

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Academic Structures Implementation Group

Minute of Meeting held on Monday 7 January 2008 at 3pm in Committee Room 321, Boyd Orr Building

Present: Professor D Watt, Dr J Anderson, Mr D Bennion, Ms H Butcher, Dr C Comerasamy, Ms M Farrell, Mr T Guthrie, Professor R Hill, Mr G Lee, Mrs E Duncan (*vice Mrs C Mallon*), Dr D Moore, Miss C Murphy, Professor A Nash, Ms H Reid, Dr A Whittaker, Miss M Wilson.

Apologies: Mr I Black, Professor C Edwards, Ms H MacPherson, Dr T Munck, Mrs J Shearer.

In Attendance: Mrs E Waugh.

1. Minute of Meeting of 14 November 2008

The minutes were approved.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 DACE requests

Prof Nash confirmed that he had been in contact with Dr Hamilton, Acting Head of DACE, regarding the request to retain courses worth 4 or 8 credits available to part-time students enrolled on the open programme. In addition, the Department had requested permission to retain the existing structure of the language programme currently taught over two 10-week blocks. Neither the timetable nor the credit rating of these courses (worth 12 credits) conformed to the recommendations of the new structure. Prof Nash would be discussing this again with Dr Hamilton and would report back to the next meeting.

Action: Prof Nash

2.2 PGT Programmes in Medicine

Prof Watt and Prof Nash had met Dr Edwards and Ms Stewart, postgraduate administrator in the Faculty of Medicine, to discuss the specific exemptions requested from the new structure for their PGT courses. Conclusions had not been reached and Prof Edwards was invited to investigate and report back on the special arrangements approved for PGT courses in Medicine at the University of Edinburgh.

Action: Prof Edwards

2.3 CRB

Staff in MIS had discussed with Ms Murphy the difficulties experienced by Central Room Bookings (CRB) in accessing some of the course information held in the existing course database. Specifically, awareness of links between courses was mentioned in respect of Engineering and the MSc IT programme where students attending lectures in consecutive slots had found them located at opposite ends of the campus. With no information on the relationship of courses to a specific programme, CRB had not identified the problem.

Discussions were continuing.

Action: CRB/MIS

2.4 Course Catalogue and Programme Specifications

Ms Butcher had looked at the information provided under 3H and 4H course entries in the Undergraduate Course Catalogue and was able to confirm that it could be included in 'Programme Structures and Features' section of the Programme Specification. Information on requirements for progression, assessment weightings and the honours course prescription already appeared in the Programme Specifications in some faculties.

It was confirmed that, where 3H and 4H courses were already subdivided into honours options, the 3H and 4H entries would be removed from the Catalogue and the data transferred to Programme Specifications when these were reviewed. This would be explained in Senate Office guidelines accompanying requests to departments for the updating of specifications.

Action: Ms Butcher

3. Implementation Plan

Academic Matters

7.1	Agree new academic year for MBChB	SO, Medical Sch, FBLS
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Ms Duncan had submitted a detailed timetable of the MBChB programme as requested at the last meeting, to the Clerk of Senate. Start and finish dates for all years had been finalised. Minor changes were likely to be made to the submitted timetable but these affected only internal arrangements. Agreement had still to be reached with FBLS on some aspects of the programme but this was dependent on changes to teaching in FBLS which were currently under discussion.

Exam dates in years 1, 2 and 3 had been brought forward but were not aligned to the new structure for reasons previously acknowledged concerning the requirements of the medical curriculum.

Ms Duncan clarified that the exam diet in June in the final year was a resit diet and the first diet was in February.

Prof Watt requested a copy of the timetable for himself and Mrs Waugh. (*Clerk's Note: copies of timetables were supplied as requested.*)

7.4	Agree new academic year for BVMS	SO, Vet School
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Dr Anderson was attending the meeting as the new representative of the Vet School. He was aware of where there were likely to be difficulties for the BVMS programme conforming to the new structure. It was agreed that he would discuss this with Prof Watt and Prof Nash.

Action: Dr Anderson, Prof Watt, Prof Nash

7.5	Agree new academic year for ITE programmes	SO, Education
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As previously noted, Ms Farrell confirmed that the BEd programme should be able to conform to the new academic structure.

The PGDE (Professional Graduate Diploma in Education) provision was under review and it was likely that this would become a postgraduate programme offering a master's award over

two years. This was not expected to change the existing timetable which started earlier to accommodate the required periods of school experience.

7.6	Consider any other requests for exceptions	SO, Faculties
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No other requests for exceptions to the new academic year had been received.

9.2	Consider any requests for exceptional course sizes	Faculties
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No other requests for exceptions to the recommended credit ratings of courses had been received.

9.3	Consider any requests for exceptional timing of assessments	Faculties
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The only request received was for students taking joint language programmes where the period covering the third-year May exam diet was normally spent abroad. Dr Munck was investigating this and would report progress to the next meeting.

Action: Dr Munck

10.1	Develop and approve generic UG regulation	ARWG, ASC
10.2	Recast specific UG regulations in terms of generic regulation	Faculties, ASC

Dr Guthrie reported that the concerns from the Faculties of Science about the proposed generic UG regulation had not yet been resolved but a meeting was due to take place on 17 January with Science Deans, other Science Faculty representatives, Dr Guthrie, Prof Watt and Prof Nolan to review the issues.

