

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 18 November 2011

**Extract from Report from Fast-Track Programme Approval Group –
Outstanding Proposal for MA (Hons) - SMLC**

Petra Joshua and Laura McGarry, College of Arts Office

Present:

Professor Vince Bissell, Dr Mike Carroll, Professor Bob Hill.

In attendance:

Miss Petra Joshua (Clerk of Undergraduate Board of Studies) Miss Laura McGarry (Clerk of Higher Degrees Board of Studies).

By invitation:

School of Modern Languages and Cultures – Dr Barbara Burns
School of Modern Languages and Cultures – Ms Adeline Callander
School of Critical Studies – Professor Jeremy Smith

1. UNDERGRADUATE PROPOSALS

- 1.1 **MA Honours French**
MA Honours French (Joint)
MA Honours German
MA Honours German (Joint)
MA Honours Spanish
MA Honours Spanish (Joint)
MA Honours Italian
MA Honours Italian (Joint)
MA Honours Hispanic Studies (Single)
MA Honours Russian (Joint)
MA Honours Czech (Joint)
MA Honours Polish (Joint)
MA Honours Slavonic and East European Studies

Rationale: MA Honours language programmes taught in SMLC are 5-year degrees (full-time). This includes the mandatory year of residence abroad. The University receives five years of tuition fees for students on these programmes.

The programme specifications are currently weighted at 480 credits. The year abroad is shown as being a part of the degree but, as presented, carries no credits. However, the year abroad codes used on Websurf, and which have existed for many years, do carry 120 credits giving students 600 credits in total on their records. There is obviously an inconsistency here.

It became evident during the “plan building” stage of the Student Lifecycle Project that this inconsistency needed to be resolved. 120 credits are attributed to each year of a plan so 5-year plans attract 600 credits.

An added consideration is the fact that we are bound by EU regulations where students study abroad on Erasmus exchanges:

“After return of the student the responsible administrator will transfer all credits gained abroad in the approved programme of study (Transcript of Records) into the student’s official learning programme at home, indicating the learning activities they refer to, with their original titles; the credits will subsequently be included in the Diploma Supplement, with a note specifying the institution where they have been gained.”

Also, those students abroad on British Council Assistantships who qualify for Erasmus Grants are bound by the same regulations. Linda Buchan in the International Office tells us:

“The Erasmus Handbook for 2011-2012 actually includes a section specifically on Language Teaching Assistants, confirming that they are eligible to receive an Erasmus Grant (if they haven't had a placement one before), and that they are subject to exactly the same rules and reporting requirements as every other student, and that "the home institution must give full recognition for the placement period, wherever possible by using ECTS credits””.

It seems imperative, therefore, that the programme specifications listed above have their credit weightings raised to 600. This is a formalisation of current procedures to fit with the new student records system and with the reality of the duration of the study programmes as opposed to any real change in the way the programmes are delivered.

The School proposed that the programme would begin in session 2011-12.

Regulations: The Board noted that the proposed programme would be governed by the existing Undergraduate Regulations.

Programme Specification: The Group considered the programme specifications for these awards, and raised several points requiring to be addressed.

Points for discussion: The Group raised the following issues with regard the proposed changes to the programmes:

- *Section 1 – Programme Title* – The Group asked that the word ‘Single’ be removed from the title of the MA Honours Hispanic Studies programme.
- *Section 10 – Intended Learning Outcomes* – The group asked that the Intended Learning Outcomes for all languages be rewritten using the Senate Office format.
- *Section 11 – Assessment Methods* – The Group pointed out that there was no mention of assessment for the year abroad, and asked that details of this be entered in Section 11.
- *Section 11 – Assessment Methods* – In the *MA Honours Russian (Joint)* the group asked that the word ‘Italian’ be changed to ‘Russian’, under the sub-heading ‘Literature, Culture and Social Sciences elements’, third bullet point.
- *Section 11 – Assessment Methods* – The Group pointed out that there was no reference made to the Dissertation in the Assessment Methods for MA Honours German and MA Honours German (Joint). The Group asked that details of the Dissertation be entered in Section 11.

- *Section 14 – Programme Structure and Features* – The Group asked that Year 3, the Year Abroad be noted as being Level 2, and be worth 120 credits.
- *Section 14 – Programme Structure and Features* – The Group asked that the credits in Year 4, the Junior Honours year be changed to '(minimum of 360 credits including at least 60 credits at level 3)'.
- *Section 14 – Programme Structure and Features* – The Group asked that references to 'grade C' be changed to 'C3'.
- *Section 16 – Academic Session* – The Group pointed out that the Academic Session seemed to differ across the programmes, and asked that this be changed to 2011-12.

Conclusion:

The Group recommends the proposal to ASC Summer Powers, subject to the conditions identified above being met. The Group noted that the proposed changes to the MA Honours Russian (Joint), MA Honours Czech (Joint), MA Honours Polish (Joint) and MA Honours Slavonic and East European Studies were being applied only for students currently on the programmes, and were to be discontinued.

Update:

The requested amendments were made and the Convener of the Fast-track Programme Approval Group recommended the proposal to the ASC.