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## LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

### MEETING OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

#### Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024

**PRESENT:** Dr P Haughan (in the Chair), Prof D Bolt, Ms J Egerton, Professor S Kelly, Ms S Murray, Mr N Thorley, Associate Professor K Wagner, Professor C Wakefield,  
Dr C Walsh

**Invitees:** Dr W Bignold (item 9)

**Secretariat:** Mr D Dykins

**Apologies:** Professor P McGrail, Mr I McKenna

#### 1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received the minutes of the Academic Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024. These were **APPROVED** as an accurate record.

#### 2. Matters Arising

- i) **Anonymised Marking:** The Chair reported that the Student Sounding Board had concerns about the proposal. Prof Donnelly is continuing with a pilot scheme in his Faculty and during the next academic year there will be a consultation based on this. External Examiner reports often highlight the lack of anonymised marking as an anomaly, but it is important to explain the University stance and this should be included in guidance to panels.
- ii) **Inclusive COP Recommendations:** Members had received the recommendations. Ms Murray said that there had been a good response and she had collated feedback which was largely positive, though some areas still need to be addressed. The recommendations are around the checklist and this becoming standard practice throughout the University, while continuing to identify training needs. Some recommendations are relatively easy to implement, such as captions and subtitles etc. At some point the University may need to consider introducing champions in this area. Members supported the proposal, which is written into the APP and the recommendations were accepted in principle. Members thanked Mr Thorley for his work in this area.

**Action:** Ms Murray to consider how to take forward by writing to the Deans and Heads of School; and ensure an audit of materials is undertaken so this can be audited against the APP

- iii) It was noted that Senate Approved the move to a Single Algorithm from September 2024.

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- iv) Network of Hope Meetings: As the Network only has one partner involved (Holy Cross), meetings have moved to once-a-term and are conducted online. However, Belmont College can join once the partnership is finalised.
- v) Feedback from Prof Donnelly on DBS costs: Mr Dykins reported that he had spoken to Prof Donnelly who confirmed that it was a misunderstanding on behalf of a member of staff on how the costings worked.
- vi) Mr Dykins confirmed that the BCS summary has been updated to accurately reflect the current situation.

### 3. Course Approval and Review

- i) CVG/Course Specifications Approvals for New Courses: it was noted that the following courses had been considered and approved by UEB. Members **RECOMMENDED THAT THE PROPOSALS BE TAKEN FORWARD TO CO-DESIGN.**
  - MA Dance Professional Practice
  - MA Critical Disability Studies
  - MA Disability and Interdisciplinary Professional Practice
  - MA Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Studies
  - MA Education
  - MA Education Leadership and Management
  - MA Early Childhood
  - MA Early Childhood Leadership with GPCs
  - MA Creative Approaches to Children's Wellbeing
  - MA Advanced Mentoring and Coaching
  - MA Disability Studies
  - MA Professional Practice
- ii) CVG/Course Specifications Approvals by UEB for Existing Courses: It was noted that BAC Childhood & Youth had been considered and approved by UEB. **Members RECOMMENDED THAT THE PROPOSALS BE TAKEN FORWARD TO CO-DESIGN.**
- iii) It was noted that the Definitive Documents for the following new courses had been reviewed as the final stage in the reapproval process. Members **RECOMMENDED THE COURSES FOR APPROVAL TO SENATE.**
  - MA Safeguarding Children and Families
  - BAC Creative Industries Business Management
  - MA International Criminology and Security Studies
  - MRes Green Criminology and Environmental Crime
  - MRes International Terrorism and Extremism Studies
  - MRes Transnational Crime
- iv) It was noted that the Definitive Documents for the following existing courses had been reviewed as the final stage in the reapproval process. Members **RECOMMENDED THE COURSES FOR APPROVAL TO SENATE.**

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- BAC Computer Science
  - MSc Advanced Computer Science
  - MSc Data Science
  - MSc Musculoskeletal Practice
  - MSc Robotics Engineering
- v) Withdrawals/Suspensions approved by UEB: Members had received and noted courses suspensions and withdrawals for 2024-25, which can be found in Appendix 1. Dr Haughan explained that UEB had reviewed student numbers and ascertained that a number of courses were not viable. It was noted that PG Cert Professional Writing is included in the list as withdrawn as it has been replaced by other awards. Decisions on further withdrawals and suspensions for UG will be discussed at UEB shortly, with PGT to follow.
- vi) Curriculum Overview 2024-25: Members had received the Overview. If members note any potential errors, they should contact Mr Dykins directly outside the meeting.
- vii) Title changes for new students in 2024: BSc Nutrition is to become BSc Food and Nutritional Sciences; this will remain an accredited course. The Postgraduate Certificate in Leadership in Pastoral Ministry is to become Postgraduate Certificate in Catholic Pastoral Leadership.

