

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
Academic Standards Committee

**Minute of Meeting held on Friday 3 October 2008 in the
Carnegie Room**

Present:

Mr T Guthrie, Mr M Hastings, Professor R Hill, Dr D McCafferty, Ms H Macpherson, Dr T Munck, Professor D Watt (*Convener*), Dr P Skett, Dr A Whittaker, Mr J Wightwick.

In attendance:

Ms H Butcher

Apologies:

Dr V Bissell, Professor G Caie, Dr P Cotton, Professor N Evans, Dr S Johnston, Dr Q Cutts, Dr J Aitken.

ASC/2008/1. Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 30 May 2008

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.

ASC/2008/2. Matters Arising

*ASC/2008/2.1 Guidance on Principles for Programme Design and Development
(ASC/2007/70)*

It was noted that Dr Mann was currently finalising this document for on-line publication later this month.

ASC/2008/3. Convener's Business

ASC/2008/3.1 Proposed Review of Compensation Regulations

The Convener reported that he had been in discussion with the Vice Principal (Learning, Teaching & Internationalisation) regarding his proposed review of current regulations on compensation which varied between different types of degree (three year degrees, honours degrees and postgraduate taught degrees). It had been agreed that a review should be undertaken, and in discussion at a meeting Professor Nolan had called to discuss a more comprehensive review of assessment focusing on pedagogical issues, it had been agreed that the Academic Regulations Sub Committee should undertake the review of compensation regulations alongside its review of the PGT Generic Regulation.

*ASC/2008/3.2 DipHE Requirements for MA Liberal Arts and MA Applied Health
& Social Policy*

It was reported that during preparation of the 2008-9 Calendar it had come to light that the requirements for the DipHE exit awards for the above two degrees delivered at Dumfries Campus were a minimum of 60 credits at Level 2 out of a total of 240, which was below the SCQF minimum threshold of 90 credits at Level 2 and the University's minimum of 80. Members were advised that colleagues at Dumfries had agreed to review and revise these requirements for introduction in 2009-10.

ASC/2008/4. Programme and Course Approval

ASC/2008/4.1 Programme and Course Approval Process - Proposal from RAPS

ASC considered a proposal from the Recruitment and Participation Service for amendment to the programme approval process to formally include faculty consultation with RAPS at the point when proposals were forwarded to Faculty Boards of Studies for scrutiny. Members agreed that it was important for RAPS to be included in the process to ensure their input in marketing and recruitment of new or revised programmes. However, it was agreed that this should not be a requirement for programme approval which could delay a proposal if consultation had not been sought at the suggested point. It was agreed that the Programme and Course Approval Guidelines should include a strong recommendation to consult with RAPS at an early stage.

Action: Senate Office

ASC/2008/4.2 PIP - Pilot Final Report and Report on Programme and Course Approval Procedures

The Committee received the above two reports which had been presented together to the University's Information Policy and Strategy Committee. Dr Whittaker confirmed that the Programme and Approval Working Group, which had provided the second report, had worked closely with the PIP project to advise on the approval process within the context of the new system. He commented that, at times, the Working Group had found it challenging to draw a distinction between the principles of the process and practical issues which arose during the development of the new system. He also suggested that there was insufficient information on the new system available to members of the University who were not in the faculties piloting the system.

It was noted from the report that the pilot for PIP in the faculties of Science and LBSS would be extended to 2008-9, with a full roll-out to all faculties across the University planned for the start of session 2009-10. In the interim, a new version of the system had been rolled out to the pilot faculties for use in 2008-9.

ASC/2008/4.3 Report from the Programme and Course Approval Working Group

Dr Whittaker, the Working Group Convener, spoke to this report on the Working Group's discussion on issues about the production of programme specifications which had been identified by the PIP Manager. It was noted that in considering the most effective ways to produce

programme specifications, the Working Group had sought to maintain the principle agreed previously by both EdPSC and ASC that the duplication of documents containing the same, or very similar, content should be avoided. Following discussion and consideration of the report, ASC agreed to confirm the following guidance for faculties and departments regarding the production of programme specifications to encourage consistency in practice across the University.

