**Executive Secretary**

Chris Harper, Learning and Quality Unit

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**ACADEMIC COLLABORATION COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Sixtieth meeting (First of 2012-13 session) of the Academic Collaboration Committee, held Thursday 25 October 2012 at 2.30pm in Room QA75, Maritime Greenwich .**

**12.1.1 PRESENT:**  Gordon Ade-Ojo (Education)

Richard Blackburn (SCI)

Dean Brander (VP Education -Students’ Union)

Will Calver (Access and Partnerships Manager)

Wendy Cealey Harrison (LQU)

Corine Delage (ADC)

Mamood Gousy (HSC)

Alasdair Grant (ENG)

Chris Harper (LQU) *(Secretary)*

Debi Hayes (Partnership Division)

Henry Hill (OSA)

Simon Jarvis (DVC – Academic Development) *(Chair)*

Richard Jump (BUS)

Maggie Leharne (ILS)

Mayur Patel (CMS)

Zoe Petit (HSS)

**APOLOGIES:** Stuart Allen (ADC);

Peter Bryan (EDU)

Fiona Conlan (International Partnerships Manager)

Samer El-Daher (SCI);

Andrew Haggart (SCI)

Nick Hand (BUS)

Maggie Leharne (ILS)

Simon Walker (EDU)

Dean Brander (SUUG) was welcomed to his first meeting.

**MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

**12.1.2** The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 May 2012 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

**ACC ACTION CHECK-LIST FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**12.1.3** The list of actions arising from the May 2012 meetings of ACC was noted. Specific attention was drawn to the following:

1. ***11/12.2.4 (f) on-line registration for international partners***

Henry Hill reported that the on-line registration process was being constantly monitored. The statistics produced in the presentation made at the last meeting of ACC had been misleading in that they contained a number of incomplete records which were in fact rejected applications. Follow-up briefings/training provided to collaborative partners and guidance given to prospective students had emphasizedthe 2 stage process of application and registration. Further system enhancements were being investigated.

Some School representatives reported that information regarding applications and registrations for some partners did not appear to be readily available, indicating that full utilization of the system was not occurring.

**ACTION: Schools to alert International Partnerships Manager of instances where on-line registration data was deficient, in order that appropriate follow-up action with partner staff takes place.**

**(**b) ***11/12.3.16 Partner College Student Representation***

ACC received minutes of a Partner College Themed Meeting held on 26 September 2012.The purpose of the meeting was to engage partners in dialogue around key topics of student engagement. Will Calver reported that the theme of the meeting had been the audit recommendation:

*that the University seek to achieve greater consistency in the expectations placed upon its partners in relation to student involvement in quality assurance processes and give greater prominence to feedback from students in the partner's and University's reporting processes.*

As such the major focus of the meeting had been on discussing

* the effective organisation of programme committees (inclusive of student representatives) including an annual agenda/calendar of business.
* reporting processes which included individuals (Link Tutors/Progression and Development Officers), Schools and the wider University community.
* measures in which student opinion can be captured outside of formal student representatives and surveys.

As a result of the meeting, guidelines and expectations relating to the above and future areas of staff development had been agreed.

**ACTION: Will Calver to publish guidelines in Partner College Handbook, on dedicated website and to bring content to the attention of Schools and other University representatives, in order that good practice be extended to international partners and internal provision.**

The DVC (Academic Development) thanked the Students’ Union for delivering student representative training sessions to date, together with a reminder that, given its University funding, training should also include student representatives at Partner Colleges.

**ACTION: Dean Brander/Gary Naylor (SUUG) to implement training for Partner College student representatives**

(c) ***Minute 11/12.4.8 International Partner Representation***

The International Partnerships Manager reported that:

* discussion had taken place with the Marketing Office whereby marketing material would be saved on a new portal for partners. The new portal will be launched in early 2013.
* training in relation to the Electronic Admissions System had been delivered to 15 MSA (Cairo) staff. Discussion was also taking place with regard to enrolling MSA staff on the PGCHE via distance learning.

