

**University of Glasgow**

**Academic Standards Committee – Tuesday 16 April 2013**

**Report from the Programme Approval Group for the College of  
Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences, held on 18 March 2013**

**Ms H Clegg, Senate Office**

**Present:**

Dr B Stewart (Convener), Dr K Brophy

**In attendance:**

Ms H Clegg, Professor C Edwards

**Apologies**

Ms L Stockwell, Ms J Ramsey, Dr K Renaud

**1. UNDERGRADUATE PROPOSAL**

**1.1 BSc (Hons) Neuroscience and another subject (New Programme)**

**Rationale:** The programme has been developed in response to a recommendation of the 2010 SHEFC subject review. It was suggested that a new combined Honours degree should be designed in order to benefit from the strong research links between the subject areas of Psychology and Neuroscience.

**Regulations:** The programme will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 4-8 (UG) and MVLS 18-23 (UG). It will also be added to the list of combined degree subjects on MVLS 22-23 (UG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 14, the Group queried whether the sentence “to progress to Year 2, a student must achieve at least grade D in all courses and have completed courses totalling at least 120 credits” was required given that this was half of a joint degree. A link should be added to direct the reader to the list of optional courses at level 2. Under the ‘assessment’ sub-heading, ‘%0%’ should be changed to ‘50%’.

**Conclusion:** The Group recommends the proposal to ASC, subject to the amendments identified above being made.

**2. POSTGRADUATE PROPOSALS**

**2.1 MRes Biomedical Sciences (Cancer Studies) (New Programme)**

**MRes Biomedical Sciences (Cardiovascular Studies) (New Programme)**

**Rationale:** The new programmes are being proposed as new variants of the existing MRes Biomedical Sciences. The particular specialisms have been developed in response to student demand in order to improve career prospects.

**Regulations:** The programmes will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 44-45 (PG). They will also be added to the list on MVLS 45 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specifications for these degrees, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 9, the programme aims appeared identical for both programmes. Given that there are different specialisms, the aims should demonstrate the distinction;
- In Section 10, the Intended Learning Outcomes also appeared identical for both programmes. These should be revised in order to indicate the differences. The use of 'demonstrate' should also be avoided. The phrase 'with critical reference to published research' is not part of the standard preamble and should be removed;
- In Section 11, it was not necessary to cross-refer assessment methods to intended learning outcomes, as this led to duplication within the list;
- In Section 14, the weightings should be removed from the table and replaced with an indication of the semester in which each course should be studied. A link to the Life Sciences optional courses should be provided. It was not clear whether students leaving with a Postgraduate Diploma would receive the Diploma with the named specialism. It should also be specified whether or not a Postgraduate Certificate exit is available.

**Conclusion: The Group recommends the proposals to ASC, subject to the amendments identified above being made.**

## **2.2 MRes Biomedical Sciences (Veterinary Science) (New Programme)**

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed as a new variant of the existing MRes Biomedical Sciences. The particular specialism has been developed in conjunction with the Universiti Putra Malaysia.

**Regulations:** The programmes will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 44-45 (PG). They will also be added to the list on MVLS 45 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 10, many of the Intended Learning Outcomes did not appear specific to the programme. The phrase 'with critical reference to published research' is not part of the standard preamble and should be removed;
- In Section 11, it was not necessary to cross-refer assessment methods to intended learning outcomes, as this led to duplication within the list;
- In Section 14, the weightings should be removed from the table and replaced with an indication of the semester in which each course should be studied. A link to the Life Sciences optional courses should be provided. It was not clear whether students leaving with a Postgraduate Diploma would receive the Diploma with the named specialism. The information on reassessment should be removed as a link is later given to the Calendar regulations.

The Group noted that consultation with the External Academic was described as 'still in progress' on the Proposal Support document. This consultation should have been

considered by the College in its deliberations. Approval cannot be granted until the consultation is completed and the feedback considered.