1. Programme specifications are not required for **research programmes**.
2. A single programme specification should be produced where the **same degree is delivered in more than one faculty** (e.g. Geography, or Psychology). The department in which the programme is primarily located should be responsible for its specification and the faculty in which that department resides is responsible for approval. Other faculties offering the degree should be advised of any development or update of the specification.
3. Separate programme specifications are **not** required for **early exit awards**. Discrete programme specifications are only required for **designated degrees** where students are explicitly recruited to the three year degree on a separate UCAS code.
4. MSci and MEng degrees should have separate programme specifications from Bachelor awards in the same discipline as there should be different aims and intended learning outcomes between these levels of award.

This guidance would be disseminated to faculties.

Action: Senate Office

ASC/2008/5. Review of PGT Generic Regulations

ASC considered a paper outlining the proposed approach for the review of the PGT generic regulations which Senate had requested to take place in the current session. Members agreed that the review should include consideration of the following issues:

- the current generic regulation for progression to Masters;
- the current criteria for the award of Merit and Distinction in the generic regulations;
- assessment – descriptors in Schedule A of the Code of Assessment and reassessment of the dissertation;
- the generic regulations for Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas introduced in 2008-9;
- the potential for transferring existing non-generic PGT regulations into the generic framework;
- the parallel review of compensation regulations at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

It was agreed that the review would be undertaken by the Academic Regulations Sub-Committee within the following timescale.

DATE	ACTION
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October 2008	Academic Regulations Sub-Committee to commence review, identify key areas for review and gather information : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate consultation document to be issued to faculties by 1 November 2008 • compare practice in other universities • request data from Planning Services
19 December 2008	Deadline for completion of information gathering.
January 2009	ARSC to review data collected and draft Review Report for ASC including recommendations for the PGT Generic Regulation.
20 February 2009	ASC to consider initial report and recommendations from ARSC.
18 March 2009	EdPSC to consider initial report and any issues of principle arising from the consultation and review.
March 2009	ARSC to finalise report in light of feedback from ASC, and possibly, EdPSC.
9 April 2009	ASC to finalise Review Report for recommendation to EdPSC.
6 May 2009	EdPSC to consider ASC's Review Report.
29 May 2009	ASC to receive feedback from EdPSC.
4 June 2009	Final report to Senate.

Mr Guthrie, the Convener of the Sub-Committee, confirmed that preparations had begun and that a meeting had been scheduled for later this month to consider a draft consultation document for faculties. Members agreed that the consultation document should be sent to PGT Programme Leaders, Heads of Department, and Faculty Offices.

Action: Senate Office

ASC/2008/6. DPTLA Business

ASC/2008/6.1 Summary of Actions Arising from ASC Scrutiny of DPTLA Reports on 30 May 2008

The Committee received and noted a short report providing an update on actions relating to DPTLA Review reports taken in response to ASC discussion at the previous meeting in May.

ASC **agreed** to recommend a review of the Senate Regulations on Statutory Training for GTAs, noting that these were last updated in June 1993. This recommendation would be referred to the Clerk of Senate for action.

Action: Clerk

It was noted that the Clerk of Senate was taking forward discussions regarding Peer Assisted Learning and the Disclosure Scotland (DS)

procedures to develop a University-wide approach. ASC agreed that a further report on progress with this issue should be provided in due course. Members noted that DS procedures were being amended from January 2009 so that DS approval was for the person, rather than a specific job or activity they were undertaking. It was noted that this change could reduce the number students needing to gain DS approval to undertake PAL, as some students may have already obtained DS approval for other activities.

Clerk's Note

Following the meeting, a response on the Estates issue arising from review of Veterinary Medicine was received as follows:

The Vice Principal (Learning Teaching & Internationalisation) has met with the Director of Estates and Buildings to discuss his responses to recommendations 2 & 7. The Director of Estates and Buildings confirmed that every effort would be made to ensure that the schedule for the construction of the Food Animal Facility was adhered to.

