

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee - 29 May 2009

**Report on Internal Audit of Programme and Course Approval
Procedures - April 2009**

Mr Jim Craig, Senate Office

For the information of the Committee

Since early April, an audit of programme and course approval procedures has been conducted. The firm of Deloitte and Touche LLP (Deloitte) is contracted by the University to carry out its internal audits. Deloitte advises that it takes a risk-based approach to its audit of systems and procedures with a view to improving performance and operating efficiency. The Senate Office therefore welcomed the news that, in the routine round of audits, programme approval had been selected for scrutiny in the present semester.

The audit is being conducted by Ms Laura Green (project manager) and Mr Scott Geddes of Deloitte who began by studying the instructions and guidance which are posted on the Senate Office web site, and by examining Programme Approval Group reports which had been submitted to ASC last spring. Mr Geddes then interviewed me to clarify his understanding of procedures. Without any direction from Senate Office Mr Geddes then selected, as an audit sample, six new programmes which had been approved by ASC in 2007-8. Of these, one was an undergraduate programme, one a postgraduate certificate, and four were masters programmes; two were from Science, one Veterinary Science, one Arts, one Education, and one LBSS.

Mr Geddes then visited the faculties concerned, discussed procedures with administrators, and examined documentation raised in support - and recording the progress - of the proposals which had led to the selected programmes being approved. Mr Geddes has reported his impressions orally to Ms Butcher and myself, and has indicated that a draft report should be available to us for comment by 26 May. While it might be wise not to anticipate the conclusions of that report, we did not form the impression that Mr Geddes had found a great deal wrong with procedures though he remarked that he had discovered more variation in practice between faculties than he might have expected, and suggested that his report might identify exemplars for the guidance of others.

It is proposed that when the final report of the audit is available it should be considered by the Programme and Course Approval Working Group which should advise ASC on any changes to practice, or guidance to staff, which may be necessary.