#### 4. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- i) ARE Guidance: this will be considered outside the meeting.
- ii) Follow-up on School External Examiner Report for MCSE: Members had received the Follow-up Report. Members agreed that, while it demonstrated that the situation was improving in the School, the Report does not address other issues that are evident such as grade inflation concerns. The introduction of class tests to lower marks is not appropriate particularly as some students require alternative assessments. Rather the assessments should be assessing the learning they have had. It was noted that the OfS criticised Bradford College Computer Science provision over their grade inflation, and when they met with students and staff, the students' skills didn't align with the skills that they had allegedly been demonstrating in coursework, with a misalignment in marks awarded. Members recommended that an external expert be appointed to undertake a similar exercise with MCSE students to ensure that standards are being aligned.

**Action:** Dr Walsh to meet with Prof Donnelly and the Faculty of Human and Digital Sciences Assoc, and the Dean Student Experience to discuss appointing an external expert to undertake a review of assessment in the School of Maths Computer Science and Engineering.

- iii) TEF Working Group Minutes 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024: Members had received the minutes. It was noted that Professor Rao had submitted a proposal for internships to review TEF panel statements to identify good practice, and that there had been a great deal of discussion on what data is collected and how it will be presented. To this end, a Task and Finish group has been created to look at this element and it will be discussed further at the L&T Day in July; the discussion will include data that is required for the APP and B3 Regulations. The Group are also looking at actions from the previous year and reflecting on those interventions. It was noted that the L&T prize will be launched earlier and the guidance will have some minor amendments.
- iv) Learning Spaces Group Minutes 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and Baseline needs for Spaces: Members had received the minutes which focused on the Baseline document. This has

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been developed collaboratively and has surfaced ideas in three areas: physical space and furniture; technology; and accessibility. Ms Murray requested feedback on these and for members to consider how we take forward as there will need to be certain priorities which should dovetail with the Digital Strategy as it is developed. Feedback from Creative Campus would be particularly welcome.

**Action:** Ms Murray and Ms Donaldson to undertake audits and report back

- v) Verbal Report on Forthcoming Learning & Teaching Day: The event will take place in the i3 building and will include L&T prize-winners delivering presentations. Prof Neil Morris will deliver a session on online learning as a university-wide approach, considering such different models such as employing an external provider who provide content, or a buying into platform for LHU-generated content. Other sessions will be delivered by staff, including Ms Cross on the model developed for short courses, and the TEF working group, which will include breakout sessions for different items.

### 5. The Student Journey

- i) Access & Participation Plan: Dr Walsh gave a verbal update, explaining that the first draft is ready after completing an analysis of performance. This will be presented to UEB on Tuesday. There will also be a Student Submission and Dr Haughan said she would discuss this further with Mr Thorley outside the meeting. The submission deadline is 1st October 2024.
- ii) Student Engagement Policy and Procedure: Members had received the document, which combines a range of documents and practice already in place. The next stage will be to produce a student friendly version.

The Policy was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to Senate.

### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- i) NSS Update on completion rates: Dr Haughan reported that the rate this year was 81% which is very similar to last year
- ii) Level C and I Evaluation Outcome: Members had received the Outcome Reports which painted a mixed picture. It was noted that following the Level H Evaluations, which took place after Christmas, subjects had not provided any feedback. It is important that outcomes are followed up and reported back to students. Dr Haughan said that she would meet with those subjects where there are issues. It was agreed that response rates for Levels C and I might be improved by doing these in-class, and that there should be more publicity of the evaluations going forward to ensure all voices are heard.

