

# CONFIRMED

LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

## LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**Present:** Dr P Haughan (in the Chair), Dr N Almond, Dr J Bennett,  
Dr L Bourke, Ms S Murray, Mr N McLaughlin-Cook, Dr C Penketh,  
Mr P Shakya, Dr C Walsh

**By Invitation:** Mr J Ryan (item 3i), Mrs S Anton, Mrs G Mair, Dr L Hilditch

**Secretariat:** Mr D Dykins

Apologies were received from Dr B Evans

#### **1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of Learning & Teaching Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016. These were approved as a correct record, subject to the correction of Mrs Mair as being present.

#### **2. Learning & Teaching Committee Terms of Reference**

Members received the terms of reference. These were agreed at the meeting of 25 May 2016., Dr Haughan noted, however that amendments were necessary to capture changes in the committee's remit prompted by the White Paper and the TEF. The Senior Quality Advisor role will also need to be removed.

#### **Recommendation to Senate: Amended Terms of Reference for LTC.**

#### **3. Matters arising**

##### **(i) Update on Planning for Changes to DSA**

Mr Ryan gave an update of recent developments put in place to prepare for the cuts in DSA funding for non-medical help for new students from academic year 2016/7 onwards. The University has appointed a provider of non-medical help within a new model of support. He explained the new matrix approach which identifies the most appropriate support for each student. The nature of support has shifted by attempting to challenge such students to develop their study skills independently in order to transition into the world of work following graduation. So far the system had not surfaced any major issues. Mr Ryan said that a separate appeals process relating only to this group of students who may be dissatisfied with their additional provision is being developed. So far no complaints had been received.

Other developments included a revised LSP template, redesigned following consultation with relevant academic staff to give a clearer more user-friendly format. Mr Ryan confirmed that his department would continue to consult with end-users.

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Dr Almond noted that a lecture capture system was currently being installed in 20 of the highest volume lecture spaces, including the Lecture Theatre Complex and in certain FML classrooms, this includes a pre-scheduling automated facility. These pilot classrooms will be used to trial the system to ensure it meets student and lecturer needs across all pedagogies. Dr Almond said he would report on ongoing developments at the next LTC meeting.

Dr Walsh said that her impression so far of provision was generally positive. She queried how many students were receiving support now compared with the previous arrangements. Mr Ryan said the coverage was comparable.

### **4. Anonymous Marking**

Members received the draft questionnaire and preamble produced by Dr Birch and Mr Shakya which included further comments for members to consider. Dr Haughan asked that feedback should be sent directly to Mr Shakya in order for the final version to be ready for dissemination in late January or early February 2017. Mr McLaughlin-Cook suggested that the preamble appeared to be biased towards anonymous marking and that more neutral pros and cons would better inform students before completing the questionnaire and Dr Walsh felt some of the questions were leading. Dr Bennett said that the preamble was an opportunity to underline the University's commitment to the student voice by making it clear that the results of the survey would inform the University's decision on the matter. Dr Haughan noted that mention should be made that examinations were already anonymously marked.

Action: Mr Shakya to meet with Dr Bourke and Mr McLaughlin-Cook to ensure that arguments both for and against are clearly captured.

### **5. White Paper and the TEF**

The Sept 2016 edition of the TEF Year 2 specification, was received by the committee alongside a diagrammatic version from Wonkhe. Dr Haughan advised members that as a result of the excellent HER outcome and the submission of an acceptable Access Agreement for last year, the University will automatically achieve a Bronze rating for 2017-18. The deadline for submission for the 2018-19 academic year is January 2017. Given the current trajectory of the University's standing in league tables, Hope would be making every effort to achieve a Gold rating. This will require comprehensive support from all staff, particularly the members of LTC. A steering group is being set up to oversee the submission. This group will report to Senate via LTC.

