

## University of Glasgow

## Academic Standards Committee - Friday 9 October 2009

## Report from the Glasgow International College for Session 2008-09

Mrs Jackie McCluskey, Senate Office

September 2009

**1 Background**

In January 2006, the Senate of the University established two joint committees with responsibility for the management of Glasgow International College's (GIC's) academic provision, namely, the Collegiate Board of Studies (CBoS) and the Joint Academic Management Board (JAMB). Each committee consists of representatives from the University of Glasgow and GIC. The remit of each committee is outlined below. During academic session 2008-09, both committees met twice. This paper summarises their main activity during this time.

In addition to the academic committees, Professor Nolan, Vice-Principal (Learning, Teaching and Internationalisation), established the GU/GIC Joint Strategic Management Board (JSMB) with a remit to discuss the strategic direction of GIC, with particular reference to recruitment, progression, marketing and student support. The JSMB met for the first time in 2008-09 and reported to Senate in June 2009.

**2 Remit of the CBoS and JAMB**

**Collegiate Board of Studies** - The CBoS was established by Senate to assure the quality and standards of programmes and courses delivered by GIC. It scrutinises proposals for new programmes and changes to existing provision. It also considers GIC's annual course (module) monitoring reports and recommends course/programme changes where necessary.

**Joint Academic Management Board** - The JAMB is responsible for all academic issues relating to the establishment and operation of GIC programmes. It considers and approves, where appropriate, the recommendations of the CBoS for new or amended courses/programmes. JAMB also considers the programme monitoring reports submitted by CBoS and approves GIC's External Examiner nominations.

**3 Membership**

During 2008-09, the membership of JAMB and CBoS, outlined in Appendices 1 and 2, remained unchanged. Professor John McColl has since resigned from CBoS effective session 2009-10. Dr David Moore will represent the Faculty on CBoS in addition to his role as Subject Moderator for Mathematics. Professor John Davies will replace Dr Arthur Whittaker on JAMB during Dr Whittaker's secondment to the Student Lifecycle Project. Mr Peter Venables replaces Ms Anna MacVicar on JAMB following his appointment to the new post of Academic Director at GIC.

#### **4 New Programmes**

There were no new programmes approved during session 2008-09. However, in light of low application rates, the Diploma in Business and Diploma in Engineering programmes which were approved by JAMB during session 2007-08 were subject to further discussion. One proposal submitted by the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences (LBSS) in relation to the Diploma in Business was to consider revamping the Foundation Certificate programme to move towards Year 2 entry to the MA Business and Management programme. In addition, it was proposed that the Pre-Masters programmes could be revised to link with other specialist MSc programmes (currently the Pre-Masters leads only to the MSc in Management). As these proposals involved a shift of policy for LBSS as well as a need for GIC to review their curriculum, and, given that GIC remained of the opinion that the Diploma programmes would attract students, no real conclusion was reached on this issue. It was agreed that further discussion would be required during session 2009-10.

#### **5 Module and Programme Amendments**

A number of module and programme amendments were proposed in June 2009, some as a result of national Kaplan International College (KIC) requirements and others as a result of discussions which took place during the module monitoring process. (See paragraph 7). These changes were approved by both CBoS and JAMB during the summer break. Due to scheduling difficulties between GIC and Kaplan, it had not been possible for the amendments to be reviewed beforehand.

#### **6 Articulation Pathways**

Following detailed discussions within the Faculty of Law, Business & Social Sciences, a decision was taken to reinstate the BA Global Business programme thereby reintroducing it as a pathway for GIC students. The BA Global Business pathway replaced the MA Social Sciences route which had been introduced the previous session. Members of GU staff consulted fully with GIC students affected by this change.

#### **7 Annual Programme Monitoring**

In line with the approved annual monitoring procedure, the Module Monitoring groups, sub-groups of CBoS, considered the termly Module Monitoring Reports provided by GIC. Annual Programme reports were also considered in detail by JAMB. No significant concerns were noted. However, members highlighted the low completion rate for the Foundation Mathematics module illustrating a national problem. GIC agreed to liaise with GU staff who had recently introduced developments to address this problem within the University. Another difficulty highlighted related to problems with the IT link between GU and GIC which had impacted on communication with departments regarding marks and transcripts. This issue was subsequently resolved. Difficulties were also noted regarding the language ability of the two-term students entering in January. JAMB was assured that GIC had plans in place to resolve this problem, particularly with the recruitment of additional staff to support this area (see paragraph 9).