### 7. Registrar

- i) Registrar's Business: Members had received the paper. Dr Walsh noted that she had undertaken the five-yearly review of programme regulations and that there were only minor cosmetic amendments that were necessary for BA and BA with Foundation Year regulations. The Integrated Masters requires aligning with UG with the removal of the dual algorithm. Students who start from October 24 will be subject to a single algorithm. Currently there are only small numbers on Integrated Masters so analysis of the effect of the move to a single algorithm is limited.

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PGT Regulations require an amendment as MA Youth and Community Development includes part-time provision so the durations for this award will be aligned to the full time durations. The MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration), once validated, will have bespoke durations.

The Framework of Qualifications has been amended to allow the development of 30- and 20- credit micro-credentials for newly validated courses.

Retakes for UG: Students are “normally” allowed to retake, but to ensure consistency, this has been defined as adequate engagement with studies and having submitted the majority of their assessments or provided mitigation. Fitness to Study processes are to be written into the guidance for students offered a mitigating retake.

The above amendments were **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to Senate.

- ii) Assessment Calendar 2024-25: Members had received the latest version of the Calendar. Dr Walsh noted that the significance of dates in Section B where reassessment arrangements already been agreed and include Autumn 2024 boards. She will check on 18<sup>th</sup> October submission dates for PGT dissertations and request broader feedback before Senate.

The Calendar was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to Senate.

- iii) Programme Regulations for Foundation Degrees: Members had received the Regulations which had been amended following a request to include Merit and Distinction classifications, which are now included.

The Regulations for Foundation Degrees were **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to Senate.

- iv) Degree Outcomes Statement: Members had received the Statement with supporting data. Dr Walsh noted that it is a requirement from the OfS that the University reflects on the state of its awards in relation to quality and standards, including degree inflation, and publishes its findings. Dr Walsh noted that results are in keeping with the sector, though there is currently an achievement gap for students who enter with a BTEC or non-A-level qualification. This is currently being addressed through the action plan. It was noted that the date for National Data is 2021/22; Dr Haughan suggested removing the year reference. Additionally, as Data Futures had been delayed there is no recent HESA data available. Overall, the University is doing very well and there is no issue with grade inflation. The statement and data can be shared.

The Degree Outcome Statement was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to Senate.

- v) External Examiner Nominations: Members had received for consideration the following new nominations. It was noted that Ms Hoban-McGlynn did not have an academic background or examining experience, but that there may be a rationale for the appointment alongside Ms Smith.

Although Dr Pavlika and Dr Sanders were approved by Chair's Action, members felt it was important that examiners should be reviewing assessments over the entire course in blocks, rather than reviewing these in levels. This will be fed back to the School.

**Action:** Mr Dykins to contact the School for a rationale for the appointment of Ms Hoban-McGlynn

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Subject	Name	Institution	Commence	Comments
Youth Work and Community Development	Ms Joanne Hoban-McGlynn	LCC Targeted Services for Young People	Sept 2023	See comment above
Youth Work and Community Development	Ms Christine Smith	University of Hull	May 2024	See comment above
BAC Media and Communication (Major)	Dr Anita Howarth	Brunel University	Sept 2024	APPROVED
Marketing	Dr Mark Ojeme	De Montfort University	Sept 2024	APPROVED
All Computer Science related degrees at Level C and I	*Dr Vasos Pavlika	University of Oxford	June 2024	APPROVED
All Computer Science related degrees at Level H and M	*Dr Ben Sanders	University of Winchester	June 2024	APPROVED
BAC Art History BASH Fine Art	Ms Helen Potkin	Kingston University	Sept 2024	APPROVED
PGCE Primary and Secondary (for Ambition Institute)	Dr Tracy Wallis	University of Worcester	Sept 2024	APPROVED

The following existing external examiners were proposed and approved for an amendment to their tenure:

Subject	Name	Nature of Request
BA Marketing	Dr Seamus Allison	REALLOCATION OF DUTIES
Psychology postgraduate courses (MSc conversion; Applied Developmental Psychology).	Dr Hazel Blythe	EXTENSION OF TENURE

vi) Other External Examiner Matters: The following were noted

- The removal of Prof Christos Gatzidis as External Examiner for BSc Computer Science, BSc/MSci Artificial Intelligence, BSc/BEng/MEng/MSci Software Engineering, BA/BSc Information Technology, MSc Advanced Computer Science, MSc Robotics Engineering and MSc Data Science
- the pausing of the appointment of Dr Anesa Hosein as External Examiner for L&T Credit-bearing courses.

