



Meeting	FACULTY TEACHING & QUALITY COMMITTEE	
Place	Wessex House 3.36	
Date and Time	Wednesday 3 June 2009 at 9.30am	
Present	Dr S B Bedford	Department of Chemistry
	Mr A Hayes	Department of Computer Science
	Dr A C Jeffries	Natural Science Programmes
	Dr F R Laughton (Chair)	Department of Physics
	Dr M B Reed	Department of Mathematical Sciences
	Dr P J Rogers	Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology
	Dr A D J Taylor	Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology
	Dr C M Todd	Department of Biology & Biochemistry
	Professor A B Walker	Department of Physics
	Dr D Wolverson	Department of Physics
	Mrs E F Bird (Secretary)	Faculty of Science
Apologies	Ms K Mabery	Students' Union

Dr Laughton welcomed members to the final meeting of this academic year. On behalf of the Committee she thanked Katie Mabery, Students' Union, for her contribution to discussion in the Committee and also to the Secretary, Mrs Elizabeth Bird.

1445 QA16 Marking, Moderation and Feedback to students

The FT&QC discussed revision to QA16, particularly relating to the production of transcripts and feedback to students.

This QA statement was effective from 1 June 2009, the day on which it was circulated to academic departments for implementation. Given that Department Administrators and Directors of Studies are majorly concerned with assessment and Boards of Examiners at this time of year, it is far too late to circulate new procedures which require instant implementation.

There was also concern that the paraphrasing in the covering memo did not quite reflect the content of QA16. The covering memo indicated that paper copies of both forms of transcript should only be produced for completing students (ie exit summary transcript and full transcript). There is nothing in QA16 that relates specifically to transcripts for continuing students.

There are a number of references in QA16 to the requirement to provide feedback. However there is little detail about the nature or level of feedback that should be provided, particularly from tutors.

The timing of feedback to students is also problematic. The covering memo indicates that "Personal tutors should be available to discuss results available online with students and provide feedback". However unit results for Semester 2 for continuing students are not available on SAMIS until early July (five weeks after the end of S2) and not all tutors necessarily have access to marks on SAMIS.

It should be noted that it is rarely the Director of Studies who is responsible to ensuring that unit marks are on SAMIS. This is a task normally undertaken by Department Administrators and their staff.

It was agreed that the Chair would pass these concerns onto the LTEO.

FRL

1446 MINUTES

The FT&QC approved the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2009 (paper 135), subject to a minor amendment M1431 relating to Ordinary degrees in the Department of Mathematical Sciences.

1447 MATTERS ARISING

M1431 Ordinary degrees

Ordinary degrees are Designated Alternative Programmes that currently exist outside the NFA. The FT&QC noted that the Quality Assurance Committee has not yet considered formally whether a route that enabled students on an Ordinary degree to recover to an Honours programme, could fit with the NFA.

Dr Reed expressed the view that the Department of Mathematical Sciences has not yet been told explicitly by the University that it cannot continue offering this recovery route to its students. The Chair indicated that such a route would require formal approval by the Quality Assurance Committee. It was the view of most members of the FT&QC that such approval was unlikely to be granted as recovery from an Ordinary degree to an NFA-compliant Honours programme will create injustices if those students are treated very differently from those under the normal progression requirements within NFA-compliant Honours programmes.

The Committee did not support a suggestion that Accreditation of Prior Learning might provide a mechanism for Ordinary degree students to recover back to an NFA-compliant Honours programme.

It will be necessary for all of the Ordinary degrees in the Faculty to be restructured to comply with changes in credits as part of the FHEQ, to remove the route for Ordinary degree students to recover to Honours, and to ensure that the transfer criteria onto Ordinary degrees is consistent with the NFA.

A revised programme structure for the Ordinary degree in the Department of Computer Science will be considered later this meeting. It was agreed that revisions to the Ordinary degrees in the Departments of Mathematical Sciences and Physics to accommodate these changes will be considered for approval under vacation powers by mid-July 2009 (for inclusion in the 2009-10 programme handbooks). If the Department of Mathematical Sciences wishes to ask the Quality Assurance Committee for the approval for Ordinary degree students to recover to Honours, Dr Reed was encouraged to submit a paper to one of the July meetings.