It had previously been agreed that a proposal to replace the termly module monitoring process with an annual process would be considered by CBoS and JAMB during session 2008-09. However, in light of KIC's proposals for a review of the External Examiner system (see paragraph 8) and potential programme modifications, JAMB agreed that the system should remain unchanged in the medium term. The process,

which was managed by the Module Monitoring Group Conveners, now involved e-mail consultation which had significantly reduced the burden on staff. In addition GIC members reported that they had found the process of termly reflection very useful.

## **8 External Examiners**

CBoS and JAMB considered a paper from KIC outlining its proposals for changes to the External Examiner structure. The paper had been amended following feedback from CBoS in November 2008. It was agreed that as the University was in a different position from other KIC colleges in that credit is given for the study at GIC, it was necessary for the University to maintain a sufficient level of control over the assessment and appointment of External Examiners. Following further discussion at CBoS and JAMB in May and June respectively, JAMB agreed to the proposal for a pilot of the new structure for the English Language and Academic Skills modules subject to the current structure remaining unchanged until the results of the pilot were known.

## **9 Student Progress**

Following discussion by JAMB, a meeting was held in February 2009 to review the semester 1 results of the first cohort of GIC students who had articulated to the University in September 2008. JAMB members were reassured to note that there were no major concerns with the performance of the GIC students in semester 1. It was agreed that a second progress meeting would be arranged once final results were known. In addition JAMB would review the final results at its December meeting in session 2009-10.

## **10 Updates from KIC**

The Director of Academic Development and College Operations at KIC reported on the following KIC developments throughout session 2008-09:

- The establishment of an Academic Direction and College Operations unit responsible for providing additional central support to the Colleges;
- The introduction of a new MIS system enabling KIC to make more meaningful and timely statistical comparisons across the colleges;
- The recruitment of 3 full time members of staff dedicated to supporting the English Language and Academic Skills modules at a national level.

**Joint Academic Management Board**

**Membership List  
2008-09**

**University of Glasgow**

Professor Andrea Nolan	Convener
Professor Robbie Paton	Convener of CBoS
Dr Jack Aitken	Director of the Senate Office
Dr Arthur Whittaker	Faculty of Engineering
Ms Jackie McCluskey	Clerk

**Glasgow International College**

Mr Roger Smith	Director, Academic Development and College Operations, Kaplan International Colleges
Ms Jackie Main	Director, Glasgow International College
Ms Anna MacVicar	Programme Leader, Business, Law & Social Sciences

**Glasgow International College  
Collegiate Board of Studies**

**Membership List  
2008-09**

**University of Glasgow**

Convener	Professor Robbie Paton
Clerk	Ms Jackie McCluskey
Director of Language Centre & EFL Unit (Co-opted Member)	Dr Esther Daborn <sup>1</sup>
Faculty Representative - BLS	Dr Rob Aitken
Faculty Representative - Engineering	Dr Arthur Whittaker
Faculty Representative - IMS	Professor John McColl
Faculty Representative - LBSS	Mr Tom Guthrie
Faculty Representative - Physical Sciences	Professor Robert Hill <sup>2</sup>
Subject Moderator (Chemistry)	Professor Robert Hill
Subject Moderator (Computing Science)	Dr Helen Purchase
Subject Moderator (Economics)	Mr Terence Moody
Subject Moderator (Engineering)	Professor John Davies
Subject Moderator (UG Business & Management)	Dr Geoff Southern
Subject Moderator (BSSL – Pre-Masters)	
Subject Moderator (Mathematics)	Dr David Moore
Subject Moderator (Physics)	Dr Peter Sneddon
Subject Moderator (Politics)	Dr Paul Graham
Subject Moderator (Sociology)	Dr Andrew Smith
Subject Moderator (English Language and Study Skills)	Dr Esther Daborn

**Glasgow International College**

Director	Ms Jackie Main
Director, Academic Development and College Operations, Kaplan International Colleges	Mr Roger Smith
Programme Leader (Business, Soc Sciences & Law)	Ms Anna MacVicar
Programme Leader (Science & Engineering)	Dr Neil A McLeod
Subject Leader (ELT and Academic Skills)	Mr Peter Venables

<sup>1</sup> Dr Daborn is also Subject Moderator for English Language and Study Skills

<sup>2</sup> Professor Hill is also Subject Moderator for Chemistry