ASC/2008/6.2 Update Reports

ASC/2008/6.2.1 Adult & Continuing Education

The Committee received an update on responses to two recommendations for the above Review which had been held on 20 and 21 April 2008. It was noted that a further update on the linking between mature student access and part-time degree admissions would be provided after a one year period. An update on the trial evening hours opening of catering facilities taking place in October would be presented to either the November or February meeting of ASC.

ASC/2008/6.2.2 Educational Studies

The Committee received an update on the responses to recommendations for the above Review which had taken place on 30 April and 1 May 2007. Members agreed that appropriate consideration had been given to Recommendation 6. In relation to Recommendation 7, ASC agreed that the recommendation by the Convener of the Review Panel should be transmitted to the Department and therefore the Faculty of Education should be requested to:

- remind teaching departments of the importance of meeting the deadline for notifying Central Room Bookings of their teaching space requirements for the academic year;
- review its priorities in allocating learning and teaching space and consider whether there is flexibility for priority allocation of three teaching rooms with a capacity of 30 to the Department of Educational Studies to accommodate the requirements of the Support for Learning course for a block booking of 5 consecutive days from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm, during a period to be specified by the Department.

Action: Senate Office

ASC/2008/6.2.3 Modern Languages & Cultures

A further update on seven of the recommendations from the above review held in March 2006 had been requested from ASC. The Committee considered the report on these and **agreed** with the Panel Convener's suggestion that **a further update on matters relating to Recommendations 2 and 6 should be provided in 6 months time at the April meeting of ASC**. Accordingly, the School of Modern Languages & Cultures would be asked to (i) consider introducing a piece of compulsory formative assessment for students studying abroad (recommendation 2); (ii) update on the development of School-wide grade related criteria for language learning; and (iii) provide clarification on which part of GTA training covered assessment – department or LTC. (Both ii and iii relate to Recommendation 6.)

Action: Senate Office

ASC/2008/6.3 Summary Reports

ASC/2008/6.3.1 2007-08: Summary of Recommendations

ASC reviewed the summary of DPTLA Review recommendations provided by the Senate Office and in the course of discussion agreed that further action should be taken on the following:

- Guidance on annual monitoring and review processes should be revised to make explicit the expectation that departments should regularly reflect on the relevance and appropriateness of ILOs.

Action: Senate Office

- Send a reminder to Heads of Department that GTAs must attend statutory training at the Learning and Teaching Centre prior to undertaking any teaching or assessment work.

Action Senate Office

Following discussion, members did not consider it necessary to recommend any further action in relation to University policy on departmental or faculty workload models, or the development of good practice guidelines on effective communication between and among staff and students.

ASC/2008/6.3.2 2007-08: Summary of Good Practice / Key Strengths

ASC considered the above summary from the previous session's DPTLA Review reports and agreed that the following should be disseminated across the University.

- Commitment to the principle of research-led teaching and the effectiveness with which it has translated the principle into the curriculum. (Economic & Social History [ESH])
- The student-driven “accelerator course” where students from the year above deliver extra classes to support the year below them. (Computing Science [CS])

- Fast, analytical feedback on students' written work coupled with a readiness to provide further support as requested in a friendly environment. (ESH)
- Rigorous assessment procedures and the provision of constructive feedback (History [HIST])
- The Department's mapping document, widely available via MOODLE, which clearly links the ILOs contained in the Programme Specifications to the learning and teaching methods employed. (Geographical & Earth Sciences [GES])
- The range of opportunities for personal development planning (PDP) offered within the curriculum. (CS)
- Courses that include a high degree of generic training and the high level of student awareness of the opportunities presented for learning transferable skills and the understanding of the wide range of contexts in which they might be applied. (ESH)
- Steps taken to support students at strategic points in their academic life, including the use of one-to-one essay tutorials, and the introduction of the Honours Induction programme. (HIST)
- The Department's international focus with a remarkable 90% of postgraduate taught students from outwith the European Union, a notable number of international staff and links being developed with a number of institutions outwith the UK (Economics)
- Developmental approach to undergraduate Graduate Teaching Assistants. (GES)

Action: Senate Office

ASC/2008/7. Report from the Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Officers on Annual Monitoring for Session 2006-07

ASC considered the above report which highlighted issues identified by the FQAEOs, both in their individual Faculty Annual Monitoring Reports and also from their discussion of these reports.