It may be possible at some time in the future to develop a more generic Ordinary degree, or at least some alignment of programme regulations across the Faculty.

In the meantime, the Chair agreed to seek advice from the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee, the Deputy Academic Registrar and the Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement in order to obtain a clear and unequivocal statement about the Recovery to Honours route.

Secretary's note: This statement has now been provided and circulated to those concerned.

Students who are transferred to Ordinary degrees in the Faculty of Science for the start of the 2009-10 academic year, must not be told that they could have the opportunity to recover to a Honours programme.

It was noted that one current barrier to the development of a generic Faculty Ordinary degree is that students can progress onto an Ordinary degree at the end of Year 1 in Computer Science and Mathematical Sciences; and only in Year 2 in Physics. **FRL**

M1426/1427 PG Diploma/MSc in Industrial Biotechnology and Enterprise

Full approval for these new programmes was granted on 19 May 2009.

M1429 Freeze on academic staff,

Dr Rogers reported that one post has been 'unfrozen'. However the Department has other staffing problems that have consequences for its programmes. Strategies are being developed to resolve any difficulties.

M1432 DSR progress reports for degrees in Chemistry,

These reports will now be discussed by the Quality Assurance Committee in early July.

M1453 Student Exchange programmes

Relevant departments have been asked for information about some of their Student Exchange programmes, with a deadline of 5 June 2009.

1448 PROGRAMME AND UNIT CHANGES

On behalf of the Board of Studies, the FT&QC approved the following minor and intermediate changes to units and programmes (papers 136a-g and some tabled papers).

Department of Biology and Biochemistry

- Changes to MRes in Biosciences to comply with the revised FHEQ. The FT&QC noted that Masters programmes will need to include a minimum of 75 credits at M level for satisfactory completion. Currently the requirement is for 72 credits. Some minor modifications to the optional units in the MRes programmes were approved. The credit requirements will be fulfilled if students are told that they must take at least 12 credits at M level in their choice of optional units. The FT&QC noted that there can be problems with setting up ZZ units (Directors of Studies' approved units) in SAMIS.
- Minor amendments to all undergraduate units. These were approved. Dr Todd was commended for his spreadsheet listing all unit codes and details and providing web links to each unit description.

Department of Computer Science

- Amendments to CM30082, CM10227, CN10228, CM40178 were approved.

BSc (Ordinary) in Computing

The FT&QC considered a revised structure for the BSc (Ordinary) in Computing. These revisions took into account changes in FHEQ credit requirements (at least 30 credits at H level and the acquisition of at least 150 credits (currently 130 credits). Members noted that students with low marks progressing into Year 2 in October 2009 will be offered the opportunity to transfer to the Ordinary degree or repeat the year. There will not be any opportunity to recover to the Honours programmes.

In discussion, the FT&QC suggested that the Department should consider removing the provision of the BSc in Computing with Study Year Abroad. This reflected the high hurdles in other departments and the scarcity of such opportunities even for high performing students.

The programme specification and programme regulations were approved subject to some amendments. It was agreed that these should be completed before mid-July and approved under vacation powers.

Revised timelines for the Degree Scheme Review of undergraduate degrees.

The FT&QC noted progress of the DSR and the revised schedule. The proposal is that the DSR Panel will meet in September. This will be dependent upon students being available to attend the meeting.

**Department of Mathematical Sciences
Curriculum Review Year 2 in 2010-2011**

The FT&QC approved the proposed changes following a detailed Curriculum Review of all undergraduate programmes in the Department of Mathematical Sciences.

It was noted that there had been full discussion about the implication of these changes for the Maths and Computing, Maths and Physics and Natural Science degrees.

Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology

- Revisions to the MPharmacol placement units reflecting the weightings, under NFA, for the enhanced placement.
- Amendment to final year pharmacology options for the Pharmacy and Pharmacology degrees, and also Natural Sciences, with the approval of a new unit in Quantitative Pharmacology and the development of modern medicines; the withdrawal of PA30150 and PA40159 for 2009-10. Dr Bedford observed that the new unit might be appropriate for students following the Chemistry for Drug Discovery programme.

