

University of Glasgow**Academic Standards Committee – Wednesday 20 April 2011****Report from the University of Glasgow/Glasgow International
College Joint Academic Management Board held on 15
December 2010****Mrs Jackie McCluskey, Senate Office****1) Progression Scholarships**

Members were advised that a working group had been established by the Senior Management Group to take a holistic University-wide approach to scholarships with a view to aligning scholarships to budgets. Previously there had been no clear link to budget plans. The Convener explained that the current financial position would likely impact on the University's ability to provide Scholarships, however, the scholarships which had been identified for academic session 2010-11 would still apply.

2) BA Global Business and Diploma Programmes

Board members were advised that, after much consideration, the College of Social Sciences had rejected the latest proposal from GIC for the progression of the Diploma in Business students - a new pathway had been required due to the withdrawal of the BA Global Business programme established for this purpose. The College had identified significant gaps for third year entry which had not been addressed by GIC's proposal. It was acknowledged that although students entering in year two also experienced difficulties, they had more time available to resolve these. Possible solutions were discussed including establishing a Foundation Certificate in Business from existing modules which would allow direct entry to year 2 of the MA (Social Sciences). Members agreed that this option should be discussed further and that a proposal should be submitted to the CBoS meeting in May 2011. If acceptable, the new programme would be submitted to JAMB for approval in July 2011.

It was also acknowledged that a decision on the future of the Diploma in Business and Engineering programmes was outstanding. The Convener clarified that although JAMB was in a position to discuss academic issues, the future of the Diploma programmes would need to be discussed by the Joint Strategic Management Board (JSMB) on 21 February 2011.

GIC members were assured that the Diploma students completing in 2011-12 would be able to access the MA (Social Sciences) programme via the current agreed route.

3) Issues from the Collegiate Board of Studies

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Collegiate Board of Studies (CBoS) held on 25 May 2010. In addition to the discussions outlined in section 2 above, the following issues were considered.

3.1 *CBoS Membership for 2010-11*

JAMB **approved** the CBoS membership for 2010-11 which now included Ms Ballantyne and an observer from GIC. It was acknowledged, however, that there were fewer GIC members. Members agreed that the Board should continue to review the membership in light of the proposed intention to reduce the membership as a means of lightening the burden on staff and the changing processes.

3.2 *Transitional Issues*

CBoS considered a number of positive developments which GIC had instigated in direct response to the Student Transition Report for 2008-09. These developments addressed issues highlighted regarding student feedback; the use of “white space” in timetables and examination procedures. JAMB was advised that a “wish list” of what UoG should ideally provide to assist with transition was currently being prepared by GIC in liaison with the University. The ‘wish list’ would be submitted to CBoS in May.

3.3 *Module Monitoring Cycle*

JAMB **approved** the amendments to the monitoring cycle recommended by CBoS, specifically, subject based modules would move from termly to annual monitoring. However, given the recent review of the English Language and Academic Skills modules, termly monitoring would be retained.

3.4 *Annual Monitoring*

JAMB noted the discussions of the Module Monitoring Groups and GIC’s response. The Subject Moderator for English Language and Academic Skills had raised concerns about the level of integration between the subject and English Language and Academic Skills staff within GIC. In direct response to the feedback, GIC had introduced induction sessions on the subject areas throughout the College. In addition, greater participation at staff development events would be encouraged.

3.5 *Annual Programme Monitoring*

Members noted the CBoS discussions regarding the proposed programme modifications for delivery in September 2011. The final proposals would be submitted to CBoS in May following final consideration by Kaplan in January. Thereafter, CBoS would submit the final proposals to JAMB for approval in July 2011. CBoS had indicated slight concerns regarding the proposed withdrawal of the Pre-Masters *Social Sciences Principles* module. Following further discussion about this proposal JAMB agreed to approve all proposed modifications in-principle subject to further scrutiny by the College of Social Sciences - in the case of the proposed withdrawal of *Social Sciences Principles* - and CBoS in May 2011.

3.6 *Student Progress*

JAMB noted the decision of CBoS that the main Committee should review the annual student progress data. Previously review was undertaken by sub-groups of CBoS. The intention was to minimise the burden on staff.

4) Student Transition Report for 2009-10

Members considered the final Student Transition Report for 2009-10 as well as the discussions of CBoS. It was noted that no areas of concern had been highlighted by Pre-Masters students. Any negative feedback tended to be from undergraduate students. However, it was acknowledged that progress was being made in response to the feedback and that it would likely take some time for the impact of the developments discussed in item 3.2 to be seen. The Board agreed to keep a watching brief on student transition issues.