**Conclusion: At present, the Group cannot recommend approval to ASC. Approval will be recommended when the consultation has been completed and considered, and the amendments identified above have been made.**

### 2.3 MRes Ecology & Environmental Biology (New Programme)

**MRes Ecology & Environmental Biology (Biodiversity) (New Programme)**

**MRes Ecology & Environmental Biology (Evolution & Systematics) (New Programme)**

**MRes Ecology & Environmental Biology (Marine & Freshwater) (New Programme)**

**Rationale:** The new programmes are being proposed in order to consolidate three existing named programmes into one generic programme with three specialisms.

**Regulations:** The programmes will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 45 (PG). They will also be added to the list on MVLS 44-45 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specifications for these degrees, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 9, use of 'you' and 'your' should be avoided;
- In Section 10, the phrase 'with critical reference to published research' is not part of the standard preamble and should be removed;
- In Section 11, it was not necessary to cross-refer assessment methods to intended learning outcomes, as this led to duplication within the list. The Group noted there were only three types of assessment and considered this range could be expanded. The information after the bullet points should be deleted or moved to Section 14;
- In Section 14, the information should be rearranged to follow chronological order. Percentage weightings should be removed. The course information would be better presented in tabular form. And should show the semester in which each course should be studied. It was not clear whether students leaving with a Postgraduate Diploma would receive the Diploma with the named specialism. It should also be specified whether or not a Postgraduate Certificate exit is available. Part (d) of the regulations should be deleted.

**Conclusion: The Group recommends the proposals to ASC, subject to the amendments identified above being made.**

### 2.4 MSc Clinical Sciences with specialisation (New Programme)

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed in order to consolidate three existing programmes into one generic programme with three specialisms. The Group noted that titles, programme codes and specifications were required for the specialisms as well as the generic programme.

**Regulations:** The programme (including the three specialisations) will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 39-42 (PG). They will also be added to the list on MVLS 41-42 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- As noted above, each of the three specialisms require their own title, programme code and programme specification;
- In Section 8, the entry requirements needed clarification – it was not clear whether the ‘1 year post registration experience in reproductive medicine’ was in addition to the ‘three years’ relevant experience’. The use of ‘you’ and ‘your’ should be avoided;
- In Section 9, no programme aims were apparent, as the bulleted list indicated the available specialisms. The statement that ‘the content of the programme is not primarily aimed at Home or EU students’ should be moved to Section 8;
- In Section 10, the phrase ‘with critical reference to published research’ is not part of the standard preamble and should be removed. The final point under ‘knowledge and understanding’ was rather long and should be separated out into several outcomes and moved into ‘transferable skills’. The penultimate point under ‘transferable skills’ did not fit grammatically with the preamble and should be revised
- In Section 11, only the assessment methods should be listed, without cross-referencing to particular specialisms;
- In Section 12, only a list was required. Information on formative assessment (such as ‘practice examinations’) should be moved to Section 11;
- In Section 14, part (d) of the regulations should be deleted;
- In Section 15, the first two paragraphs should be deleted.

The Group had been provided with only the generic programme specification but required to see the specifications for the specialisms in order to ensure these were sufficiently distinct. Therefore approval could not be recommended until these specifications had been provided.

**Conclusion:** At present, the Group cannot recommend approval to ASC. The proposal will be reconsidered when the programme specifications for the three specialisms have been provided and the amendments identified above have been made and incorporated into the programme specifications for the specialisms.

## **2.5 MSc Medical Physics (New Programme)**

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed in order to merge two existing programmes (MSc Clinical Physics and MSc Clinical Radiation Physics) into one programme. The programme is being reduced in length from two years to one year.