Most Faculties had produced supplementary regulations to address specific matters not included in the proposed generic regulation.

A sub-group of the Degree Regulations Working Group would be considering the submissions and Dr Guthrie would report progress to the next meeting.

Action: Dr Guthrie

Registry Matters

14.1	Change and approve non-conformant exam durations	Depts, Faculties
17.1	Review supply of exam halls in the light of the new academic year	E&B, Registry
17.2	If necessary, identify additional exam halls	E&B, Registry

Mr Bennion reported that the Kelvin Gallery would be available for the December 2008 exam diet. The Director of the Gallery was looking at all existing commitments in relation to the May 2008 diet and for all diets in subsequent years. It was hoped that a long-term arrangement would be put in place to secure the Gallery for exams.

Registry would shortly be sending requests to departments for information on their exam requirements for both diets in session 2008-09. It was particularly important for exam duration to be reviewed taking account of the new guidelines approved by Senate. This would be specifically mentioned in the request. For LBSS, Dr Guthrie asked that the request be sent to the Faculty Office (to Ms Webster). For other departments, the request would be sent to the exam co-ordinator and copied to the Head of Department. The accompanying letter should stress that any change of exam duration or timing should be an academic decision.

The new exam duration maximum periods did not apply to practical exams in the Faculties of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine but did apply to all written exams despite the fact that courses in these Faculties were not credit-rated.

MIS Matters

MIS had been unable to send a representative to the meeting.

19.1	Develop and pilot prototype PI system, with training for volunteers	PIP, MIS
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The PIP Project Manger, Ms Shearer, had sent a progress report, which had been tabled, on the PIP pilot currently running in the Faculties of Law, Business and Social Sciences and Science.

The report gave an optimistic view of progress so far in the pilot. Prof Watt invited any members of the Group with experience of the new system to comment.

Prof Hill had found the process of submitting and approving courses time-consuming and some data had to be entered twice. Ms Reid had not found the system easy to navigate or user-friendly. For example, when adding a number of Associated Programmes for a course into the PIP database, it was not possible to select and link a number of programmes at once; each programme had to be selected and linked one at a time. Some of the features of Word did not have their normal or full functionality, e.g. 'Track changes', 'Find and replace' and 'Spelling'.

MIS was aware of these issues and was working on possible solutions.

HR Matters

4.1	Re-align annual leave year	HR
4.2	Negotiate September Fri/Mon working with unions	HR

Mr Black was unable to attend but reported that there had been no further developments since the last meeting.

4. Other Matters

4.1 Synergy

Concerns had been raised by Prof Ward in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures about German courses which are taught to students from both this university and Strathclyde. In the new structure there could be a discrepancy in teaching periods of as much as two weeks. After discussion with Prof Watt and Prof Nash, Prof Ward was investigating more flexible delivery of courses including making teaching available online.

It was clarified that there was no proposal to reduce teaching to an 8-week period when both groups of students were guaranteed to be in attendance. Other solutions to the timetabling problem would be sought.

Other undergraduate programmes that might encounter similar difficulties were identified as:

- BEng, MEng Product Design Engineering (taught by the Faculty of Engineering in conjunction with Glasgow School of Art)

- BEd Music (taught by the Faculty of Education in conjunction with the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama)

Postgraduate programmes that might be affected included:

- MSc System Level Integration (taught by the Departments of Computing Science and Electronics & Electrical Engineering in conjunction with the Universities of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt)
- MSc Water Resources Engineering Management (taught by the Department of Civil Engineering in conjunction with Heriot-Watt University)

Faculty representatives from Engineering and Education were asked to investigate any potential timetabling issues arising from restructuring.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Revision classes

Ms Reid asked if revision classes could be held in the time identified for revision immediately before the exam diets in December and May. It was confirmed that:

- optional revision classes can be scheduled for Hons students on the dedicated revision days within the two exam periods provided that it is made clear to the students that the sessions are optional, that no new material is covered and that no hints are given as to exam content; students should not be disadvantaged if they chose not to attend
- revision classes should not be scheduled for students taking qualifying courses (L1 and L2) within the revision/exam periods
- non-exam instruments of assessment (e.g. oral and poster presentations) for Hons students are allowed in the winter (December) exam period, providing there are no clashes of exams for any student on a combined Hons programme
- Hons projects can continue in the winter (December) exam period

5.2 Return date for exam results in December diet.

Dr Moore was concerned about the possible difficulties presented by an exam diet immediately before the Christmas break in terms of the marking responsibilities for academic staff. As an adviser, he was aware that early return of results was extremely helpful for students who were considering a change of curriculum in semester 2.

Registry normally set dates for the return of results and Mr Bennion did not see any likely change to the current arrangement of setting the date after a specified number of working weeks from the end of the exam diet. He would bring to the next meeting the dates Registry would be proposing in 2008-09.

Action: Mr Bennion

6. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 29 February 2008 at 3.00pm in Committee Room 321, Boyd Orr Building.