The DVC (Academic Development) reported that the distance learning materials for the PGCHE had been written. The precise ways in which the support mechanisms and assessment would operate is likely to vary from partner to partner but will include video conferencing and site visits. Attainment of the award led to membership of the HEA following payment of a fee. Several partners had expressed an interest in their staff pursuing this and pilot institutions were being identified. The onus is upon staff developmental activity with discussion taking place to embed such activity as a requirement of new and continuing partnership agreements.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP 2012-2013**

**12.1.4** ACC re-affirmed its Terms of Reference (with no amendments from last session). Membership of the Committee for 2012/2013 was noted.

**CHAIRS’S COMMUNICATIONS**

**12.1.5** ACC received an oral update regarding Collaborative Strategy Working Group. Discussion had centred upon the strategic planning of international collaborations, resource allocation given continued expansion and adequate financial planning/full economic costing of such collaborations.

**ACTION: DVC (Academic Development) hoped to submit a report from the Collaborative Strategy Working Group to the next meeting of ACC in January 2013.**

**UK QUALITY CODE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

**12.1.6** ACC received feedback following QAA Consultation meetings concerning **the draft Chapter B10 Management of Collaborative Arrangements.** Key aspects/issues identified were:

**- Definition of collaborative arrangements:** denotes educational provision leading or contributing to **academic credit** or a qualification of a degree-awarding body, delivered, supported, or assessed through an arrangement with a partner organisation. The definition of collaborative arrangements reflected that many degree-awarding bodies and higher education providers now have much more diverse portfolios of collaborative activities than was the case when Section 2 of the Code of Practice was last revised.

* **The scope of such arrangements** range from work based provision, external credit rating, articulation agreements to franchised/validated provision including dual/joint/multiple awards. Degree-awarding bodies are responsible for ensuring that the Expectations of the Quality Code are met and that its Indicators of sound practice have been considered. However, they need to ensure that their partners have an explicit understanding of the Chapters of the Quality Code relevant to the collaboration and of the respective responsibilities of the degree-awarding body and partner organisations.
* **Proportionate procedures and processes:** Degree-awarding bodies and other higher education providers will find it necessary to develop and approve (through the appropriate institutional authorities) a range of different practices and procedures that are tailored and appropriate to the risks of the collaboration involved. For example, the procedures which apply to student placements are likely to be less complex than those which apply to validation of programmes at an overseas partner institution.
* **Loci of responsibility:** Institutions are not expected to centralise all arrangements e.g. work placement provision. However, Institutions do need to have a taxonomy of arrangements with clear lines of responsibility and reporting.

The QAA consultation had now finished, with a December 2012 publication of the finally approved chapter. The Chapter will consist of a single Expectation, which expresses the key principle identified by the HE community, as essential for the assurance of academic standards and quality, within the context of collaboration. The Expectation is currently worded as:

**‘Degree-awarding bodies and other higher education providers implement and manage collaborative arrangements effectively. Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities delivered irrespective of where these take place or who provides them.’**

The Expectation is accompanied by a series of Indicators which reflect sound practice. The Indicators are structured to reflect the life-cycle of a collaborative arrangement: Strategy and Governance; Negotiating, agreeing and managing a collaborative arrangement; Responsibility for, and equivalence of, academic standards; Assuring academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities; Information for students and partner organisations and Certificates and records of study.