Following discussion, ASC agreed to the following actions:

Dr Munck would check further on discussion in the Faculty of Arts regarding the application of regulations on the award of Credit Refused, and if necessary report onwards to the Code of Assessment Working Group.

Action: Dr T Munck

Members noted the comments on anonymous marking reported from external examiners in the Faculty of Information & Mathematical Sciences. However, it was not considered that any further action was required as the University had a clear policy and procedures on anonymous marking.

The reported feedback on the Generic PGT Regulation reflecting concerns that the current regulation might reflect a lowering of standards would be referred to the Academic Regulations Sub-Committee for inclusion in their forthcoming review of the generic regulation.

Action: Clerk

The Committee considered the proposal from the Faculty of LBSS that a formal feedback report was provided from ASC in response to the annual monitoring exercise. Members did not consider that such a report would contribute anything further than the current reporting practice of providing FQAEOs with an extract of the ASC minute detailing consideration of the FQAEO Report on Annual Monitoring. Members were also concerned that the full reporting process was lengthy and somewhat protracted and considered that any further extension of the process would not be a positive step.

In response to the FQAEO report's request that ASC advised on a possible approach for encouraging departments to be more proactive in reflecting on and reporting enhancement activity, members suggested that the activity in areas where enhancement had been reported could be reviewed to see if any approaches there could be applied elsewhere. It was also suggested that the Learning and Teaching Committee may be able to provide advice on the basis of other initiatives which had been established to enhance students' learning and teaching experience.

In considering other elements of the report, ASC identified the following items as requiring further action:

- The need to engage in dialogue with Disclosure Scotland to try and achieve greater flexibility in arrangements relating to Peer Assisted Learning. [This issue had arisen in the DPTLA context and was being taken forward by the Clerk of Senate.] The Director of Senate Office would be asked to provide an update to ASC in February.

Action: Senate Office

- ASC agreed to recommend that the following facilities be provided as standard for all central learning and teaching space:
 - Audiovisual facilities that are well-maintained and easy to use, with a common set of easy to follow instructions
 - A clock in every lecture theatre
 - A coat hook in every lecture theatre
 - Chalk in every lecture theatre with a blackboard
 - A pointer in every lecture theatre
 - Ventilation/heating systems that maintain a comfortable working temperature, irrespective of season and student numbers
 - A notice telling the lecturer how to get janitorial assistance quickly in times of emergency (audiovisual problems; health problems)

The Directors of Estates & Buildings, and IT Services would be requested to provide a response to this recommendation for reporting to the February meeting of ASC.

Action: Clerk

- Members noted that the Faculty of LBSS had invited ASC to consider the possibility of dedicating flexible teaching space to postgraduate programmes within the CRB system. While members agreed that there was a need for more flexible teaching space throughout the

University, it was not considered appropriate that such a request should be applied only to postgraduate teaching space. It was therefore **agreed that the Convener of the Space Configuration Group should be made aware of the request for more flexible teaching space to be available for all levels of study.**

Action: Clerk

- It was noted that the Faculty of Arts had identified the need for funding to allow student access to departments in evenings and weekends, irrespective of janitorial provision. Members agreed that this was a particular issue for small departments in older, un-refurbished, parts of the campus where there were no modern security devices to allow student access to buildings (e.g. swipe card entry systems). It was understood that various ad hoc arrangements were being made by departments to enable some level of student access, but there was concern that these were not always appropriate in terms of security and safety. It was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Vice Principal Strategy and Resource for a response to be made to the February meeting of ASC.

