

LEARNING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Third meeting of the Learning and Quality Committee in the 2012-13 academic session, held on Wednesday 5thth December in Blake 028, Avery Hill Campus

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

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| **LQC/12/3.1** | **Items from Chair** |  |
|  | The Chair reported that the final draft of the University’s Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy has been endorsed by Academic Council. The Strategy will now move into a phase in which School, Faculty and Office based implementation will be considered in greater detail.  The Educational Development Unit has drafted a broad implementation plan that covers the University in the widest sense and which is focussing on a number of projects to enhance student experience – including use of physical space and e-learning. The former engendered a discussion of classroom usage and timetabling issues that emphasised the need for timetabling to be driven more by programme pedagogy and nature than is currently the case. LQC suggested that a number of actions could be taken to ensure that timetabling is more geared to specific student needs and these included:   * focus on programme pedagogy and nature as a basis for timetabling the student experience * consider creative use of space for timetabled activities in alternate weeks for different student groups * reduce complexity of programme structures and choice to facilitate a less complex programme matrix * improved communications between Schools and Space Management through increasing the number of iterations of the timetable * Schools to place greater emphasis on meeting required deadlines for data * devise means whereby students are encouraged to do more research into their potential choices of courses and ensuring that choices made remain a commitment during their study. |  |
| **LQC/12/3.2** | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** |  |
|  | The minutes of the meeting of October 2012 were agreed as an accurate record. |  |
| **LQC/12/3.3** | **Matters arising from the Minutes** |  |
|  | LQC noted that all matters had been completed, were part of the current agenda or are part of future actions being undertaken in response to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. Some issues were raised in respect of specific minutes: |  |
| **Action**  **(Minute 12.26 refers)** | **LQC officer agreed to circulate the University proposal for the “Employability Passport” for inclusion in School LQC agendas** | **SN** |
| (Minute 12.27 refers) | Discussion took place over the nature and skills of staff who can be expected to undertake a chairing role for approval and review panels. It was agreed that the Chair’s list should focus on staff with experience of academic leadership and curriculum development, expertise in collaborations and other areas of specialism to which many events adhere: that role and level alone are not sufficient for the purposes of chairing. LQC agreed that Schools, in nominating staff to undertake this role in future, should give weight to staff expertise as appointment criteria to areas such as   * Engagement as an examiner in another HEI * Engagement with a professional Body * Programme Leadership and curriculum design expertise * Involvement with the Higher Education Academy * Link Tutoring   The LQU Officer noted that many of these considerations will be put into effect when proposing Chairs for 2013/14 events. EDU staff noted that the pool of staff who are engaged with the PG Certificate Higher Education should be included as potential panel members for future reference. Current practice is that registered students on this programme must attend at least one Panel event as part of their study activities.  All Schools were urged to provide opportunities for staff to attend events as observers in line with effective practice adopted by the School of Health and Social Care. |  |
| **Action** | **Provide list of PG Cert staff to LQU and write to the group regarding future panel membership.** | **SW**  **SN** |
| **LQC/12/3.4** | **Postgraduate Transition** |  |
|  | LQC received and noted a detailed paper on postgraduate student transition to the University. The committee endorsed the paper, recommending however that it filters its proposals relating to postgraduate research students and takes these through appropriate Research Degrees fora.  LQC also recommended that a reading of this report’s sections relating to Research Students is taken together with the actions arising from the last QAA institutional audit of the University, which contained requirements for the University to address how research students should be supported when engaged in teaching. Also, consideration should be given to the QAA code of Practice on Research Students.  LQC recommended that any further information and guidance that the EDU provides await the outcomes of the iGraduate and Postgraduate Student Surveys being undertaken in early 2013.  LQC endorsed the development of specific activities in weeks 1 and 2 aimed at inclusion for postgraduate students, particularly in view of the wide cultural demography of the University’s postgraduate student body. The general view being that greater customisation is necessary for this group of students. It was recommended that opportunities for socialisation of PG students be considered with the related Personal Tutoring Paper. |  |
| **LQC/12/2.5** | **Personal Tutoring** |  |
|  | LQC received an in-depth report on personal tutoring, written following the conduct of interviews with both students and staff by the EDU. This constituted a part of a general review of 2T@UG and aimed at identifying best practice, support required for an effective system and to assure greater consistency of outcomes across all Schools. The report and LQC concluded that a number of features are needed to ensure a successful personal tutoring system. These include   * focus on the development of relationships both student to staff and student to student (in particular focussing on group tutoring methods as well as individual) * provision of timetabled personal tutorial sessions for ALL Level 4 students * linking personal tutoring groups and activities to the students’ curricula * development of a universally utilised attendance recording system with automatic notifications and focus on non attending students to develop higher levels of engagement * development of a policy document to guide Schools and to clarify for students the role of personal tutors and their entitlement * development of School based and discipline focussed activities that meet the general policy requirements   LQC agreed that following the agreement of base line principles Schools will need to provide detail on how they meet the tenets of the general policy within their different disciplines. |  |
| **Action** | 1. **The EDU provide a draft paper which identifies base level principles arising from the report and which:**  * **Identifies general principles of personal tutoring** * **Identifies base level entitlement for students (non-negotiable minima)** * **Includes the potential for part time staff to act as personal tutors** * **Provides indicative models and exemplars of practice**  1. **All School DLQ members to provide the EDU with feedback on the base level principles which could be included in the policy** | **EDU**  **DLQ** |
| **LQC/12/3.6** | **Higher Education Achievement Report** |  |
|  | The Committee received a short written report on the current status of the HEAR from the Deputy Director of OSA. Whilst the report addressed some of the issues that the Committee had requested it was agreed that it fell short of a complete status report. Members requested further information. |  |
| **Action** | **Office of Student Affairs to provide a more detailed report which includes:**     * **Accounts for the total spends of HEAR Pilot Scheme funding provided by HEFCE and an update on the HEAR pilot programme projects at the university** * **Detail on how the Student Records Systems Project Board is taking the project to completion. (specify systems requirements that have been agreed)** * **Detail on how PSRB statements will be incorporated into the HEAR** * **Detail on the procedures and systems being put into place for the systematic collation and use of information under section 6.1 of the HEAR** * **Confirmation of how the proposed "Employability Passport" may be incorporated into the HEAR** * **Provide a working facsimile of the University HEAR and confirmation of when the first HEARs will be issued.** | **OSA** |
| **LQC/12/3.7** | **2011-12 Annual Report on Approval and Review** |  |
|  | The Committee received and noted a general report on the 2011-12 approval and review activities. The Committee endorsed the report, noting that the first recommendation, to centralise appointment of panel Chairs, is already under way. In respect of the second recommendation, to appoint student members of panels, the Committee agreed that such a move would be in keeping with the current direction of QAA thought. However, prior to coming to a formal agreement the committee requested that a paper be submitted which provides detail on general sector practice and arguments as to the advantages and disadvantages of adopting this as policy. |  |
| **Action** | **Provide details of sector endorsement and utilisation of students on approval and review event and which includes pros and cons of adopting such a policy.** | **LQU** |
| **LQC/12/3.8** | **Professional and Statutory Body Reports** |  |
|  | LQC received and noted reports from two professional bodies:   1. School of Health: Nursing and Midwifery Council confirmation of accreditation for the BSc Specialist Practitioner for a period of 5 years from October 2012. LQC was pleased to note the report includes two areas that have moved from Unsatisfactory to Good: *Length and Content of Programme* and *Education*. The latter focussed on engagement of service users whilst the former focussed on provision of detail on APL and the mandatory status of some programme elements. LQC expressed its congratulations to the School for achieving this improvement. 2. School of Engineering: Joint Board of Moderators review report from May 2012 was received. Of key note was the extent to which the School has addressed issues surrounding conceptual design raised by the Board in its last major visit – noting that “significant improvements in provision of conceptual design introduced since the last JBM visit are fully acknowledged”, The JMBM continues to urge the School that that “further development should tip the balance more towards creative thinking….[ ] and thus student learning should be more clearly focussed on design of a project from scratch and on assessment of different options”.   LQC noted that the School will be adopting the JBM’s request to limit compensation to no more than 20 credits as opposed to the University’s current 30. LQC noted that this is permissible within current University regulations and is not viewed as a derogation. |  |
| **LQC/12/3.9** | **External Examiner nominations** |  |
|  | The Committee received notification of nominations received since its last meeting. The LQU officer responsible for the examiner system noted that a significant number of nominations (some 20+) had been provided by the all Schools which were recent and they had not been included. Coverage across the University is now near completion with some 6 examiners in Architecture Construction and Design and 2 in Humanities and Social Sciences where status requires confirmation. |  |
| **Action** | **Schools of Architecture, Design & Construction and Humanities & Social Sciences to confirm status of final examiners prior to 31/12/2012** | **CD**  **ZP** |
| **LQC/12/3.10** | **School LQC Minutes** |  |
|  | LQC received and noted sets of Minutes from Architecture, Business, Computing, Engineering, Education, Health and Science. Two issues were raised for Schools to address.   1. Business: LQC requested that future minutes be written in a manner to reduce internal shorthand so that they can be more clearly understood by an external audience. 2. Science: The School to review the exact nature and meaning of its minute relating to Postgraduate students in the NRI (October 2012 Minute 2.14.6 refers) |  |
| **LQC/12/3.11** | **Items from the Directors of Learning and Quality** |  |
|  | The group had not been able to meet prior to the LQC and no papers were presented or issues raised. |  |
|  | Date and time of next meeting |  |
|  | Wednesday January 9th 2013 at 13.00 in Queen Anne 075, Greenwich Campus |  |