ACC discussed the indicators and identified the following **ACTION:**

**-** mapping of published indicators against University practice/procedures to be undertaken - **LQU to report to March 2012 meeting of ACC.**

**-** incidence of dual/joint awards to be reviewed with appropriate regulatory framework **- Wendy Cealey Harrison**

* where appropriate, Collaborative Strategy to reflect on loci of responsibilities and associated resources - **DVC (Academic Development)**
* clarification as to whether Exchange students are to be included within the scope of collaborative arrangements  **- LQU**

**REVIEW OF COLLEGE HIGHER EDUCATION (RCHE)**

**12.1.7** ACC received an outline of the revised methodology that replaces Integrated Quality Enhancement and Review from 2012-2013.While having key differences from IQER, RCHE is still based on the premise of peer review and assuring standards and quality of higher education. RCHEretains the three CORE themes from IQER, with the addition of enhancement to partly replace the enhancement part of the Developmental Engagement (DE), as well as bringing it in line with Institutional Review in England and Northern Ireland (IRENI). Reviews will contain a thematic element in order to promote development through the sharing of good practice across higher education providers. The identification and operation of themes will be subject to the protocol agreed by the Quality in Higher Education Group (QHEG).

**12.1.8** For academic standards, there are two grades of judgement: **meets** or **does not meet** national expectations. For the other three areas, there are four grades of judgement:

* two above the line - **commended** and **meets expectations**
* two below the line **- requires improvement** and **does not meet expectations**.

Below the line judgements will require follow-up action, which will include monitoring of an action plan and may also include a second review or visit by reviewers.

**12.1.9 Recommendations** (will not be graded essential, desirable or advisable; instead they will be time-bound) - Review teams make recommendations where they agree that a college should consider changing a process or procedure in the following judgment areas in order to: safeguard academic standards; assure the quality of or take deliberate steps to enhance the learning opportunities it provides for students; improve the fitness for purpose, accessibility and trustworthiness of the information it produces. Outcomes will also include **Affirmations** in order to identify action that is already taking place in a college to improve a recognised weakness or inadequacy

* + 1. **Student Engagement** will become a greater part of the methodology, withthe team including a student reviewer and meeting with more students. The student submission will still be voluntary but the hope is that more students will be involved in producing one. There will also be a new role of lead student representative (LSR) from the College who acts as a direct link between the review team and student body.

**ACTION: Briefing of partners and support of College reviews to take place as appropriate – LQU/Partnership Division/Link Tutor**

**IQER SUMMATIVE REVIEW**

* + 1. ACC received the action plans arising from the Summative Reviews for Bromley and K Colleges. ACC commended the Colleges for the successful outcomes. Schools and EDU were encouraged to reflect on the areas of good practice identified, in order to facilitate on going enhancements to University practices. It was noted that one of the desirable recommendations for Bromley College was to develop staff development activities to support the delivery of learning and teaching at subject level.

**ACTION: EDU to ensure that Partner College staff are aware of and involved in professional development scheme (GOLD) and other University activities that supported teaching and learning.**

**QAA TNE CHINA**

**12.1.12** ACC noted that a QAA team is visiting Yunnan University of Economics & Finance (YUFE) on 27 November 2012. Wendy Cealey Harrison reported that the QAA (Jane Holt) had been provided with required documentation and that YUFE staff were being briefed by School of Architecture and Construction link tutors. They would also attend the QAA meetings, the timetable for which had now been finalised.

* + 1. **PARTNER COLLEGE NETWORK**

ACC received an update of actions and meetings initiated by the Partnership Division, with particular reference to consistency of University expectations and sharing good practice amongst Partner Colleges and Link Tutors.

**LLTE NETWORK**

* + 1. Gordon Ade-Ojo reported that a review of the Network (clusters of Colleges) had been successfully completed. Given the changes to, and uncertainty in the future funding of teacher training, six colleges hadwithdrawn from the network.

**PARTNER SCRUTINY PANEL**

**12.1.15** ACC received an update from PSP. Academic Councilhad ratified the approval of Kolej MASA, Malaysiaas a new partner, subject to confirmation by the Malaysian Qualification Authority (MQA) in December 2012. Academic Council had noted the discontinuation of Havering College as a partner.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Thursday 31 January 2013, commencing at 2.30 p.m. in Room QA75 Maritime Greenwich