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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd February 2017

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

By Invitation: Mrs S Anton, Mrs G Mair, Dr L Hilditch

Secretariat: Mr D Dykins

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Academic and Learning & Teaching Committees held on 26th October 2016 and the Learning & Teaching Committee held on 23rd November 2016. These were approved as a correct record.

2. Matters arising

(i) DSA and Lecture Capture

Members had received the summary of developments in the pilot stage of the project provided by Dr Almond. The quality of recordings was currently being reviewed. Dr Evans queried whether current facilities, provided a cheaper option. Dr Almond advised that the chosen software – Panopto Lecture Capture – was more sophisticated and automatically synchronised speech with specific slides in a PPT, rather than students having to follow the PPT manually.

Dr Bennett queried the involvement of staff at Creative Campus in the pilot; Dr Almond said that no-one had so far volunteered to take part.

Action: Dr Bennett to publicise the pilot further to staff at Creative Campus

Future developments will include: rolling out to more staff; further integration with Moodle; and integration with SITS to allow automatic scheduling via the timetable. There was a particular need to develop University policy to articulate the University's approach to lecture capture, especially in relation to intellectual property (IP).

Dr Almond advised that the parameters of the next stage would be decided by the end of February (2017).

Action: Dr Almond to submit a report to LTC on the outcomes of the pilot stage and a draft policy on IP relating to lecture capture.

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(ii) Anonymous Marking

Members had received the draft questionnaire which Mr Shakya wished to circulate to students. Mr Shakya said he would also be circulating a fact sheet containing arguments both for and against anonymous marking. The SU would then make a recommendation to the University. The Committee discussed the challenges and merits of anonymous marking for coursework. Mr McLaughlin-Cook noted it was important that students could make an informed decision.

Action: The Chair tasked Dr Walsh, Dr Almond, Mr McLaughlin-Cook and Mr Shakya with forming a sub-group to discuss the content of the questionnaire and the fact sheet.

(iii) Key Practitioner Scheme

Members had received the updated report from Dr Penketh, which noted how the Key Practitioners (KPs) were used within the Faculty of Education. Dr Penketh said that the scheme had been put in place in recognition of the shortage of professorial level staff in the Faculty to lead others in development of their L & T practice. This had been partially mitigated by the inclusion of visiting professors, including Professor Lin Norton. KPs had been a focal element in the Faculty L&T day in January.

Dr Bennett queried how the scheme was funded. Dr Penketh said that it had been supported by the Faculty.

Action: Information on the scheme to be shared with colleagues in Science and Arts & Humanities Faculties. It was recognised that having similar provision in these Faculties might require some additional funding.

(iv) Plan for Student Success

Four-week turnaround for feedback on student submissions: All Faculties reported that following consultation four weeks was felt to be appropriate. Dr Walsh said that this might be shortened for the first Level C assessment, which was low stakes. Dr Penketh reported that four weeks was usually necessary for moderation to play its part in both quality assurance and professional development of academic staff.

3. The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

Members had received the final version of the University's submission. The Chair said that the outcome was expected in late May. She noted the need to continue careful monitoring of the relevant data and particularly retention. Mr McLaughlin-Cook commended the report, particularly in the way narrative explained data.

4. Estates and Learning Spaces

As requested, Mr Ellison attended for this item in order to receive direct feedback from Faculties on any issues relating to learning spaces. Members raised issues relating to excessive furniture in rooms causing access problems, the balcony area in the Great Hall at Creative Campus being routinely locked due to external events in the Great Hall, issues with temperature control, for example in the Learning Lab

Ms Murray said the Library was currently mapping spaces for the storage of Library materials,.

CONFIRMED

Action: members to advise Faculty staff to contact Estates Helpdesk in the first instance with any classroom issues and ITS helpdesk for audio visual issues.

5. Student Voice

(i) Update from SSLCs

Education: Dr Penketh said that comments she had received were largely very positive, particularly around pastoral support, academic staff and guest lecturers. There had been some delays in getting appointments with SDW due to staff illness, but this had now been resolved. Students also requested that more laptops in the Library be made available. She also noted that Wi-Fi coverage was not consistent on campuses.

Action: Mrs Murray and Dr Almond to write a proposal to purchase additional devices.

Arts and Humanities: Dr Bennett said Departments all reported positive comments about the quality of teaching, though there had been negative comments around assignment deadlines. There were also comments about variability in feedback between lecturers. Members discussed considering a 'loose' standard for feedback across the University. Dr Bourke said that expectations needed to be managed, particularly when, there may be multiple markers involved in giving feedback. Mr Shakya said that the SU had received comments from students about inconsistencies (including how long it took to receive feedback), which suggested that guidelines for academic staff would be helpful.

Sciences: Dr Walsh said that she had received some negative comments that feedback was sometimes not received in time for the next deadline.

