**LEARNING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the first meeting of the Learning and Quality Committee in the 2012-13 academic session, held on Wednesday 19th September in HH102, Hamilton House, Greenwich Campus**

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| **Present**: | S. Jarvis (Chair) | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development) |
|  | S. Naylor (Officer) | QA Manager Learning and Quality Unit |
|  | D. Brander | Vice President (Education & Welfare), Students’ Union |
|  | W. Cealey Harrison | Head of Learning and Quality Unit |
|  | J. Cullinane | DLQ, School of Business |
|  | A. Grant | DLQ, School of Engineering |
|  | V. Habgood | DLQ, School Health and Social Care |
|  | D. Hayes | Head of Partnership Division |
|  | C. Ierotheou | DLQ, School of Computing & Mathematical Sciences |
|  | S. Leggatt | Acting DLQ, School of Education |
|  | A. Murphy | Head of Learning Services, ILS |
|  | Z. Pettit | DLQ, School of Humanities & Social Sciences |
|  | S. Walker | Head of Educational Development Unit |
| **In attendance** | C. Couper | Head of Planning and Statistics |
|  | K.Thompson | Senior Planning Analyst, Planning & Statistics |
| **Apologies** | C. Delage | DLQ, School of Architecture, Design and Construction |
|  | D. Sheppard | SQAO, School of Business |