*Officer: Stephen Naylor   
Tel: 8159  
Email:* [*ns01@gre.ac.uk*](mailto:ns01@gre.ac.uk)

Actions Arising from the Second meeting (2012/13) of the Learning and Quality Committee, 18th October 2012.

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| Minute | Action | Responsibility | Status |
| 1/ 3.2 | PAS to confirm participation in PTES as a matter of priority | PAS |  |
| 1/3.4 | AOB Refers: LQU will request from appropriate parties a statement to all Partners reminding them of their obligations in respect of UKBA for the small number of overseas students who register at the Partner and then transfer to the University. | LQU | Completed 29/10/2012. Emailed Peter Fisher and Jane Bland with request for reminder text to be sent to Partner College staff. |
| 2/2.6 | Schools to provide a review of PDP activities (aims and outcomes) as part of development of implementation plan for the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. |  |  |
| 2/2.5b | LQU to re-circulate SAP and PAB paper to include indications of old and revised text together with School comments | LQU | 29/10/12 DLQs circulated with textual revisions and request to comment by 12/12/12 for inclusion into January LQC |
| 2/2.7 | 1. Circulate review listing for first comments on events structures 2. Supply list of nominated School Panel Chairs 3. Supply first draft Schedule | LQU  DLQ  LQU | 1. Completed 19/10/2012 (lengthy email with request for comment by 7/12/12 2. Awaited by 7/12/12 3. To be completed by Feb 2013 LQC |
| 2/AOB | Submit report on progress of the HEAR to December meeting of LQC | OSA | Agenda Item, December 2012 |