Department of Physics

- Amendments to PH10003, PH20020

**1449 DEGREE SCHEME REVIEW FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS**

Dr Rogers chaired the FT&QC for this item of business.

The FT&QC considered the Degree Scheme Review report, examples of good practice, recommendations and departmental responses for undergraduate degrees in the Department of Physics. (paper137).

Dr Rogers reminded members that they are responsible for evaluating the Review Report in detail, assuring themselves that the Review Report covers all required areas, that the outcomes are appropriate, and that the action plan is both specific and sufficient to the purpose of ensuring that the process results in quality enhancement.

The Faculty Teaching and Quality Committee is also responsible for ensuring that:

- good practice identified through the Degree Scheme Review process is shared across the Faculty;
- the action plan arising from the Degree Scheme Review is implemented to an agreed timescale; any Faculty -level issues are addressed.

The FT&QC confirmed that the DSR report addressed all the required issues and that the outcomes were more than satisfactory. This was a good report based on an evaluative Programme Evaluation Document. The FT&QC endorsed the continuation of all of the existing programmes and the amendment of the Ordinary degrees (to comply with the revised FHEQ). Some minor typographical errors will be corrected and some textual amendments were suggested for clarity.

The FT&QC then focussed on the Recommendations and Action Plan. These had been discussed by various groups within the Department of Physics and had been approved by the Head of Department. Members agreed that the recommendations and actions were achievable and on target. They commented particularly on the following recommendations.

Recommendation 5

Improvement of recruitment onto the undergraduate masters programmes. Dr Laughton explained that she intended to discuss this with current students (surveys/focus groups) to find out why they chose the programmes they are undertaking and what motivates them in the programmes.

Recommendation 10

Extending the membership of the Programmes Committee. Dr Laughton explained that, apart from the Programmes Committee, the Department also had teaching ‘strands’ and year group teaching teams. The Department had therefore felt that it was not beneficial to extend the membership of the Programmes Committee. The FT&QC was supportive of maintaining the *status quo*.

Recommendation 13

The University should consider the provision of GTA space (for example, in 3W level 4) being adapted to be more flexible for small group learning and teaching. This was fully endorsed by the FT&QC.

Recommendation 14

The completion of a post-graduation questionnaire. The Department felt that students were already ‘over-surveyed’. The students already complete an end of year questionnaire. It would be possible to add some additional questions that sought opinions about the overall student experience. The FT&QC endorsed this view.

Recommendation 15

Extending the use of Moodle. The FT&QC encouraged the Department to seek the support of the e-learning Team in the LTEO.

The FT&QC noted the examples of good practice that were highlighted in the report.

The FT&QC fully endorsed the report, which will be submitted to the Quality Assurance Committee for further consideration of the report and the review process. **QAC**

1450 REVISED QA STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The FT&QC considered some revisions to QA9 to combine QA9, 29, and 46 (paper 138).

The following comments were made in discussion.

- The general consensus was that there was no good reason to combine three currently existing QA statements into one statement. It was more difficult to find specific information. It might also be that some information may be omitted in the combined revision. Several members commented on what appeared to be additional new responsibilities and expectations placed on Directors of Studies. Some clarification or examples may provide clarification (paras 3.3, 11.2 and 11.3).
- A couple of paragraphs might be inappropriate for a QA statement (paras 4.1 and 6.1), as they simply flagged up activities in the LTEO.
- There were some aspects relating to peer review that require further clarification (paras 5.2 and 5.6.2). There was some conflict between peer review being a 'supportive process', the acquisition of 'information on the quality of teaching practices', and records remaining 'confidential' (particularly if it is considered good practice to include some of this information in Annual Monitoring Reports).
- The sections should be re-ordered. Section 7 is important and should be nearer the beginning of the QA statement.
- It was suggested that the Academic Staff Committee may have a view on Section 8.
- Annex 1 is helpful.

Members made a range of minor comments and amendments which will be provided as feedback to the LTEO in a tracked version of QA9.