Action: Dr Almond to task and coordinate the two Communities of Practice with creating a set of guidelines on assessment feedback and to liaise with other LTC members (including Mr Shakya) for their input

Network of Hope: Mr McLaughlin-Cook reported no issues, except when students made comparisons of experiences between two majors. This was being remedied with the support of tutors who had were suitably experienced in delivering two subjects.

(ii) NSS 2017

Dr Haughan advised that the current completion rate was similar to trends last year. Some departments had already reached 50%.

6. Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Student Experience

There was a general discussion about PGT experience, which highlighted a lack of convenient facilities open in the evening, the availability of academic writing support and a query over allocation to appropriate rooms. Dr Penketh noted that Education were revising their approach to PGT induction for the coming year.

Dr Almond suggested using the provider statement for UG and applying this to PGT.

Action: A sub-group tasked with putting together a paper to guide further consideration of PGT experience.

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7. Student Data Group

(i) Update

Members had received the update summary, which gave an overview of the key metrics being monitored for UG. The summary also explained the Group's approach to dealing with Departments where a cause for concern had been identified. Dr Walsh said that the aim was to be as supportive as possible to enable the Department to comply with data submission, by meeting with Departments to discuss interventions, some of which can result in a significant and timely turnaround. She acknowledged that other strategies may take longer to implement.

Dr Walsh also highlighted recent activity which involved comparing poor attendance to Moodle access. Using less than 50% attendance as a cut-off point, there were differences noted between the three levels. At Level C, 13% of registered students had attended less than 50%, with 66% of these poor attenders regularly accessing Moodle, with similar (but marginally improved) trends at Level I. At Level H, attendance was markedly better with 5% attending less than 50%, and with most of those poor attenders accessing Moodle.

Dr Bourke noted the success of using of PhD students for ad hoc support in her Department to get students back on track; Dr Haughan said she had received positive feedback on this at the Student Sounding Board.

Dr Almond said that currently there was a trend for peer-led opportunities to support students, but that these needed to be considered in relation to expanding the number of "huddle" spaces.

Action: Dr Almond to send suggestions for huddle spaces to Mr Ellison

Dr Haughan said that students at risk of failing and/or dropping out of the University would be approached as part of a Back-on-Track initiative next week. .

Action: members to forward any suggestions to Dr Walsh.

8. Implementation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

(i) Communities of Practice

Members had received the COP Network Report which detailed all the meeting of the Communities of Practice and their focus and facilitator(s). Dr Almond said that the vast majority were now fully developed and self-sustaining. There was a discussion about the effectiveness of some of the COPs.

Action: Dr Almond to undertake a systematic evaluation of the efficacy of all of the CoPs at the end of the academic year.

There had been requests to allow Creative Campus staff access to more CoPs.

Action: Dr Bennett to promote CoPs and target possible staff to encourage to attend

A number of recommendations had been received from the COPs:

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The Feedback CoP (Hope Park) recommended guidance for the whole University in the use of a variety of assessment modes. There was a recognition of the need for on-going support for eAssessment, possibly with an “eAssessment clinic” during marking periods.

Action: Dr Almond to provide guidance on the different assessment types available and to arrange an eAssessment clinic in the new L & T space.

The Global Hope CoP wanted a higher profile in Foundation Hours. It also wanted greater access to the CoP for students. Dr Evans asked whether students could be involved and the Committee agreed that, although it was at the discretion of the facilitator, most CoPs would welcome the input from students.

Action: Mr Dykins to consult with the Faculty running the current Foundation Hour programme with a view to scheduling the Global Hope CoP as soon as possible

Provision of refreshments was requested by various COPs.

Action: Dr Hilditch to estimate the cost of providing refreshments

The Pragmatic Practice CoP recommended greater access to whiteboards across campuses. Dr Almond also queried the strategy for introducing plasma screens.

Action: Dr Almond to approach the IT Steering Group.

The Student Experience CoP would like a range of additional support for supporting the development of peer-led mentoring groups across the University. Dr Haughan acknowledged that finding appropriate space for groups could be an issue and would need coordinating centrally.

Action: The Student Experience CoP to write a proposal to Dr Haughan giving more detail of what they would like to see in place

(ii) HEFCE Catalyst Fund Project: Institutional Memory Bank

Members had received the summary which gave an overview of the project and its aims and goals. The project should be completed by February 2018 and will create a digital storage platform allowing staff from across the University to navigate the CoP network, with an emphasis on the archive having a robust search function. The aim was to create more efficient workflow and development processes, avoiding circular discussions.

Dr Bennett noted that other relevant Learning and Teaching projects could also be included in the Memory Bank, such as the Vice Chancellor’s Innovation Award and the Faculty Learning and Teaching Awards. Dr Evans expressed an interest in joining the project.

Action: Dr Evans to attend the first project meeting on 4th April 2017

9. Staff Development

(i) Update on PGCert LTHE

Members had received the update on FHEA status, which showed a small rise to 58%. Mrs Anton said that 24 new academic appointments had been made since the last meeting, none of whom had fellowship status.

