmed that the YouTube clips were now available as part of the induction process for external examiners. Members queried the reason for missing or unconfirmed marks. Mr McLaughlin-Cook confirmed that the situation had now been resolved and was probably due to a combination of staff illness and new coordinators who might not have been fully familiar with the process.

Mr McLaughlin-Cook noted the request that, where fewer than 10 students were to be considered at a Spring Board, the Chair should be authorised to approve results in liaison with the Registrar, rather than a formal Board meeting being held. This amendment was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**.

Mr McLaughlin-Cook also noted the request that from 2017/8, in addition to existing reassessment rules, students should only be given a re-assessment opportunity for a failed 60/45/120/90 credit block if they had passed assessments with a combined weighting of at least 50% to the block aggregate. He explained this would then harmonise regulations across both postgraduate and undergraduate programmes. This amendment was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**.

- (ii) Academic Misconduct

Mr McLaughlin-Cook referred members to the appendix to the minutes of 15th March 2017 which referred to penalties for academic misconduct at Level C. The proposal

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was to include a more detailed definition of plagiarism and collusion to identify instances where these involve deliberate cheating. This included:

- submitting, as the student's own work, an assessment that contains sections bought from an "essay mill";
- collusion that takes the form of one student submitting work produced by another student, without the second student having given permission for their work to be submitted.

This would then categorise offences so that they could be referred to the University Secretary under the Code of Student Discipline.

Dr Haughan commented that so-called *essay mills* were now endemic and that the challenge to HEIs was to "design out" the possibility of a student using an essay mill.

The document also gave greater detail on dissertations submitted without having gained ethical approval, with possible escalation under the Code of Student Discipline.

The above changes to Academic Regulations were **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**.

(iii) Aegrotat Degrees

Members had received the proposed regulations governing posthumous and Aegrotat awards (the latter referring to students who have become permanently unable to complete their studies due to illness, disability or injury). Mr McLaughlin-Cook reported that following the recent deaths of two undergraduate students, the need for the necessary amendments to academic regulations to include both awards had become apparent. Mr McLaughlin-Cook explained that the conferring of such an award would be discussed with the student's next of kin by the Dean of Students.

The changes to Academic Regulations were **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**.

9. Faculty Boards

(i) Arts & Humanities Faculty Boards

Members had received for information the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd May 2017.

(ii) Education Faculty Boards

Members had received for information the minutes of meetings held on 8th February, 8th March and 3rd May 2017.

(iii) Science Faculty Boards

Members had received for information the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd May 2017. Professor Nagar noted minor modifications to the BA Tourism Management, and confirmed that these would not impact upon the management element of the course, delivered by the Business School.

***Dates for next meeting:**

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- Wednesday 25th October 2017 at 2.15 pm (Joint Meeting of Academic Committee and Learning & Teaching Committee)
- Wednesday 28th February 2018 at 2.15 pm
- Wednesday 30th May 2018 at 2.15 pm

***Subject to Senate Approval**