1451 QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Dr Laughton provided some informal feedback from the meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee on 26 May 2009

Individual Mitigating Circumstances

This was a major issue for discussion at this meeting. The intention is that new procedures will apply to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students at the point of implementation.

Although there was consultation earlier in the year, there has been little consultation on the current, rather more extensive, proposals. The NFA Working Group is meeting again to discuss these proposals and it is currently not clear on what will happen next.

The discussion in the FT&QC focussed on the 'bunching' of examinations. Dr Reed expressed concerns that some individual students maybe affected by the close timing of some of their exams. This 'bunching' has however, been ruled out as a mitigating circumstance. It was pointed out that the Examinations Office and Department Administrators put in a lot of effort to spread out individual students' examination timetables as far as possible. On occasions, if a student is undertaking an option from another Department, for example a student in Mathematical Sciences taking a Management option, it may not be possible to avoid having several examinations close together.

Dr Reed suggested that there should be a minimum standard for the sequencing of examinations. However the general view of the Committee was that given the constraint of space for examinations and the importance of final year students taking their exams earlier rather than later in the assessment period, this was not possible. An alternative strategy might be to reduce the number of options available to students or to warn them that some options from other Departments/Schools may have consequences in the timing of examinations.

The FT&QC was reminded that a student who had a medically-certified illness resulting from the bunching of examinations would have grounds for the submission of a request for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account.

1452 LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE

The FT&QC received the minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2009 (paper 139).

1453 PROGRAMME APPROVAL PANELS, DEGREE SCHEME REVIEWS, EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

The FT&QC noted current progress on the following:

Programme Approvals:

- *MSc in Advanced & Specialist Healthcare Practice: Received initial approval: December 2008 Senate, subject to an amended title prior to full approval. Full approval, FT&QC 25 March 2009. PAP to take place 29 June 2009*
- *MSc in Industrial Biotechnology and Enterprise granted full approval following a PAP which took place on 6 May 2009*
- *MRes/Integrated PhD in Sustainable Chemical Technologies granted full approval following a PAP which took place on 24 April 2009*
- *MSc/EngD in Digital Media granted full approval following a PAP which took place on 28 April 2009*

At planning stage

- *DPharm Practice.*

Degree Scheme Reviews (DSR) 2008-09

- *The DSR for the undergraduate programmes in the Department of Biology & Biochemistry. DSR Panel 18 June 2009*
- *The DSR for the undergraduate programmes in the Department of Physics. DSR Panel met on 27 April 2009 DSR report to be submitted to July 2009 QAC*
- *The DSR for the undergraduate programmes in the Department of Computer Science. Panel to be scheduled late summer 2009.*

Student Exchange Programmes, Department/Faculty/Institutional New programmes

- *Curtin University: strategic approval being considered by the Chair of the Board of Studies, prior to consideration by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning & Teaching)*

Renewal of existing programmes

- *Ferris State University*
- *University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*
- *University of Texas, Austin College*
- *University of Florida at Gainsville*
- *Other Faculty exchange programmes (previously regarded as institutional agreements).*

Accreditation of Programmes 2009-10

- *Undergraduate degrees in Physics and Maths and Physics*

1454 DEPARTMENTAL TEACHING/COURSES/PROGRAMMES COMMITTEES

The FT&QC received the minutes of the following meetings (paper 140).

Department of Biology & Biochemistry

12 March 2009

Natural Sciences

16 February 2009

6 May 2009

Department of Physics

12 May 2009

Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology

11 March 2009

15 April 2009.

Dates for 2009-10

Date	Day	Time	Room
21 October	Wednesday	1.15 pm	WH 3.36
18 November	Wednesday	1.15 pm	Council Chamber
13 January	Wednesday	1.15 pm	WH 3.36 but booking still unconfirmed
17 February	Wednesday	1.15 pm	WH 3.36
24 March	Wednesday	1.15 pm	WH 3.36 but booking still unconfirmed
5 May	Wednesday	1.15 pm	WH 3.36
9 June	Wednesday	9.30 am	WH 3.36

Lunch will be provided at all meetings.