

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – 28 May 2010

Report from the Liaison Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 27 April 2010 of the University of Glasgow and Glasgow School of Art

Ms Rona Miller, Senate Office

[FOR APPROVAL]**1 Remit and Membership**

The Remit of the Liaison Committee for 2009-10 remained unchanged.

New members to the Liaison Committee from the Glasgow School of Art are: Professor R Wilson, the new Head of School of Fine Art; Dr Craig Williamson, Academic Registrar and Head of Academic and Student Services; and Mr M White, Student SRC President.

The University Membership will be revised following University restructuring. However, it is thought likely that Professor Moignard and Professor Yarrington will continue as the representatives of the University's Senate on the Academic Council of the Glasgow School of Art (GSA).

The Convener reported that the Faculty structure is being replaced by a College structure. The Faculty of Arts is to become a College, with Professor Pittock, the recently appointed Dean of Faculty, remaining as its Head. There would be a School of Engineering within the College of Science of Engineering, and the Head of the School would replace the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering in future Liaison Committee Membership.

The Liaison Committee **resolved to recommend** to Academic Standards committee approval of the Remit and Membership of the Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow and Glasgow School of Art for session 2009-10 attached as Appendix 1.

2 New Members of Academic Staff

GSA was pleased to welcome a new member of academic staff, Dr Paul Chapman, Deputy Director of Digital Design Studio (DDS), Head of Academic Graduate Programmes. Dr Chapman graduated in 2004 with a PhD from the University of Hull. He had been Director of Hull Immersive Visualisation Environment (HIVE) at the University of Hull. He has a BSc Computer Science with Engineering (2:1) and MSc Computer Graphics and Visualisation (Distinction).

The Liaison Committee **resolved to recommend** to Academic Standards Committee that Paul Chapman be recognised as a Teacher of the University for the purpose of teaching on courses leading to the degrees and Postgraduate Diplomas of the University.

[FOR NOTING]**3 Ceramic Design pathway in the BA (Honours) Design**

The Liaison Committee was updated on the status of the Ceramics Design pathway on the BA (Honours) Design, on which student recruitment had been ceased. GSA

was keen to maintain the quality of the student experience on the pathway until completion, and to encourage as many students to progress to Honours as possible. GSA was pleased to report that they had a full cohort of Fourth Year students on this pathway and that the students were being fully supported. Full-time students would continue on this pathway until completion at the end of 2010-11 and part-time students would be graduating in 2012-13.

Academic Standards Committee Members are asked to **note** that following a request from the University, a short re-validation event for the BA (Hons) Design: Ceramics (Part-time) will be held this session and that the report of the re-validation event will be presented to the Committee in October 2010.

4 Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), Beijing, China

GSA had maintained an informal relationship with the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), in China. A number of staff had visited CAFA to recruit students and a number of offers would be look at students' portfolios and offers of places would be made over the next few weeks. The first year foundation pathway, originally being offered at CAFA, would now be provided by GSA in Scotland. Academic Standards Committee is invited to **note** that an approval event for this pathway has been scheduled for May/ June 2010 and the outcome of the event will be presented to the Committee in October 2010.

5 Memorandum of Agreement

Mrs McCluskey had advised the Liaison Committee that a draft of the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) had been provided to GSA. The two main changes introduced were the fee scale, which now reflected full economic costings, and the structure of the annual report.

6 Validation and Review

Members were advised that two new programmes had been validated in 2008-09: an MLitt in Writing and Criticism and an MDes in Design Innovation.

There had been a review of the Department of Historical and Critical Studies during this session, and the MLitt in Writing and Criticism was an important development within the Department. The programme treated writing about culture and the arts as a form of artistic practice in its own right. Writing would adhere to academic principles, which would be expressed in an academic paper, to be released this term, drawing from internal and external reference points.

7 Agreement with Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

An agreement had been signed with the Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, and GSA was exploring possible developments with them, such as a joint Masters in Fine Art and Design and an Architecture programme. The agreement stipulates that subject to a good level of English, students from Tsinghua's international foundation programme would be enrolling in GSA.

[FOR INFORMATION]

8 Presence in Beijing

GSA had opened an office in Beijing. This had transformed GSA's profile in the city and attracted a high number of student applications. GSA had also increased its English Language support internally, through the addition of one full-time member of staff and by other means.

9 Exit Award for the Diploma in Architecture

Liaison Committee Members discussed the exit award for the postgraduate level Diploma in Architecture, which is the equivalent to RIBA Part 2. The course attracts GSA BArch students, and around 30 entrants from undergraduate architecture degrees elsewhere, having completed three years at undergraduate level. The first year of the Dip Arch (SCQF Level 10) is equivalent to Year 4 of the undergraduate programme. Those previously GSA undergraduate students who leave after the first year of the Diploma may be awarded a BArch Honours degree, whereas those students from other institutions, who have not completed sufficient credits at GSA to entitle them to a GSA Honours qualification, do not. No one had as yet graduated by that route however the discrepancy had not yet been resolved.

Committee members discussed progress to the MArch by Conversion. It was noted that acceptance on the MArch depended on achieving suitable grades on the DipArch, and that it was important that students be aware of the criteria for acceptance to Masters.