Action: Clerk

ASC/2008/8. Use of Foreign Language References in University Assignments

ASC received a discussion paper which highlighted that there was currently no University policy on whether or not students were permitted to use foreign language references in University assignments. In discussing this issue, members agreed that it would be inappropriate to prohibit foreign language references as a general rule as this would go against the spirit of the academic context of the University itself and also the Internationalisation Strategy. It was accepted that there could be specific cases where the use of foreign languages should not be permitted, but these would be dependent on matters of both practicality and academic judgement such as the relevance of the text to the subject matter. The Committee therefore agreed that approaches would need to vary depending on specific cases, and subject areas, and therefore it would not be possible to draw up a formal University-wide regulation. It was agreed that departments should be encouraged to ensure that student expectations were managed appropriately, and that Heads of Department should consult with the Clerk of Senate should they have any matters of concern over specific student requests to use foreign language texts.

Action: Clerk

ASC/2008/9. Moodle and Assessment - Guidance on Summative Assessment

ASC received a Draft Guidance Note on Assessment by Online Quizzes/Multiple Choice Tests which had been developed following the consideration of Moodle and VLE assessment procedures by a small group convened by Professor Steel. A second paper covering pedagogical principles for assessment on Moodle was withdrawn.

ASC **agreed to recommend to EdPSC** that the Guidance on Assessment by Online Quizzes/MCTs should be disseminated to staff using Moodle, and other VLE formats, for assessment. Members considered on-line learning and assessment to be a major growth area for all higher education institutions in the short to medium term future. It was therefore recommended that the University

should consider, strategically, the provision of adequate resources to enable large-scale on-line assessment to be offered at Glasgow in place of traditional hand-written examinations.

Action: Clerk

ASC/2008/10. Consultation on the Referencing of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework

ASC was invited to comment on the consultation document from the SCQF seeking views from the sector on the methodology and findings of an initial report on the referencing of the SCQF to the EQF. The referencing exercise had been undertaken in response to the European Parliament and Council recommendation that EU states showed how their national qualifications systems related to the EQF by 2010. The aim of this recommendation was to “promote the quality and transparency of the relationships between national systems and the EQF and help facilitate the comparison and portability of qualifications across national systems”.

Members noted the proposed referencing to the eight EQF levels and in particular, undergraduate provision where both levels 9 and 10 of the SCQF were aligned to EQF level 6, and both levels 8 and 7 in the SCQF were aligned to EQF level 5.

ASC/2008/11. Remit, Composition and Membership 2008-09

ASC/2008/11.1 Remit and Composition

ASC **agreed to recommend** the proposed remit and composition for 2008-09 to EdPSC for approval.

ASC/2008/11.2 Membership

ASC **agreed to recommend** the proposed membership for 2008-09 to EdPSC for approval.

ASC/2008/12. Report on Items Approved under Summer Powers

ASC is invited to **note** the following proposals considered under Fast-Track Approval procedures and approved under Summer Powers for introduction in September 2008:

Faculty of Arts (Dumfries Campus)

New Programme

MLitt Scottish Folklore

Faculty of Education

New Programme

BA Childhood Practice

Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences

New Programmes

MSc Banking and Financial Services
MSc Financial Forecasting and Investment
MSc Investment Banking and Finance
MSc Quantitative Finance
MRes Sociology and Research Methods
MSc Environment, Development and Globalisation

Major Changes

MSc Housing Studies: Development and Regeneration
MSc Housing Studies: Policy and Analysis
MSc Housing Studies: Services and Delivery
PG Diploma in Housing Studies: Development and Regeneration
PG Diploma in Housing Studies: Policy and Analysis
PG Diploma in Housing Studies: Services and Delivery

ASC is also invited to **note** the following new programmes or programme amendments approved under Summer Powers for introduction in September 2008.

Faculty of Arts

New Programmes

MFA Creative Writing
MFA Creative Writing (Applied)

Faculty of Education

Modification of the approved PGCE with Teaching Qualification (Primary) to **Postgraduate Diploma in Education**

Faculty of Engineering

New Programme

MSc Telecommunication Electronics

Faculty of Medicine

New Programme

Graduate Certificate in Cardiovascular Care

ASC/2008/13. Programme and Course Approval

ASC/2008/13.1 Report on New Courses and Course Amendments Approved by Faculties

The Committee noted a report detailing the number of new courses and course amendments approved by faculties between October 2007 and September 2008. Figures for new courses and amendments appeared high in some cases, but this was partly accounted for by the fact that certain course changes involved the generation of new course codes, and that correction of data errors were counted as course changes on the systems.