### 8. School Academic Committee Minutes including Holy Cross

A number of items were highlighted:

- EDN/SS; BAC Childhood and Youth reapproval will be delayed to 25/26 to align with other courses in the Faculty.
- EDN/SS; BASH Social Work MMAP proposed to remove exams at Level I as the timing of these were proving problematic with placements. It was agreed by Dr Haughan that this will be replaced with a piece of coursework.

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- EDN/SS; PGCE, reapprovals on the 5-year review were originally advised to employ two externals but it has been agreed to reduce this to one external.
- GES: It is not clear whether responses from course evaluations had been uploaded to Moodle. There are also questions over quoracy and the limited discussion that takes place, though this could be related to the size of the School

**Action:** Mr Dykins to follow up with the School

- HSS: it was noted that a great deal of business had been approved though Chair's Action; the use of Chair's action should be the exception
- HUM: issues around buses were highlighted, though this has been dealt with through the student sounding board.
- Law and Crim: the section on course evaluations is too brief, though this is also observed in minutes from other Schools.

**Action:** Dr Haughan to write to all Heads to request that evaluations are analysed more robustly and actions highlighted and tracked.

- PSY: The introduction of standard assessment briefs is a useful development. It was noted how anonymous marking is "unmasked" for resubmissions to allow staff to see feedback.

Dr Haughan noted that Faculty Committees will give an opportunity to standardise practice, including around course evaluations. Terms of Reference for these are currently being developed.

### 9. Partnership & Accreditations Committee

- i) Minutes of Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024: Members had received the minutes. Dr Bignold highlighted the BASRaT submission and noted that the ITT accreditation was signed off in March; the Steering Group will now take forward preparations for Ofsted. The Accreditations tracker is now in place which will enable academic colleagues to track key parts of their accreditation. The validation for the Ambition partnership is on track and it was noted that BPS accreditation has been postponed to the 2025-26 Academic Year. The Belmont partnership is now formally agreed and more details on progress will be available after the next meeting.

Following the submission made by the University, BCS requested further details linking assessments to mapping documentation. The University is awaiting the outcome.

- ii) Academic Partnerships Handbook: Members had received the Draft Handbook. In order to help navigate the different process, flow diagrams will be included in the final draft.

The Academic Partnerships Handbook was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to Senate.

### 10. Library Steering Group

- i) Library Steering Group Minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024: Members had received the minutes. Ms Murray noted that Ms Lorraine Beard has now joined the University as the Head of Library services and will be leading a review of the Library Development plan which will be presented to Academic Committee in due course.

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- ii) Information Literacy Framework: Members had received the Framework. The Framework was originally titled the Skills Plan, but this was changed to Information Literacy Framework to make it more competency based, giving greater flexibility as to how It is applied. The Framework attempts to identify what a student should be able to do via the outcome statements. There is more detail on PGR and the Framework links the aims to L&T principles. There is also a section on Special Collections which members agreed was an important development. Members were requested to send any Feedback directly to Ms Murray.

The Framework was **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to Senate.

### 11. Any Other Business

- Dr Haughan advised that she will be doing a full review of Academic Structures, Assessment and the overall curriculum during the next academic year.
- As it was Mr Thorley's last meeting, Dr Haughan thanked him for his input into the Committee.

### 12. Next Future Meeting: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024



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## Appendix

The following courses are being withdrawn from September 2024

- Artificial Intelligence (with a Year in Industry) MSci
- Artificial Intelligence MSci
- Electronic & Computer Engineering (with a Year in Industry) MEng
- Electronic & Computer MEng
- Robotics (with a Year in Industry) MEng
- Robotics MEng
- Software Engineering (with a year in industry) MEng
- Software Engineering MEng
- Software Engineering (with a year in industry) MSci
- Software Engineering MSci
- BAC Social Policy
- PG Cert Professional Writing
- MA Criminology (replaced by MA International Criminology & Security Studies)
- iMBA (Replaced by MSc International Business and MBA)

## Suspensions

The following courses are suspended until September 2025

- BAC Contemporary Craft (Major)
- BAC Arts and Wellbeing (Single Hons).