Mr McLaughlin-Cook noted from his working with the Academic Registrars Council that an issue already highlighted was concern over standardisation on how degree classifications were calculated which could result in a drive to limit variability between HEIs. He noted that the use of metrics will raise other issues around comparability between HEIs. Dr Bennett queried whether this was a drive to standardise awards within the UK; Mr McLaughlin-Cook said this would be resisted, adding that pilots to introduce a GPA system were struggling because of the lack of consensus achievable between HEIs. He said it was likely that limits would be introduced with regard to the limit of the variability, rather than stipulating a particular standard. Dr Almond noted that standardisation would make it easier to calculate the learning gain.

Dr Haughan advised that University Council had already met to consider how their role had changed with the introduction of the changes to the Quality Assurance processes, particularly their approval of the University's submission to HEFCE and the need for heightened scrutiny of documentation.

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### 6. Student Voice

#### (i) Update On SSLCs

There were no recent items to report as most SSLCs have yet to meet. Mr Shakya advised that reps had been recruited by most subjects and that a training programme had been set up for them.

#### (ii) NSS Results 2016

Members had received the subject breakdown of results, the overall results analysis and the analysis for equality and diversity. Dr Haughan commended the whole University staff for their part in producing such excellent results. She added that there were some areas that could be further improved, and the strategy would be to focus on supporting departments to increase their scores (via the data group –see agenda item 7). She drew members' attention to results relating to equality and diversity breakdowns, where the University had not only increased its overall satisfaction by 3%, but was also 6% above the sector wide figure.

Mrs Mair noted the need to correct the graduate level employment figures in the analysis for E&D document.

#### (iii) NSS 2017 Consultation and New NSS Questions

Members had received the summary document on the consultation, and the final list of questions which would be used in next year's NSS; these questions would also form the basis for internal student surveys. Dr Haughan said that the University had contributed to the consultation; feedback relating to Unistats and KIS data were included in the consultation. The new questions have already been incorporated into internal surveys due in November. Members discussed setting up a group to discuss good practice sharing similar to that run in November 2015.

Action: Dr Haughan to set up meeting for dissemination of good practice for NSS 2017.

Mr McLaughlin-Cook noted that certain elements of the University's structure, such as the integrated curriculum, should help to increase the University's overall score. Dr Penketh asked whether it would be possible to use the questions during SSLC meetings; members agreed that it is important that they are discussed at every level so students understand the questions they are answering. Staff, particularly those delivering to Level H students, need to be aware of, and understand, the questions in order to better focus their interaction with students.

Action: FQLT chairs to ensure that Faculty staff are aware of the new question set.

#### (iv) The Hope Charter

Members had received the existing Charter. Following discussion members agreed that this was acceptable for use in 2016-7 without further amendments.

**Recommendation to Senate: The Hope Charter be used in its current format for 2016-7.**

### 7. Student Data Group

#### (i) Update on initial meeting

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Dr Haughan updated members of the terms of reference and means of working of the new student data group. Dr Walsh has been seconded on a 50% basis to identify and interventions related to parameters and indicators required as part of the University's submission for the TEF and in relation to NSS. The group would be supporting departments by identifying areas for improvement with suggestions for how improvements might be achieved. Issues that are highlighted as more data is amassed will be discussed at LTC; future LTC meetings will have feedback from the Group as a standing item on the agenda.

(ii) Retention: Plan for Student Success

Members received the existing plan and agreed that it would form a substantive item at the next meeting. Mr McLaughlin-Cook said that the PGR section needed updating and advised he would send amendments shortly.

Action: Members to review the plan prior to the next meeting.

### **8. Implementation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy**

(i) Plan for Communities of Practice Activity 2016-17

Members had received the plan for the current academic year. Dr Almond noted the CoPs were first introduced 2 years ago and the forum was now firmly embedded with staff development. The first Learning & Teaching Day had been devoted to CoPs with approximately 50 themes emerging from that Day. 12 CoPs were already developed, and running autonomously. Some new themes emerging include the use of augmented and virtual realities, and reflection. Dr Almond said he would report back to LTC as themes developed.

