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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd November 2017

Present: Dr P Haughan (in the Chair), Dr J Bennett, Dr L Bourke, Dr R Cousins, Mr F Doolin, Ms S Murray, Dr L McLoughlin, Dr A Owen, Dr C Penketh, Dr C Walsh

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

Apologies: Dr D Mangione

Secretariat: Mr D Dykins

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of the Learning & Teaching Committee held on 18th October 2017 and the joint meeting of Learning & Teaching and Academic Committees on 25th October 2017. These were approved as a correct record.

2. Matters arising

(i) Lecture Capture (18th October, actum 3i)

Members had received the summary of recent developments. Dr Penketh noted that her request at the last meeting was for clarification on whether all students in the selected groups would have access, or just those identified as requiring additional support. The Chair advised that all students in the groups would have access.

(ii) Redesign of the Withdrawal Form (18th October, actum 4ii)

Members had received the current withdrawal form. Dr Walsh advised that there had already been an update of the form early last month and noted it already provided a comprehensive range of information. It was agreed that this did not need further amendment this year. Dr Walsh said that the next step would be looking at how the form is used.

(iii) Learning Spaces (18th October, actum 3iii)

The Chair reminded members that staff should report any immediately actionable issue directly to Estates. There was an issue with loud music from Our Place interfering with sessions in FML 014, and the removal of permanent flip charts from teaching rooms in EDEN. She requested that Mr Dykins contact Deans to remind senior managers within their Faculty to also report and follow up such issues. The Chair asked for volunteers to join a Learning Spaces sub-group which Dr Bennett would chair; Ms Murray and Dr Penketh agreed to be members.

Dr Bennett advised members that the Learning Lab would be relocating to GWB 219 during the last week of the current term. Both he and the Chair saw this as a positive move to a more

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suitable space, freeing up the current Lab for External Relations and creating two additional large teaching rooms in EDEN. The Chair advised that she was hopeful a second Lab would be installed in the near future as part of the developments at the Creative Campus.

Dr McLoughlin said that she had received negative feedback from students who are timetabled in the same room for all sessions. The Chair noted that this is seen as a positive by many subjects, but advised Dr McLoughlin to discuss this further with the Timetable Manager.

Action: Mr Dykins to contact Deans to remind senior managers to contact Estates; to contact Mr Pace regarding the music levels during sessions; and to contact IT Services about the issue of flipcharts in EDEN

Action: Dr Bennett to arrange meetings of the sub-group

(iv) Dissertations (18th October, actum 11ii)

The Chair noted that issues around dual dissertations (UG) required further scrutiny. Dr Bourke commented that this was particularly difficult to manage with students studying Psychology and, for example, Early Childhood studies, where the requirement to do a shorter ethics clearance for the 15-credit dissertation duplicated some elements for students. The Chair tasked Dr Bourke with creating a proposal which would address these issues for the next meeting.

Action: Dr Bourke to write a proposal on managing dual dissertations

(v) Mobile Devices Proposal (actum 3iv)

Ms Murray advised that she had met with Dr Bennett to discuss options for the proposal to purchase tablets and laptops which could be loaned to students. They considered a system of short loan managed by the library management system, but this was likely to be too expensive given expected demand. Ms Murray said she was looking at working with SDW to propose a longer loan period targeted towards students who have been assessed as having a disability. Once she had ascertained likely numbers of students requiring loaned devices, she would be able to submit the proposal to LTC.

Dr Cousins queried how devices would have data erased from one loaner to the next. Ms Murray said that all devices would be fitted with software which automatically erases any data held upon return.

Action: Ms Murray to submit proposal for a system of loans for mobile devices

3. Review of Indicative Assessment Descriptors

Members had received the current descriptors and an example of good practice in how these can be used with students from Early Childhood. Dr Walsh reminded members that there had been no changes to indicative descriptors for some years and these had not been changed when drawing up guidelines on how to convert these to letter grades for the current academic year. She confirmed the current descriptors would not change this year, but that she and Dr Bennett would be reviewing these for their levelness with a view to introducing a new set of descriptors for the next academic year. As part of this review, Dr Walsh commended the work done in Early Childhood, and said that such examples of good practice were being sought to help inform the review. Dr Owen said that she had already redesigned the Early Childhood descriptors to include letter grades. Dr Bourke advised that her department used a similar

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document but that nuancing the levelness was a challenge. Dr Walsh requested that any feedback on the descriptors be sent directly to herself and Dr Bennett.

Action: members to send feedback directly to Dr Walsh and Dr Bennett; Dr Walsh to submit a draft best practice document to the next LTC

4. Review of ARE Reports and Faculty External Examiner Reports

Members had received extracts from the ARE and Faculty External Examiner Reports relating to University-wide issues for consideration by the Learning & Teaching Committee:

LSPs: it was noted that some LSPs gave contradictory advice, and certain issues were beyond an academic's pastoral role. Dr McLoughlin noted that sometimes different version of the LSP appeared to be available. The Chair asked Mr Dykins to check with the Head of SDW whether new arrangements currently being introduced will address these issues.

