

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Thursday 9 April 2009

Report from the Programme Approval Group: Faculty of Law,
Business & Social Sciences

Ms Helen Butcher, Clerk to the Committee

Present:

Dr Arthur Whittaker (Convener), Dr Vincent Bissell

Apologies:

Dr Q Cutts

In attendance:

Ms Helen Butcher, Senate Office

Overview of Process

The Programme Approval Group was impressed by the quality of the documentation provided to it by the Faculty. The programme specifications were found to be of a high standard with only minor amendments being required. The PAG found the minute extracts from the Higher Degrees Committee very helpful and it was agreed that they provided clear evidence of a good level of scrutiny by the Faculty. In some cases the proposal support documents had lacked information, e.g. references to regulations or consultation information, but these had been addressed in the HDC minute.

The PAG wishes to commend the Faculty for the documentation presented, and to **recommend to ASC that one of the HDC minute extracts is disseminated to other Faculties as an example of good practice.**

General matters arising from the documentation

Programme Specifications

The PAG was concerned that the text entered in sections 18 and 19 of the Programme Specification covering *Fee Type* and *Attendance Type* would not be meaningful to students or prospective students reading the document, although it was acknowledged that departments would have selected this text from drop-down options on the PIP system. Following the meeting the Clerk discussed this with the PIP Project Manager. She agreed that from next session 'both' under 19 would be amended to 'Full-time and Part-time'. She also advised that sections 18 and 19 were additional sections to the programme specifications which had been added to provide information to the Registry and that these sections would not be included on the published document.

Proposal Support Documents

In many cases it was noted that the regulatory information in section A1 had not been completed, or had been inaccurately completed; although the PAG been able to gather this information from the HDC minute extract.

In at least one case the rationale for the proposal (A2) had not been appropriately completed as the programme aims had simply been copied into this section, rather than an explanation of why the proposal was being put forward e.g. market demand.

Some PSDs were also out of date, for example, in referring to the consultation process as being outstanding when the HDC minute clearly demonstrated that the consultation process had been completed.

1. *POSTGRADUATE PROPOSALS – NEW PROGRAMMES*

1.1 **LLM Corporate & Financial Law**

Rationale: It was noted that the programme was designed to respond to demand among recent graduates and young lawyers for a specialist programme dealing with advanced aspects of corporate and financial law and that there are very few such programmes in the UK.

Regulations: The new programme would conform to the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees and therefore be added under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar.

Programme Specification: The Group commended the Programme Specification and requested one modification in section 15:

- removal of the detailed regulatory requirements for the award of the LLM, merit and distinction and the Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma exit awards. This should be replaced with a simple explanation of the exit awards available on the degree (see section 15 of Programme Specification for MSc in International Financial Analysis as an example)

Conclusion:

Subject to the one requested amendment being made to the programme specification, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.

1.2 **MSc Criminology & Criminal Justice**

Rationale: It was noted that this proposal was a substantially revised version of the programme which had been offered jointly by Strathclyde and Glasgow under the Glasgow Graduate School of Law. The University had withdrawn from this agreement, but had agreed to offer this new programme as a joint award with Strathclyde. Glasgow would be the lead institution with full responsibility for the administration of the degree with delivery of all courses at Glasgow.

Regulations: The new programme would conform to the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees and therefore added under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar. On Gr.40 the following to be added under the title Master of Science in Criminal Justice: Students admitted to the programme in 2008 or before, should refer to the relevant Calendar for that year.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the Programme Specification and requested that all references to 'module/s' be corrected to 'course/s'

It was also suggested that the Programme Team could consider removal of the middle two paragraphs of section 12 as the information was clearly set out in section 15.

Conclusion:

Subject to finalisation of the Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Strathclyde, and the amendment of terminology for course/module being corrected in the programme specification, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.

1.3 MSc Financial Risk Management

Rationale: It was noted that the programme was designed to fill a gap in the Faculty's Finance offerings and to respond to an area of increasing demand for specialists.

Regulations: The new programme would conform to the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees and therefore be added under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the Programme Specification and requested some alteration as follows.

- Section 11: revision of the ILOs under Knowledge and Understanding by replacing wording such as 'familiarise students with' and 'students will become acquainted with' as these were considered to present aims rather than ILOs. Alternative wording might be 'students will be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of/draw on relevant principles of'.
- Section 15: explain the either/or compulsory choice between Basic Econometrics and Modelling and Forecasting Financial Markets, (i.e. that Basic Econometrics might not be appropriate for students from a mathematical/statistical background).