Currently Dr Almond said he was exploring ways of capturing, highlighting and archiving CoP material in an online platform which would have an appropriate search function. Dr Penketh stressed the importance of capturing the diversity of the activity, particularly in order to: support research projects; consider how practice has been shaped by CoPs; make connections any themes may have to the TEF; and aid personal development. Dr Almond agreed, noting that academics applying for Senior FHEA membership could lead a CoP and develop a portfolio through the platform as part of their submission.

Mr Shakya asked whether there would be any opportunity for student participation in CoPs meetings. Dr Almond said there would be, particularly in sub-committees relating to the student experience but that students inevitably self-select; Mr Shakya offered SU support for any CoPs projects where students could usefully be involved.

(ii) Learning & Teaching Prize 2016-17

The Committee commended the quality of the 12 submissions for the 2015-16 prize, in particular the winning submission by Ms Laura Waite and the timeliness of its content in the context of changes to DSA. Dr Almond noted that PGCert work in CoPs had been a runner-up and suggested that this year the Committee might consider making more than one award to align with generic projects in CoPs.

Dr Penketh queried how entries could be showcased and shared with the wider University community, including on the CoP online platform when it has been developed. It was suggested that all entries could be presented on the final L&T Day, with possibly a voting system to rank entries.

Dr Almond agreed to draft policy and procedure which he would circulate later this term.

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### (iii) Policy on Mobile Phone Use and BYOD

Dr Almond felt that the main question that needed addressing in this area was whether the University had a robust enough Wi-Fi infrastructure to support high volume access during sessions. However, there were implications for policy development for staff who were resistant to allowing such technologies into their sessions. There were also practical issues that needed careful consideration, particularly around poorer students who did not have access to smartphones or tablets. He asked whether the Library could stock tablets for hire. Ms Murray said that there was currently a technical barrier relating to usage by other users of the tablet once it had been hired, but that work was ongoing to find a solution.

Dr Almond said that there were currently several pilot sessions taking place in certain teaching spaces, which included the use of Top Hat, a piece of software that, as well as having pedagogic applications, could also automatically take an attendance register for a given session.

Action: Dr Hilditch task the appropriate CoP with creating a draft policy to cover students who do not own an appropriate device.

## 9. Staff Development

### (i) Update on Learning & Teaching Days

FQLT Chairs confirmed that they had met to discuss L&T days.

### (ii) Reaccreditation of the PGCert LTHE

Dr Haughan reported that Dr Hilditch was working on the University's submission, with a deadline of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Dr Hilditch said that she would shortly be attending a meeting at the University of Chester to get more details on changes to the award and would update LTC at the next meeting. Dr Almond anticipated that changes to raise standards should not be difficult for the University to meet. Dr Hilditch advised that the role of external examiners for the award would be changing.

### (iii) Update on FHEA

Members had received the FHEA update from Personnel. Mrs Anton noted that there had been a decrease in the number of staff holding FHEA status, this was largely due to staff turnover, including 40 new members of staff who were also included in the statistics. There were currently 22 staff on target for completion of the PGCertLTHE. FHEA numbers will increase once those staff have received the award. She said that workshops were being arranged to encourage take-up and explain the process, and Deans were being urged to promote the award within their Faculties.

Dr Almond reiterated that given the natural turnover of academic staff, he felt it unrealistic to have a target of 90% of staff with FHEA status. However, he noted that in approximately 12 to 14 months the current figure could reach 80%. He said that a rewording of the breakdown to show the number of *established* staff who had attained membership would be a fairer metric to aim for. He suggested that the Data Group might look at this in more detail.

Dr Penketh said that the writing retreats which had been organised had been very well received, but noted the need to targeting people who are not engaging in the scheme. Dr Bennett queried why this did not appear to feature in performance reviews managed by HoDs.

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Action: Mrs Anton approach each Faculty Dean to coordinate two dates further dates for writing workshops.

