

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Wednesday 20 April 2011

Report of Meeting of the Joint Board of the University of Glasgow
and the Free Church of Scotland College – 12 January 2011

Mrs Lesley Fielding, Senate Office

1. Remit and Membership of the Joint Board

The Joint Board **resolved to recommend** the Remit and Membership for 2010-11 to the Academic Standards Committee. (Annex 1)

2. Validation – Master of Theology in Scottish Church History and Theology

The Board noted that the option to move from the three 40-credit course structure previously proposed in the validation exercise to a structure of four 30-credit courses with an additional study skills course had not been possible. The revised structure now entailed 35 credits for three modules with a further 15 credits for the Research and Study Skills course (total of 120).

3. Report on Teaching Programmes**3.1 Successor for Chair of Systematic Theology**

With the forthcoming retirement of Professor Donald Macleod as Chair of Systematic Theology, the Board discussed the requirement under the Memorandum of Agreement whereby a representative from the College of Arts and the University were involved in the appointment process. The Convener agreed to identify a nominee for this role.

3.2 UK Border Agency Sponsor Licence

The Board was noted an on-going appeal by an MTh student who was refused a visa by the UK Border Agency (UKBA). It was hoped that this matter could be raised at a meeting between the Principal and the Home Secretary. The UKBA's Highly Trusted Sponsor Status scheme was discussed and it was considered that it could be beneficial to the FCC, if the College met the eligibility requirements.

4. External Examiners

The period of appointment for all three external examiners ended on 30 September 2010. The College considered that this was not a satisfactory situation with regard to continuity and requested permission to extend one of the appointments by a year. The Board **approved** this request.

5. External Examiners Reports

The Board members considered the reports submitted by the external examiners including the issue of the clustering of results at the top and bottom ends of the scale. The FCC considered that the student body fell into two distinct classes of Ministry and international students. International students were often unfamiliar with the academic processes which could impede their progress, whilst Ministry students tended to be

either more academically orientated or to have a more vocational inclination. The FCC advised the Board that they were endeavouring to address these issues through individual meetings with students to provide advice and guidance, where necessary.

The Board discussed the observation made by an external whereby students could choose to answer three questions on the one subject within an examination paper. The FCC undertook to ensure that this matter was addressed.

6. Student Representative Report

The student representative sought clarification of the graduation process, explaining that there had been confusion among FCC students regarding graduation procedures and deadlines. This confusion was attributed to recent staff changes at the College and the ensuing gap in familiarity with the graduation process. The FCC assured the Board that they would ensure that staff were fully conversant with the University's graduation procedures.

7. Memorandum of Agreement

Professor Mackay provided the signed Memorandum of Agreement which would go forward to the Principal for signature.

8. Amended Annual Report Structure

As outlined in the ELIR recommendations, an amended annual report structure had been developed and this was the first report to follow the new structure. A meeting would be arranged with the Senate Office and the FCC to look at further enhancement as well as areas highlighted in the ELIR report which affected the Validated Institutions. These issues included a new process for the periodic review and renewal of partnership arrangements.

9. Complaints and Student Conduct Policies

As outlined in the University's ELIR report, this was the first report to follow the new structure suggested amendments to FCC and these were formally noted and would be addressed at a later meeting.

10. Training

The Board discussed training for FCC which previously had been undertaken by a member of the University staff during several one day visits to the FCC over the course of the year. Whilst the FCC was entitled to participate in the training offered by the University's Staff Development Service, it was considered that training would be best carried out at College level.

11. TURNITIN

The use of TURNITIN was raised and it emerged that the FCC had not yet been granted access to this software as the software licence needed to be checked again for any changes in cost or conditions.

[Clerk's Note. Further to the meeting the FCC advised that it would purchase TURNITIN for the entire College and hence did not require access to Glasgow's software licence.]

University of Glasgow and The Free Church of Scotland College

Title: Joint Board of the University of Glasgow and the Free Church of Scotland College

Remit:

1. To oversee the following programmes (taught or by research):
 - (a) Bachelor of Theology
 - (b) Master of Theology (by research)
 - (c) Master of Theology in Scottish Church History and Theology
2. To make recommendations to the Senate of the University and to the Senate of the College in respect of the validation of the above programmes.
3. To conduct periodic reviews of the above programmes, and make recommendations to the Senate of the University of Glasgow on the basis of their outcomes.
4. To make such recommendations as are appropriate to the Senate of the College.
5. To consider, for transmission to the Senate of the University of Glasgow for its approval, all nominations of external examiners to the University Court for the programmes listed in item 1 above.
6. To consider annually:
 - a) the recommendations of, and comments contained within, the reports of external examiners and the response of the College to the reports;
 - b) a report on the numbers and qualifications of students admitted to the validated programmes, and on the progress of students within the programmes;
 - c) the nomination of members of the College for recognition as teachers of the University;
 - d) the nomination of members of the Joint Appeals Committee.
7. To receive annual reports on, and keep under continuing review, the operation of the College's quality assurance procedures for all programmes overseen by the Joint Board.
8. To foster mutual understanding and co-operation and to encourage and review collaboration between the College and the University in areas of common interest.

Quorum:

The quorum of the Joint Board shall be four and shall comprise at least two representatives from each institution

**Joint Board of the University of Glasgow and
The Free Church of Scotland College**

Membership 2010-11

University of Glasgow

Clerk of Senate (Convener)	Professor Graham Caie
Head of College of Arts (or nominee)	Professor Elizabeth Moignard
Representative from the School of Critical Studies	Dr Heather Walton
Representative from the School of Critical Studies	Professor David Jasper

The College

Principal of the College (Vice Convener)	Professor John L Mackay
Two Representatives of the Teaching Staff	Professor Donald Macleod Professor John R McIntosh
President of the FCC SRC	Mr Rory Stott

In attendance

Director of Senate Office (or nominee)	Mrs Jackie McCluskey
Senate Office Clerk	Mrs Lesley Fielding

January 2011