**Regulations:** The programme will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 39-42 (PG). It will also be added to the list on MVLS 41-42 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 7, the information should be removed. Only the accrediting body name should appear in this field, once accreditation has been confirmed;
- In Section 8, the standard prospectus link should be included;
- In Section 9, no programme aims were evident and therefore this section should be revised. The final sentence should be removed;
- In Section 10, the information was not presented in the usual format and with the standard headings and preambles. It should be rewritten;

- In Section 11, more information on the types of coursework should be provided;
- In Section 12, it was not necessary to cross-refer learning and teaching approaches to intended learning outcomes. Information on workbooks should be moved to Section 11
- In Section 14, the use of 'modules' should be avoided. Course codes should be used for all courses or for none. Semester information on the first option should be included and the Assessment column should be deleted. The dissertation should be added to the table as a course rather than appearing as text following the table. Part (d) of the regulations should be deleted;
- In Section 15, the first paragraph should be deleted.

**Conclusion: The Group recommends the proposal to ASC, subject to the amendments identified above being made.**

## 2.6 MSc (MedSci) Diabetes (New Programme)

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed in response to demand for a taught postgraduate programme in this area.

**Regulations:** The programme will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 39-42 (PG). It will also be added to the list on MVLS 41-42 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

### ***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 8, the final sentence should be removed;
- In Section 9, the word 'new' should be removed from the first sentence;
- In Section 10, each preamble should read 'by the end of this programme...' rather than including the programme title. The use of 'demonstrate' should be avoided. The final point should be numbered;
- In Section 11, only a list of the assessment methods was required. Each course specification would provide the detailed assessment pattern;
- In Section 12, the use of 'you' should be avoided. Quotation marks should be deleted from 'critical' in the final sentence;
- In Section 14, the paragraph starting "The programme utilises a number of shared courses" should be deleted. Part (d) of the regulations should be deleted;
- In Section 15, "we have" should be avoided. The second bullet point under 'further information about the programme' should be moved to Section 14 or deleted.

**Conclusion: The Group recommends the proposal to ASC, subject to the amendments identified above being made.**

## 2.7 MSc Bioinformatics, Polyomics & Systems Biology (New Programme)

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed as a restructuring of the existing MRes Bioinformatics programme, with the current courses being largely replaced by a mix of existing and newly-created courses.

**Regulations:** The programme will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 39-42 (PG). It will also be added to the list on MVLS 41-42 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 10, there was a rather long preamble which should be replaced by the standard preamble. The information could be separated out into several ILOs;
- In Section 11, a list of the assessment methods used should be included. In Section 10, a 'computer based report' was mentioned but this does not appear in Section 11;
- In Section 12, a list of the learning and teaching approaches used should be included. The second paragraph should be summarised as 'field trip' or similar;
- In Section 14, the information could be better presented in tabular form. Each course required only its title, credits and the semester in which it should be studied. Reference to 'new' courses should be avoided and there was no need for the code, level or SCQF level;
- In Section 15, the second, fourth and fifth paragraphs should be deleted. Some of the information might be usefully moved to Section 9 as introductory text.

The Group found the programme aims to be of a particularly high standard and would wish to offer these to other proposers as an exemplar.

**Conclusion: The Group recommends the proposal to ASC, subject to the amendments identified above being made.**

## **2.8 MSc Sport and Exercise Science & Medicine (New Programme)**

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed as a merger of two existing programmes (MSc Sport and Exercise Science and MSc Sport and Exercise Medicine).

**Regulations:** The programme will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 39-42 (PG). It will also be added to the list on MVLS 41-42 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

- In Section 8, a link to the prospectus should be provided;
- In Section 9, the bulleted points did not represent programme aims and should be rewritten;
- In Section 10, many of the Intended Learning Outcomes did not relate specifically to the programme;
- In Section 11, only a list of the assessment methods used should be provided. Each course specification would provide the detailed assessment pattern. However, some of the courses looked rather lightly assessed and some of the weightings appeared unbalanced;
- In Section 14, it was not clear what was represented by X, Y and Z. It was also not clear whether the open bullets represented course titles. The information would be better presented in tabular form showing course titles, credits, whether compulsory or optional, and the semester in which each should be taught. Information on the part-time structure should also be included. Part (d) of the regulation should be deleted.