Action: Mr Dykins to contact Mr Ryan and report to next meeting

Training for Assessment Coordinators: it was noted that continuous training for new and existing coordinators was needed. Dr Walsh advised that she was currently reviewing how training could be delivered more effectively. Dr Haughan said that she was concerned that the management and oversight of the assessment process was not being well served by SSCA in its current format. It had become clear that the Subcommittee was overburdened by the requirement to address both basic operational arrangements for assessments and very high-level strategic matters associated with the University's regulatory framework. She felt that both areas merited more attention than the current subcommittee could accommodate. She had therefore requested that Senate allow her to revisit the purpose, terms of reference and membership of the Subcommittee with a view to finding a more effective means of ensuring that both operational and strategic matters associated with assessment are given due consideration by appropriate members of the University community.

Action: Dr Haughan and Dr Walsh to review SSCA terms of reference

The Integrated Curriculum and PSRB/Vocational Courses: it was highlighted that such undergraduate courses, which are relatively small in number, do not always fit well with the University's integrated curriculum. The Chair asked Dr Bennett to use upcoming revalidation events in Law and Design to consider introducing flexible ways of delivering the integrated curriculum to address the fit.

Action: Mr Dykins to circulate list of co-design events

5. Student Success: Retention and Engagement

The Chair confirmed that she had received useful feedback already, and requested that, as the strategy unfolds, members encourage staff to continue sending feedback on any aspect of the strategy. Dr Penketh advised that in her Faculty, some colleagues had noted that the connections between tutorials and seminars needed strengthening, particularly in the setting and marking of assessments. She felt that the model used in her department in previous years where a member of staff had two tutorial groups which were combined to form a seminar group which that member of staff also taught, allowed for a better relationship to develop between a tutor and their students. This allowed tutors to better monitor development of individual students related to assessment outcomes. . The Chair said that the arrangements for tutorials

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for the next academic year would be considered as part of the review of the new strategy.

6. TEF

The Chair advised that the indicative guidelines for TEF Year 3 had been published. She said that although a review of the metrics suggested that the University would achieve a Gold rating, Rectorate Team would probably decide not to submit for Year 3. She noted that pilot studies on subject-level TEF were ongoing and that although the University is not part of the pilot, it would receive the relevant metrics which the Chair said would be presented to LTC.

7. Student Voice

(i) NSS 2017: Review of Student Comments

Members had received a summary compiled by Dr Bennett which gave an overview of student responses to questions 4, 15 and 21 from the last NSS. Dr Bennett explained that he was still looking at the data using key words, and that if any members would like to suggest key words which may help to interrogate the data further they should contact him directly. He highlighted four themes that were emerging.

The first was around dissatisfaction with some lectures. Mr Doolan suggested that groups were often seminar-sized and the traditional lecture model was not appropriate.

A second theme was timetabling. The Chair said that space utilisation was so high that there was always pressure on the timetable. The third theme was around departmental organisation.

The fourth theme was concerned with building a community culture on campuses. Dr Cousins noted that some universities have a busy central area/student hub which consolidates a number of services, including a shop, library access, drop-in computer access and student support. Currently the Gateway building serves as a student hub and seemed to have high usage at all times. Dr Bennett suggested that greater involvement of the Chaplaincy and the SU may help to create programmes of events which involve more residential students and help to foster a community culture. Other suggestions included creating more breakout areas, such as those in the Science block, and Mr Doolin suggested that a stronger SU presence at Creative Campus should also help create a community atmosphere. Dr Penketh felt that EDEN created a challenge in the evenings in terms of creating a community feel.

Dr Haughan requested FQLT Chairs ask student representatives on their committee for their feedback.

Action: FQLT Chairs to ask student representatives on their thoughts on the four areas

(ii) Update on NSS 2018

Members were advised that NSS 2018 would start w/c 5th February 2018. Dr Bennett and Dr Walsh would be meeting on 6th December 2017 to discuss good practice around encouraging students to enter the survey. Dr Bennett said that already this term there had been constructive interventions with departments. **Student Data Group: Update**

(iii) UG Assessment Process

Members had received a report which provided data on June and September APABs from 2014 to 2017. It was noted that statistics were consistent year-on-year for June APABs, but

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that September APABs showed a decline in progression which brought into question whether the current process for August resits was fit-for-purpose. The September board for re-presentation of coursework suggested that interventions were not having the desired impact. Dr Penketh noted that the period between the end of teaching and the reassessment is too long.. The Chair tasked Dr Walsh with reviewing proposals to improve retake student performance for the next L&T Committee; she also suggested Mr Doolan consult with students about their experiences with the August resit period.

Action: Mr Doolan to consult with students over resits and re-presentations; and liaise with Dr Walsh to feed into her proposal

(iv) Level H Research Block Results Data

Members had received a summary of the block results for the dissertation and research project, plus a breakdown by department for 2015/16 and 2016/17. Following the change to assessment deadlines, there was very little overall change in the profile of marks for these assignments, although there were some differences at subject level. It was noted that in some cases the model of a student completing two 15-credit shorter dissertation does not work well, with some duplication of effort. It was suggested that good practice in achieving higher grades for 15 credit dissertations should be shared. The Chair agreed to include this as a main item at the next L&T Committee. It was agreed that Dr Walsh would provide the original data sheets for FQLT Chairs.