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| **LQC/12.1** | **Items from Chair** |  |
| 1.1 | The Chair welcomed Dean Brander to his first meeting of the session as Student Union (VP) for Education. |  |
| 1.2 | The Chair noted that the University would be focusing upon targeted recruitment and portfolio review with the immediate aims of improving student sense of belonging and identity. In particular, this focus is aimed at improving the student experience and engagement with staff at all levels. The aim of increasing student belonging will be a theme developed across the University and plans are being made to hold campus development events during the session.  |  |
| 1.3 | The University will be subscribing to the “Student Barometer” conducted by IGraduate from 2012-13. The survey data allows the University to be able to benchmark itself against other London institutions and nationally. Analysis of data for international students will be expected in January following a November survey. |  |
| **LQC/12.2** | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** |  |
|  | The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th May 2012 were **agreed** as an accurate record subject to one minor change to School name and a request from the Committee that the ARG use a consistent name. |  |
| **LQC/12.3** | **Matters arising from the Minutes** |  |
|  | The majority of actions arising from the May 2012 minutes are completed. Specific reference to completion of the publication of student examination marks and development of Moodle were made by the Committee.  |  |
| 3.1 | In the former case plans for the early release of marks remain under discussion between OSA and the University Secretary, the former confirming that all Schools have subscribed to the release of exam results, that the marks would be made available to an expected maximum of six months early for some groups of students (overseas centres) and that the OSA workload involved in addressing the management of the release would amount to some 2 – 3 days additional work. The committee endorsed its earlier view that early release will enable a large group of students to plan for potential resits and for graduation ceremonies with greater certainty than in the past.  |  |
| 3.2 | With regard to Moodle the Committee noted continuing challenges in removing “phantom” sites from Moodle as a key issue and requested that support from the VLE Working Group be sought. The Schools of Humanities & Social Sciences and Health & Social Care, who are trialling External Examiner access to Moodle in 2012-13, assured the committee that they expect no problems for examiners who will be guided to appropriate occurrences of the courses under their responsibility. |  |
| 3.3 | The School of Engineering noted that it is conducting a project with ILS to enable examiner access to coursework and materials via Turnitin: a project which can be rolled out to the wider University. |  |
| **Action** | **Contact VLE Group and place Moodle “phantom sites” item on the Group’s Agenda for 2012-13 discussion of potential longer term resolutions to their removal.** | **LQU** |
| **LQC/12.4** | **2011-12 National Student Survey and University Student Survey** |  |
|  | The Committee received and discussed the results for the 2011-12 NSS and the on-campus results for the same period for the USS. All three papers focussed on outcomes at Departmental level. Data for other HEIs will be publicly available by the end of the month. LQC noted the following main points:That responses rates are now above national average for the NSS and the general trend is upwards in terms of positive responses, of particular note being improvement in library responses, the overall positive responses from international students as a group generally and for mature students to the main survey questions.That Schools should focus attention on the differentiation between Departments within a School with the aim of establishing whether effective practices leading to improved scores in one Department might be transferrable to another. That the University could consider moving towards a partnership based model of working with the Students’ Union to improve the results relating to the Union and Social activities of student experience at Greenwich.Some further review of the nature and expectations regarding “work placement” in the University could be undertaken in order to manage student expectation of this type of activity: the term being somewhat ambiguous.In respect to the USS the Committee noted that the inclusion of a response option that permits students to comment upon the level of importance they attach to the activity under question remains desirable: ie. that students be offered the opportunity to comment upon how important that activity is as a part of their University experience as well as an opportunity to provide a graded response on how positively they view the activity per se.The USS response rate is improving and the on-campus response rates are similar to that of other online surveys. The Committee agreed that attention to basic organisational development at course and programme level will lead to a more positive outcome across a range of questions. Schools were requested as part of their review of both surveys for the SMRD to undertake a full review of the written comments made by students.In order to consider providing a postgraduate benchmark the Chair noted that the University might consider using PTES (Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey), available via the Higher Education Academy. PAS agreed to investigate this informally and advise the committee officer and Chair accordingly prior to its 2012 closure date of 30/11/2012. |  |
| **Action** | **PAS to review PTES and provide a view to the Officer of its potential for University of Greenwich participation.** | **CC** |
| **LQC/12.5** | **Approval and Review Group** |  |
|  | LQC received and noted the minutes for the Approvals and Reviews Group for June 2012. It noted that the majority of events have now been signed out; those remaining in essence being overseas collaborations and dependent upon a proposed partner obtaining ministerial approval.  |  |
| **LQC/12.6** | **External Examiner Appointments** |  |
|  | The committee received a list of examiners whose period of tenure expires in December 2012 for those for whom a one year extension may be sought. School members were requested to ensure that Heads of Department sought extensions and new appointments as appropriate within the assessment timescale of the University system. That is, that all new and re-appointments must be completed no later than 31st December 2012.[[1]](#footnote-1) |  |
| **LQC/12.7** | **Professional Bodies and External Agencies** |  |
| **7.1** | **National Youth Agency Annual Report**The Committee received a positive report from the National Youth Agency regarding the standards of the BA Youth and Community Studies, noting that some staffing issues had affected student experience, a view underpinned by the NSS results for the Department. The DLQ noted that he is following up other issues related to the report with the Head of Department. |  |
| **7.2** | **QAA Benchmarks**The Committee received revised draft benchmark statements for Forensic Science and for Counselling and Psychotherapy. These are out for sector consultation with a closing date of 28th September 2012. Committee noted that the School of Health and Social Care has sought (and had accepted) a deferral request for Counselling Programme review until the benchmark is completed. Forensic Science, due for review in 2013/14 will be able to incorporate the benchmark as part of the natural review cycle. Both School representatives observed that the statements appeared appropriate to the nature of the subject. Chair requested that any formal responses made to the QAA are also circulated to the Committee officer. |  |
| **7.3** | **QAA Quality Code, Part C: Information on HE**In response to the publication of the Revised Part C of the QAA Quality Code, the LQU had undertaken a short review of the location and nature of the information that the University provides to prospective, current and graduated students. The paper presented identified the nature of information provided under the QAA’s 7 indicators, where it may be located and where it was felt that University could enhance its provision.The view of the Committee was that whilst the University does meet the QAA’s general tenets, key academic information and guidance could be better signposted within the University’s web pages. Also, consistency of provision was an issue, particularly with information pertaining to individual Schools some of which is only provided on internal intranet sites. School pages would benefit from greater consistency of general content. More attention ought to be focussed on how the University meets Indicator 3 in detail and the extent to which Student Union materials are available to potential students. |  |
| **Action** | **Chair to raise the issues of signposting and web presence for academic information at VCG** | **SJ** |
| **LQC/12/8** | **2011-12 Learning and Teaching Conference evaluation** |  |
|  | The Head of the Educational; Development Unit presented an open analysis of the presentations for the 2011-12 Annual Learning and Teaching Conference.Discussion centred on how to generate a wider audience for the Conference and the Educational Development Unit was requested to consider other formats for the conference season that might include running the conference earlier in session as an institutional day, undertaking smaller lead-up events at campus level to generate momentum, and building on School based activities where this is possible. |  |
| **AOB** | **UKBA License and Partner College Student Transfers** |  |
|  | The Business School raised the issue of the extension of UKBA licence for students transferring from partner Colleges to the final stage of a University award and the information that ought to be provided to both Partner Colleges and the international students as to their status. The Committee noted that the University could strengthen its forum for discussion of such issues as they arise. LQC agreed that such a forum would naturally reside in the Office of Student Affairs. |  |
| **Action** | **Investigate the status and nature of information provided to international students transferring from Partner Colleges to the University in respect of their UKBA visa** | **LQU** |
|  | **APL Mapping** |  |
|  | In response to a Business School question, LQC confirmed that students undertaking applications for APL as part of admissions should always have their experience clearly mapped against individual programme and course outcomes so that there is a demonstrable audit trail for exemption purposes. Such information should be made available as a matter of course to admissions teams. |  |
|  | **Date and Time of Next Meeting**The next meeting of the Learning and Quality Committee will take place on Wednesday 18th October 2012, at 13.00 in Seacole 309/10, Avery Hill CampusMembers are requested to provide papers and agenda items (only supported by written material) no later than Wednesday 11th October for circulation on 12th October. |  |

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1. Officer’s note: The overlap time from September to 31st December permits outgoing examiners to review first semester examinations and provide feedback to the University on early assessments in the cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)