Although it was evident from a PIP search that the required consultations had been completed, this was not reflected in the Proposal Support document. The consultations needed to be detailed in the document.

**Conclusion: At present, the Group cannot recommend the proposal to ASC, given the light assessment. Further information on how the assessment is justified is required before the proposal can be approved.**

## **2.9 MSc Translational Medical Sciences with specialisation (Major Change)**

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed in order to consolidate three existing programmes into one generic programme with four specialisms. The Group noted that titles, programme codes and specifications were required for the specialisms as well as the generic programme.

**Regulations:** The programme (including the four specialisations) will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 39-42 (PG). They will also be added to the list on MVLS 41-42 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

### ***Points for discussion:***

- As noted above, each of the four specialisms require their own title, programme code and programme specification;
- In Section 8, a link to the prospectus should be provided;
- In Section 9, there was little information on programme aims. The text in the second paragraph should be deleted with the exception of the final sentence. The aims should be specific to the particular programme in the programme specifications produced for each specialism;
- In Section 10, the first bullet point should be reworded “critically evaluate the available literature and select...”. The preamble under the ‘knowledge and understanding’ heading should be replaced with the standard preamble. Use of ‘understand’ should be avoided. There is some duplication which should be consolidated. For each of the specialisms the ILOs should reflect the specific programme;
- In Section 11, only a list of the assessment methods in use should be applied. These should not be tied to a particular specialism but each of the specialisms’ programme specifications should detail only the methods used in that programme;
- In Section 12, only a list of the learning and teaching approaches used should be provided;
- In Section 14, the assessment information should be removed as this will appear in the individual course specifications. The paragraph following the table should be deleted. The regulation information should be reverted to the standard text;
- In Section 15, the first paragraph should be moved to Section 9. The second, third and fourth paragraphs should be deleted.

The Group had been provided with only the generic programme specification but required to see the specifications for the specialisms in order to ensure these were sufficiently distinct. Therefore approval could not be recommended until these specifications had been provided.

**Conclusion: At present, the Group cannot recommend approval to ASC. The proposal will be reconsidered when the programme specifications for the four specialisms have been provided and the amendments identified above have**

been made and incorporated into the programme specifications for the specialisms.

### 2.10 MSc (MedSci) Advanced Practice in Health Care (with Specialisms) (New Programme)

**Rationale:** The new programme is being proposed in order to consolidate three existing programmes into one generic programme with a range of specialisms. The Group noted that titles, programme codes and specifications were required for the specialisms as well as the generic programme.

**Regulations:** The programme (including the specialisations) will be governed by the regulations set out in the University Calendar at MVLS 39-42 (PG). They will also be added to the list on MVLS 41-42 (PG).

**Programme Specification:** The Group considered the Programme Specification for this degree, and raised the following points requiring to be addressed:

***Points for discussion:***

The Group was unable to clearly see what was being proposed as the programme appeared to offer a number of specialisms but also sub-specialisms. It was not possible to consider all of these on one programme specification. The College is asked to resubmit the proposal with one title, programme code and distinct programme specification for each award with which a student could graduate (other than exit awards).

**Conclusion:** At present, the Group cannot recommend approval to ASC. The proposal will be reconsidered when the programme specifications for all available award have been provided.

### 3. SPOT CHECKING OF PROPOSALS

Under the current process, Programme Approval Groups examine only the programme specification and support document for programme proposals. However, PAGs reserve the right to ask for full documentation if desired. It was recommended in the Deloitte Internal Audit report that occasional 'spot checks' be undertaken on proposal documentation.

In line with this recommendation, the Clerk reported a sample of proposals had been selected for spot-checking, and that the full documentation for the proposal shown below had been examined and found to be in order:

- MRes Ecology & Environmental Biology (with Specialisms)

All documentation was found to be in order.