Action: Dr Walsh to provide original data sheets for FQLT Chairs

(v) Performance Data: Residential vs Non-Residential Students

Members had received an analysis of data comparing the performance of students in relation to the type of accommodation they resided in. The data suggested that students in LHU Halls of Residence were most likely to be successful in their first assessment and the group least likely to withdraw, with those in family accommodation with similar results those representing a slight higher risk of withdrawal. The Chair said the data could be used as a marketing tool, and suggested that the Director of IT be asked to include *residence type* in the Students at Risk portal.

Action: Mr Dykins to contact Direct of IT to include residence type in the Students at Risk Portal

8. Staff Development – Plans for Faculty L&T Days in January

Dr Bennett said that good progress was being made and that common themes were emerging. Dr Walsh suggested that the Head of SDW attend. FQLT Chairs to liaise with Deans.

Mrs Anton noted that Dr Penketh had previously asked whether benchmarking was possible for the rate of Fellowship membership with other HEIs in the region. Although such data was not available from the HEA, Mrs Anton said there was HESA data available up to 2015/16 on teaching qualifications. The University's returns suggested 71% had membership in 2014/15 compared with 82% in 2015/16. In 2015/16 the University was ranked eighth in the sector.

9. Faculty Quality Learning & Teaching Committee

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

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(i) Arts & Humanities

Minutes were received for 4th October 2017.

(ii) Education

Minutes were received for 18th September 2017. Dr Penketh highlighted feedback from SSLC and evaluations requesting academic writing support be extended to PGR. She noted that writing mentors and key practitioners would be assisting in the development of an induction session. Feedback on the tutor guide had so far been positive. The template for examination papers had been re-sent to remind exam writers of the importance of keeping to agreed rubric and structure. Cross-faculty dissertations had also been noted as presenting challenges. Dr Penketh noted that Dr Owen would be taking over as Chair.

(iii) Science

Minutes were received for 4th October 2017. Dr Cousins noted that courses were expected to be delivered in the Network of Hope, though course developments had not yet started, as details had not yet been confirmed. Provision will include Level Zero courses in Creative and Performing Arts, and Sports Science, in addition to existing provision.

10. Faculty Boards and Network of Hope

Members had received and considered minutes of Faculty Boards and Network of Hope:

(i) Arts & Humanities

Minutes were received for 9th October 2017.

(ii) Education

Minutes were received for 11th October 2017.

(iii) Network of Hope

Minutes were received for meetings on 4th July, 6th September and 4th October 2017. Extracts of minutes from 8th November 2017 were also received. Ms Murray said that they were looking at transition events and noted that meta-Moodles had already been set up. She highlighted extracts from the November meeting which identified differences in the student experience between NoH students and students on Hope campuses. This included issues already highlighted elsewhere around dissertations. The Chair requested that Ms Murray use the points made to develop a proposal for the next meeting of L&T Committee.

Dr Penketh queried whether the blended learning model had been introduced and explained for students at Carmel College, the latest College in the Network. Dr Haughan requested that marketing and transition be included on the NoH agenda.

Action: Ms Murray to submit proposal to next L&T Committee; and included marketing and transition on the NoH agenda

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11. Student Services Group

Members had received and considered minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2017. This meeting had included a review of the annual monitoring reports from all SSWB units. In particular, the Chair noted that the University's Mental Health staff in SDW were seeing an increase in the number of student presenting with mental health issues. She noted that Ms Ruth Thomson, Mr Parker's replacement, had started in post and was already having an impact on the service. Mrs Anton agreed to resend the link with support information for academics who may come into contact with students presenting mental health issues.

Action: Mrs Anton to resend mental health support training link to all academic and support staff

12. Library Steering Group

Members had received and considered the minutes of the Library Steering Group meeting on 11th October 2017. Ms Murray advised that the Study Skills Mentors had been appointed though she noted that the take-up for appointments had been slow. She said the library staff would be talking to staff to encourage greater take-up by students. She said she would be liaising with Faculties on the best way to promote the service, and Mrs Donaldson would be liaising with the SU to attend course representative training to further promote amongst students.

13. AOB

(i) Learning and Teaching Development Fund Process

Dr Bennett said that he would report back at the next meeting on developments.

(ii) Student Evaluations

Level H evaluations only would be undertaken this term. Levels C and I would take place in March 2018.

(iii) Late Submissions

Following a query from Dr McLoughlin, members agreed that students should be encouraged to submit coursework on time, but that when considering granting reassessment opportunities, a late submission, should it be necessary, might be counted in the students favour by the assessment boards.

(iv) Lead Practitioners

Members queried what support was in place for new members of staff and was advised that Dr Crutchley runs a Community of Practice in this area.

Dates of Next Meetings:

- Wednesday 21st February 2018 at 2.15 pm
- Wednesday 23rd May 2018 at 2.15 pm