5) Articulation Pathways for 2011-2012

Members noted that a number of Dumfries programmes had been included as well as the new PGT programmes due to be introduced in session 2011-12. It was acknowledged that these programmes had yet to be formally approved within the University and should therefore only be advertised as “subject to approval”. Members were advised that following discussions at CBoS, GIC had agreed to include information in their prospectus outlining the relationship and location of the Dumfries campus to ensure that prospective students were in a position to make a fully informed decision.

A discussion arose regarding updating the pathways out-with the approved annual process. It was agreed that a degree of flexibility was required to allow changes throughout the year, particularly in the case of new pathways. However, where a proposal involved the inclusion of a new block of programmes, for example the inclusion of the Dumfries programmes, a strategic decision was needed. Members agreed that proposals of this nature should be submitted to the Joint Strategic Management Board (JSMB) in the first instance.

It was also agreed that in the case of PGT provision where no advance entry was involved, new programmes could be brought on immediately subject to the agreed approval process. However any new UG provision and any withdrawals should follow the formal annual process. It was acknowledged that any withdrawn programme was likely to be replaced by something similar and that the crucial issue in the case of withdrawals would be to ensure that the students were fully informed of the changes.

6) Briefing Sessions

A discussion took place on the briefing sessions planned for the College Deans of Learning and Teaching and Graduate Studies. A date had been identified, however, due to the adverse weather conditions, this had had to be cancelled. A new date was subsequently identified - 14 January 2011.

Advice was sought from the Board on the required content. It was agreed that the sessions would cover the nature of the partnership between GIC and UoG and how it operated, specifically the role of the Subject Moderators and the other points of contact within the University. Members suggested that the overall feedback process and GIC’s response to student transition issues to date should also be covered as well as the current level of contact and the benefit of the partnership to students. It was felt that the Deans should also be advised of the formal approval processes which operate via CBoS and JAMB.

7) Visa Issues

Members were advised that, following a recent successful application to the UKBA, the University had achieved Highly Trusted Sponsor Status.

GIC confirmed that the interim measures initiated last year to address the visa processing difficulties, including the issue of early unconditional offers, had been successful. Generally the expected outcome for those issued unconditional offers had been achieved. However, motivational difficulties had been experienced with a number of the students. It was anticipated that the process would improve greatly next year due to new, simplified processes and both GIC and the University having Highly Trusted Sponsor Status.

The Board also discussed the possible impact of the Government's recent announcement about capping immigration as well as GIC's response to the ongoing consultation process. The Government had proposed a number of changes to the regulations surrounding overseas student recruitment as follows:

- i) Introduction of a capping for entry for sub-degree level provision;
- ii) Increase in the required level of English level required;
- iii) A requirement for students to return overseas on completion;
- iv) Reduced number of opportunities for students to work in the UK post graduation;
- v) Stricter accreditation procedures for private HEIs.

Members were advised that Kaplan was currently preparing a response to the consultation exercise which would note its concerns. In addition a meeting of representatives from the private education sector had been arranged for mid-December 2010. KIC also hoped to input its concerns via the response from public sector institutions.

Members noted concerns regarding the potential impact on GIC recruitment which, given the recruitment pattern to date, was likely to impact on the University's Business School In particular. The Board agreed that the Board should keep a watching brief on this issue.

8) Kaplan (KIC) Updates

Members were advised of the following issues relating to KIC:

- i) No new Colleges had been established although KIC was currently in discussion with 2 institutions in this regard.
- ii) KIC had established a new body – CLIQ [the Centre for Learning, Innovation and Quality] - replacing ADCO [Academic Development and College Operations Dept. A replacement for Mr Roger Smith would be recruited who would assume responsibility for CLIQ. The post was currently being filled on an acting basis by Ms Jackie Main.
- iii) The University's International Officers recently met with the KIC Sales and Marketing team to look at more aligned ways of working. A number of actions such as possible joint recruitment had been identified.
- iv) The University Placement System (UPS) continued to provide insurance offers for those students who were unsuccessful in their applications for Glasgow. Members were concerned about the timing of the offers noting that some students may go elsewhere before a decision had been made on their offer for Glasgow. However the Director of GIC assured members that students were not on the UPS unless it was clear that they would be unsuccessful. The UPS was an attempt to address potential poaching of students by Agents. It was agreed that the University and GIC could look

at ways to combat the agents by, for example, strengthening the message of a guaranteed place. One suggestion was to run a similar event to that recently organised in the Student Union. The Convener offered agreed to speak to the students as before. GIC agreed to review the process associated with the UPS with a view to reducing the emphasis given to it. A draft procedure would be submitted to JAMB for review.