ASC/2008/13.2 Programme Approval Groups - Composition and Dates for 2008-09

ASC noted the following composition of its four Programme Approval Groups for 2008-09.

PAG 1 – Faculty of Arts

Professor R Hill (Convener)

Dr P Cotton

*Dr D McCafferty

PAG 2 – Faculty of Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences

Dr A Whittaker (Convener)

Dr Bissell

Dr Q Cutts

PAG 3 – Faculties of Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Education

Mr T Guthrie (Convener)

Dr S Johnston

Dr P Skett

PAG 4 – Faculties of Science and Engineering

Professor N Evans (Convener)

Dr P Cotton

Dr T Munck

Each PAG was scheduled to meet in Semester 1 (w/b 20 October 2008) and Semester 2 (w/b 9 March 2009) and would be clerked by a member of the Senate Office.

* Dr P Innes to cover Dr McCafferty's PAG business and attendance at ASC from mid-October until the end of November.

ASC/2008/14. DPTLA Business

ASC/2008/14.1 Geographical & Earth Sciences - Full Report

The Committee received and noted the report of the above Review held in February 2008. The report had been considered under summer powers and approved subject to some revision of the recommendations.

ASC/2008/14.2 Evaluation of the First Six-Year DPTLA Cycle

ASC noted the report of the evaluation of the first six-year cycle of the DPTLA process. The following points and actions arising from this evaluation were noted:

- a 6-year DPTLA review cycle remained appropriate;
- current arrangements for selecting and appointing external subject specialists remained appropriate and safeguards were in place to ensure appropriate distance and objectivity in external appointments;
- the inclusion of a student member on the Review Panel had been a positive and beneficial development, as it provided a greater focus on the student experience and on issues from the student point of view;
- a process for the systematic periodic review of the PGR student experience would be developed and introduced, incorporating external input;
- further consideration would be given to ways in which the University might enhance the level and nature of contribution from students;
- the production of a summary report aimed at students would be investigated, which would be posted on departmental websites (see note *, also);
- to ease the pressure on Review Panels, and to allow more time for reflection between meetings, the duration of reviews could be extended from 1 to 1.5 days where considered necessary. The timings of the visit schedule would also be reviewed;
- the SER guidance would be revised to ask departments to explain the influence of international developments on the subject development and consequently on enhancing the student experience to complement the University's commitment to promote internationalisation of the curriculum;
- the Senate Office would continue to work with Planning Services to provide meaningful data to Review Panels.

* Further to this, the Vice Principal (Learning, Teaching & Internationalisation) had requested that summary reports for students be produced and published for all reviews held in session 2007-08.

ASC/2008/15. Report of the Meeting of the Joint Board of the University of Glasgow and Christie's Education

The Committee received and noted the above report of the meeting held on 16 June 2008.

ASC/2008/16. Report of the Meeting of the Joint Board of the University of Glasgow and the Free Church of Scotland College

ASC received and noted the above report of the meeting held on 10 June 2008.

ASC/2008/17. Update on Proposals Approved for Glasgow International College (GIC)

The Committee received a summary of the activity of the Collegiate Board of Studies and Joint Academic Management Board of GIC during session 2007-08.

It was noted that the following GIC programmes had been approved:

Diploma in Business

Diploma in Engineering.

ASC/2008/18. Any Other Business

ASC/2008/18.1 Reserved Business

No items of reserved business were identified at the meeting.

ASC/2008/19. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Academic Standards Committee will be held on **Friday 14 November 2008** at **9.30am** in the **Melville Room**.

Prepared by: Ms H Butcher Clerk to Committee h.butcher@admin.gla.ac.uk

Last modified on: Friday 17 October 2008