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Dr Almond reported that there were 25 academics in the September 2016 PGCertLTHE cohort, and 18 in the January 2017 cohort. So far this year two of the modules had been delivered. Mrs Anton said that a number of staff had applied to become Senior Fellows, and an additional workshop was planned to encourage greater participation in the scheme.

As the award was now three years old, the reaccreditation process was currently underway. Certain criteria were changing, related to aligning the award with UK PSF standards. There is also the possibility that the HEA may consider an APL scheme using CPD credits.

Dr Haughan asked whether there was anything more that LTC/the University could be doing to support greater take up. It was agreed that an increasing number of SFHEAs would provide mentoring support. Ms Anton also agreed to split the list of FHEs in new and longer serving staff for ease of reference.

(ii) Identification of Staff Training and Development Needs

Members suggested that training in public speaking to tie in with lecturing in larger theatres would be welcome. Dr Evans said that training on the Erasmus scheme, particularly around access to the scheme, would be beneficial.

Action: Mrs Anton to include public speaking and the Erasmus scheme in the next schedule of training

(iii) Learning and Teaching Day, 19th May 2017

Dr Haughan noted that the Vice Chancellor will give the keynote speech, more details of which were to follow. The day would focus on student engagement and working more effectively within the tutorial system.

10. Faculty Quality Learning & Teaching Committees

Members had received and considered minutes of Faculty Quality Learning & Teaching Committees:

(i) Arts & Humanities

- 2nd November 2016
- 18th January 2017

Dr Bennett noted a recent discussion around the budget for the Innovation Awards. He also drew members' attention to the reflection around the January 2017 Learning & Teaching day with the suggestion that following a plenary session in the morning, the afternoon session should be devoted to departmental breakout groups.

(ii) Education

- 5th December 2016

Dr Penketh noted the discussion on the January 2017 Learning & Teaching Day and said she had had positive feedback. She mentioned the action being taken by the Hope SU with regard to the NSS discussed at the most recent FQLT meeting. She also noted discussion around PGT programme modifications, where the FQLT role as a critical friend is reduced.

(iii) Science

CONFIRMED

- 1st February 2017

Dr Walsh noted that issues were surfacing around students from Northern Ireland and homesickness. Dr Bennett said he was also aware of similar issues in Arts & Humanities which were affecting retention. Mr Shakya to investigate potential support via the SU.

Action: Mr Shakya to investigate opportunities for further support of Irish students particularly in partnership with the Irish Society.

Dr Walsh said there was an ongoing debate around lecture material. There was also discussion around coursework deadlines; Dr Haughan advised that Professor Nagar now has these. Dr Walsh noted that the Learning & Teaching Day had included a mix of internal and external speakers.

All FQLT chairs requested that the ToR for FQLTs be reviewed for 2017/18.

Action: Mr Dykins to collate amendments for presentation at the next LTC

11. Faculty Boards & Network of Hope

Members received and considered Learning & Teaching issues arising from the minutes of Network of Hope Experience and Academic Oversight Committee meeting and Faculty Boards.

(i) Arts & Humanities

- 28th November 2016

(ii) Education

- 12th October 2016
- 7th December 2016

Dr Penketh noted progress on the UAE project.

(iii) Science

- 7th December 2016
- 23rd January 2017

Dr Walsh noted that a monthly student bulletin was in preparation.

(iv) Network of Hope (NoH)

- 9th November 2016
- 7th December 2016

Mr McLaughlin-Cook advised that NoH Committee had been focussing on the Transition Event and at best practice and enhancement in terms of how different subjects handle dissertations.

12. Student Services Group

- (i) Members had received and considered minutes from the SSG meeting held on 18th October 2016.

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- (ii) Members welcomed the recently revised policy statement and guidelines on mental health.

13. Library Steering Group

- (i) Members had received and considered minutes from the Library Steering Group meeting held on 25th January 2017. Ms Murray noted that additional funds for book purchases had been received following the November reforecast.
- (ii) Members had received the statistics for Masters Submission formats. There were two recommendations. The first was that the Library only received copies of dissertations awarded a distinction. The second was that all subjects should provide paper copies for the Library until a mechanism is in place where electronic copies can easily be made available to students. The Committee supported these recommendations in principle and asked Ms Murray to continue to progress this.

14. Chairs Business/AOB

- (i) Learning & Teaching Development Fund

Dr Haughan reminded members that there were still some funds available and asked for any suggestions on how the fund might be used this year to be submitted directly to her.

- (ii) Mitigating Circumstances

Members had received the document on mitigating circumstances from SCAA as this was particularly relevant to Learning and Teaching. Mr McLaughlin-Cook noted that the document gave greater clarity on what is acceptable in terms of evidence, and better defined circumstances under which a student could be considered. The Committee welcomed this development.

Dates of Next Meeting:

- Wednesday 24th May 2017 at 2.15 pm