10 Glasgow School of Art - Annual Report

10.1 Retention Rates

It was reported that, with retention of 98.2%, GSA was first in Scotland and sixth in the UK for student retention. The Convener complimented GSA on such excellent success.

10.2 Committee Review

A revised institutional academic committee structure with clearer committee remits had been implemented within GSA in 2008-09.

10.3 Common Academic Framework (CAF)

Glasgow School of Art has been implementing five elements of a Common Academic Framework (Academic Calendar, Code of Assessment, Postgraduate and Undergraduate Frameworks and Quality Enhancement and Learning and Teaching (QELT) Strategy), first introduced in 2005-06. The Framework provides an infrastructure to support the design, delivery, assessment and management of academic programmes. It includes all the School's taught, validated provision.

The Postgraduate Framework was in place and the Undergraduate Framework, which had been delayed until GSA could be confident of its effective implementation, was due for implementation in September 2010, following two years of pilot studies.

The fifth element of the Common Academic Framework, the QELT Strategy, was being developed further during 2009-10 as a result of reflections made in the preparation for ELIR.

10.4 Digital Media

The School recognised the need for a new form of provision for teaching Digital Media within GSA. A senior academic had been appointed and the appointee would be starting in June 2010 and developing a suite of digital media programmes to be delivered during 2011-12.

10.5 School of Fine Art - Change Academy

The School of Fine Art (SOFA) had been awarded support from the Higher Education Academy, Leadership Foundation for the Higher Education Change Academy scheme, for a project asking cross-institutional teams of staff and students to think creatively about future challenges facing higher education.

10.6 *Admissions*

GSA's admission applications for 2010-11 were particularly high. They had applied for, and been accepted as a 'Highly Trusted Institution' by UKBA. Monitoring of students remained a priority.

10.7 *Assessment*

GSA reported that 2008-09 was their fourth year of using the Code of Assessment. External Examiners in the School of Fine Arts had asked that there be internal moderation to ensure parity of application of the Code. The Liaison Committee was pleased to note the steps taken within SOFA to ensure accurate implementation of the Code.

10.8 *Appeals and Complaints*

It was noted that responses to Appeals and Complaints from programme teams were now much more effective. Committee Members recognised the opportunity that Appeals presented to gain insight into the effective working of degree programmes and identify potential developments.

10.9 *Technical and Workshop Review*

Following a Review of Technical and Workshop Provision, recommendations had been approved in 2008-09 for all technical support to be brought together under a new Head of Technical Services.

10.10 *Exhibition Review*

An Exhibition Review had recommended a new position of Exhibitions Director, to be involved in the design of exhibition space in the new Phase 1 estates development, in consultation with academic staff. The new exhibitions management would be much more curatorial and some exciting exhibitions were anticipated.

10.11 *Employability and Personal Development Planning (PDP)*

In 2008-09, GSA had received Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funding for 'Employability' initiatives, which was used to take forward priorities identified in 2005-06.

GSA had been involved in 2008-09 in a UK study 'Creative Graduates Creative Futures'. The study provided evidence that GSA curricula developed key skills for graduates. However, it also identified a need to improve on students' entrepreneurial and networking skills.

Personal Development Planning (PDP) software 'iProgress', introduced in 2007-08, was not wholly well received by staff and students. It did not integrate well with the students' studies advisory system or their career portfolio. GSA would continue to review this area.

10.12 *Estates Strategy*

As reported in the Annual Report, Garnethill estate required upgrading and the Scottish Funding Council had committed funding of up to £50m for the School's estates development. Phase 1 development, across from the Macintosh Building, was to commence in mid-2011 with completion expected in advance of the 2013-14 session. A lot of attention had been paid to the design to ensure they maintained the quality of the students' experience.

10.13 *International Developments*

The 2008-09 session had included the graduation of GSA's first cohort of Postgraduate Certificate students. An English language support post had been put in

place to provide academic-based English language teaching, in core subjects, with weekly study skills sessions.

Professor Walker reported that the School had been marketing themselves in India, with nothing formal to report as yet. They recognised how much potential there was for developing a relationship there. The Convener recommended that Professor Walker discuss their international development with Mr Ian Thomson, Head of International Recruitment, in the first instance and Fiona Docherty, Director of the University's Recruitment and International Office (RIO).

10.14 Enhancement Themes

GSA had hosted sector-wide discussions on Research-Teaching linkages, leading to case studies and a future event scheduled for November 2010. Professor Walker reported that the discussions had been welcomed by the sector.

Professor Walker reported that there had been much discussion in the School on Enhancement Themes, seeking students' perceptions on Graduates for the 21st Century. The School was looking at the relationship between Research, Teaching and Professional Practice, and sought an integrated approach to these three strands. They sought innovation, through pedagogical research, to link these components and explore how best to benefit students and staff, and ultimately the student-staff society.

The School would be discussing, through the next stage of the CAF, how best to make Research-Teaching linkages at every academic level and what students should be aware of at each stage.

10.15 Marketing, Communication and Development

Professor Walker was pleased to report the increased number of international applications, with the introduction of new programmes.