Conclusion:

Subject to the requested amendments being made to the programme specification, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.

1.4 MSc International Corporate Finance & Banking

Rationale: It was noted that the programme was designed to provide an advanced programme of international standing (with both practical and theoretical dimensions) in international finance focusing on international financial markets and banking.

Regulations: The new programme would conform to the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees and therefore be added under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the Programme Specification and requested some alteration as follows.

- All references to 'module/s' be corrected to 'course/s'
- The Semester details in section 15 should have the months removed, simply referring to Semester 1, Semester 2 or Summer Period

Conclusion:

Subject to the requested amendments being made to the programme specification, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.

1.5 MSc International Financial Analysis

Rationale: It was noted that the programme was designed to provide an advanced programme of international standing (with both practical and theoretical dimensions) in international financial analysis aimed at students considering a career in the financial services sector.

Regulations: The new programme would conform to the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees and therefore added under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the Programme Specification and requested some alteration as follows.

- All references to 'module/s' be corrected to 'course/s'
- In section 11 the phrase 'All students will be able to:' should be added after the first paragraph (before the G1-12 list).
- The Semester details in section 15 should have the months removed, simply referring to Semester 1, Semester 2 or Summer Period

Conclusion:

Subject to the requested amendments being made to the programme specification, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.

1.6 MSc Legal & Political Thought

Rationale: The new programme would be co-taught by colleagues across the School of Law and departments of Sociology, Anthropology & Applied Social Sciences, Politics and Philosophy who were a group of internationally significant researchers in legal and political thought. The programme was aimed at students with first degrees in these disciplines and would also provide a strong foundation for those considering doctoral work in legal or political thought.

Regulations: The new programme would conform to the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees and therefore be added under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the Programme Specification and noted that in Section 15 there was a statement about the Diploma which was followed by another statement indicating that the Diploma 'also' marked an early exit point for MSc students. From this the Group was unclear as to whether the Postgraduate Diploma was to be offered as a separate programme which students could be recruited to. If this was to be the case, a separate programme specification would be required and the award would also need to be added to the generic PgC and PgD regulations currently on page Gr. 4 of the *University Calendar*. It was agreed that the Faculty should confirm the position regarding the Postgraduate Diploma.

The Group also identified the following amendments required to the Programme Specification:

- Section 11: final section – ‘enhanced and’ to be removed from the second and third ILOs under *Transferable/ Key Skills*.
- Section 15: references to the Diploma should be preceded by ‘Postgraduate’ and clarification of whether the PgD is available separately as well as an MSc exit award.

Conclusion:

Subject to the requested amendments being made to the programme specification, and submission of a new PgD programme specification if necessary, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.

2. *POSTGRADUATE PROPOSALS – MAJOR CHANGES*

2.1 **MAcc International Accounting & Financial Management**

Rationale: Changes arising from course re-structuring to Faculty-wide 20 credits per course and replacement of certain courses in the programme to reflect the wider scope of internationalisation in this area.

Regulations: No change to this degree’s position in the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the Programme Specification and suggested some alterations as follows:

- All references to ‘module/s’ be corrected to ‘course/s’
- The Semester details in section 15 should have the months removed, simply referring to Semester 1, Semester 2 or Summer Period

Conclusion:

Subject to the requested amendments being made to the programme specification, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.

2.2 **MFin in International Finance**

Rationale: Re-titling of existing MFin in International Finance and Financial Institutions, plus changes arising from course re-structuring to Faculty-wide 20 credits per course. The new title was to ensure distinctiveness from other academic developments in the Faculty.

Regulations: MFin in International Finance to replace MFin in International Finance and Financial Institutions in the Generic Regulations for Taught Masters Degrees under the list of programmes for the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences in Gr.17 of the University Calendar.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the Programme Specification and suggested some alterations as follows:

- All references to ‘module/s’ be corrected to ‘course/s’
- The Semester details in section 15 should have the months removed, simply referring to Semester 1, Semester 2 or Summer Period

Conclusion:

Subject to the requested amendments being made to the programme specification, the Group recommends the proposed new programme to ASC.