### 10. Faculty Quality Learning & Teaching Committees

It had been agreed that Faculty Board minutes would be received at the Joint Meeting with the Academic Committee. Members had received and considered minutes of Faculty Quality Learning & Teaching Committees:

(i) Arts & Humanities

- 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016
- 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016

(ii) Education

- 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016
- 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016

(iii) Science

- 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016
- 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016
- 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Dr Walsh said that the Faculty were focusing on student communication, and were trialling a Faculty News Bulletin.

On Peer Observation, Dr Bennett noted that A&H had achieved 94% participation last year. Dr Penketh said that Education were incorporating two different processes in order to align with Ofsted requirements; she said the pairing and administration was organised by the FEO. Members considered how academics could learn from the process. Dr Penketh said that where good pedagogical practice was noted, this was fed back into the Faculty. Dr Bourke said that one advantage of the scheme was that it provided some evidence which could be used if a complaint were made about a particular lecturer; the University would be able to prove that the lecturer had been observed by a peer and that his/her performance should be found to be good, at the very least.

Dr Walsh said peer observation in Science had been disappointing at approximately 50% take-up, though those that had participated produced excellent examples of good practice. Because of the low participation, the Faculty were already working to encourage all staff to participate. Dr Walsh noted that several observers, seated alongside students, noted specific issues with certain learning spaces which would not necessarily be apparent to the lecturer. She suggested a log system to help highlight issues which could then be explored by the Learning Spaces Group.

Dr Almond suggested that the forms for Peer Observation could be less prescriptive. He suggested a small group be formed to consider how the University can get the most out of the scheme, as it was an important, demonstrable example of quality enhancement. Dr Haughan said that good practice should be shared and celebrated at Learning & Teaching Days. She agreed that the pro forma for peer observation would be reviewed at the next LTC.

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### 11. Network of Hope

Members received and considered Learning & Teaching issues arising from the minutes of Network of Hope Experience and Academic Oversight Committee meetings:

- 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016
- 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016
- 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Mr McLaughlin-Cook drew members' attention to discussions in September concerning the proposed promotion of the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies at the Network of Hope. He also noted that, as the role of Senior Academic Quality Adviser was no longer in place, the ToR would need amending. a list of FAQs for students at the NoH to go alongside the Rules of the Game document was being developed.

Mr McLaughlin-Cook also highlighted the introduction of Masters programmes at St Mary's, starting with a first intake of 20 students. The mode of delivery would be a very different model to UG provision at NoH with, for example, weekend delivery. Dr Walsh asked how the Student Experience would be monitored. Members agreed that all collaborative provision would be encouraged to maintain an SSLC.

### 12. Student Services Group

Members had received the minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016. The Chair noted that the Group had also met on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and had looked at annual monitoring reports which showed significantly increased demand on counselling and mental health services, demand the University will need to consider carefully how to address.

### 13. Library Steering Group

Members had received the minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Ms Murray highlighted the launch of the Digital Content store which provided good quality scans to students using the British Library's EHESS service. She noted that there had been a change in the CLA license and the amount which can be scanned had increased from 5% to 10%. The use of URLs for scans also meant it was possible to get better quality data about usage more efficiently. She welcomed any feedback LTC may receive concerning the store.

Ms Murray also noted that the charge for inter-library loans for academics had now been dropped.

### 14. Chairs Business/AOB

#### (i) Learning & Teaching Development Fund

Dr Haughan asked for any suggestions on how the fund might be used this year to be submitted directly to her.

#### (ii) Learning & Teaching Prize

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The Committee wished to formally congratulate Ms Waite on her winning submission. The high quality work of the runners up, notably those submitted by Dr Asad Ghaleb, Dr Manel Herat and the joint submission by Drs Rao and Su was also commended.

### Dates of Next Meetings:

- Wednesday 23rd November 2016 2.15 pm
- Wednesday 22nd February 2017 2.15 pm
- Wednesday 24th May 2017