10.16 Student, Graduate and Staff Success

Members of the Committee commended the very high number of awards made to staff, students and graduates of GSA during session 2008-09.

10.17 Student Record System

The Student Record System, implemented initially in 2006-07, was reported as being 'fit for purpose'. HESA reporting had benefited from it and management information was improving.

10.18 Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

There had been a significant increase in students' use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and an increased expectation, amongst students, that it be effective for all students. GSA had combined two surveys into one Learning Resource User Satisfaction Survey. The 2010 Survey had just been completed and had reported a significant increase in students' access to Blackboard, their VLE, with significantly fewer problems reported.

A JISC¹ Survey had been carried out to identify staff skills in their use of technology and training needs. The training needs were being incorporated into the staff development programme. A Similar exercise had been carried out for students, so that they could all be brought to a common level, and technological aptitude would form part of their graduate skills under Graduates for the 21st Century.

¹ <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/>

10.19 *Widening Participation*

As indicated in the Annual Report, the School had performed below the HESA benchmark for widening participation (WP), despite increases in application rates, and had received a reduction in funding from the West of Scotland Regional Forum in 2008-09. The School was adopting a more coordinated approach to WP than before. Annual School targets had been set for monitoring of applications and conversion.

An articulation agreement agreed with Cardonald College, for entry into Levels 8 and 9, was working effectively and likely to be expanded to Telford and Central Colleges.

10.20 *Annual Monitoring Reports*

Professor Walker referred to the balance between quality assurance and enhancement and how this needed to be addressed through the Annual Monitoring Reporting (AMR) process. In terms of enhancement planning, GSA sought to link research developments with cross-cutting academic development. They sought to reduce bureaucracy and increase the focus on enhancement, as well as maintaining quality assurance to remain confident in the standards of their degrees.

10.21 *Student Feedback*

Following the 2008-09 National Student Survey (NSS) results GSA had undertaken a lot of self-reflection in conjunction with student representatives. Heads of Schools had considered the Survey results in detail, including the student comments, and made recommendations for development, which had been presented to their Academic Council.

10.22 *Staff Development*

A Career Review with Activity Planning had taken place in 2008-09 and was being implemented.

10.23 *Research*

The outcome of the School in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2008 had been that 70% of submissions were of international quality, including -

- 25% at 4*, world-leading and
- 25% at 3*, internationally excellent.

Professor Walker reported that the main focus of the 2008-09 Session had been the Review of Research, which built on their success in the RAE. Heads of Research and Heads of Schools had considered the organisation of research, leading to restructuring of activities, which was now almost complete.

11 Enhancement-Led Institutional Review

Professor Walker was pleased to report that initial QAA feedback had indicated that GSA had achieved an outcome of 'Confidence' from the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR), contingent on them implementing the Undergraduate element of the CAF by September 2010. Within the ELIR Statement a lot of good practice had been cited, such as the evolution of postgraduate provision; the quality of the academic and technical staff and the relationship between staff and students.

12 Joint Board for Product Design Engineering

An MDes in Product Design Engineering was due to be introduced. However, since application rates had been low, the programme team had agreed to postpone the introduction of the degree for a year, marketing it internationally in the meantime. The undergraduate Product Design Engineering programme was doing extremely well with very good student feedback.

13 Future Meetings

The Liaison Committee agreed that the date of future meetings should be brought forward. GSA's Annual Report would be presented to their Academic Council in December and the Liaison Committee meeting could be held in January. An Interim Meeting would continue to be held in advance of Academic Council, to discuss any issues which might be a problem at Council.

**Remit and Membership of the University of Glasgow and Glasgow School of Art
Liaison Committee 2009-10**

The Liaison Committee will meet annually to consider an annual report on the performance of all of the programmes leading to awards of the University delivered wholly or jointly by the Glasgow School of Art.

Membership

University

Clerk of Senate (Convener)	Professor G Caie
Head of the Senate Office or nominee	Dr J Aitken
Dean, Faculty of Arts	Professor M Pittock
Dean, Faculty of Engineering	Professor C Pearce
Head of Registry or nominee	Mr D Bennion
The two Representatives of the Senate on the Academic Council of the Glasgow School of Art	Professor E Moignard, Faculty of Arts Professor A Yarrington, Richmond Chair of Fine Art
University Representative on GSA Annual Programme Monitoring Event	Dr C Willsdon, History of Art

Glasgow School of Art

Deputy Director (Vice Convener)	Professor Allan Walker
Head of Mackintosh School of Architecture	Professor D Porter
Head of School of Fine Art	Professor R Wilson
Head of School of Design	Professor I McAra-McWilliam
Head of Historical and Critical Studies	Dr K Neil
Head of Research & Postgraduate Studies	Professor N Barfield
Director of the Digital Design Studio	Professor P Anderson
Academic Registrar & Head of Academic and Student Services	Dr C Williamson
Head of Learning Resources	Ms C Nicholson
Student Representative	Mr M White, President, SRC

In attendance	Mrs J McCluskey, Senate Office (GU)
Clerk (In attendance)	Ms R Miller, Senate Office (GU)