University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 14 November 2014

Periodic Subject Review: Responses to Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5 and 13 arising from the Review of Philosophy Wednesday 12 & Thursday 13 March 2014

Mr Ryan Reed, Clerk to the Review Panel

Recommendation 1

The Panel **recommends** that the Subject, as a matter of urgency and alongside the recommendation at 3.1.5, develop formalised courses, approved through PIP, which have appropriate ILOs at SCQF level 11 and appropriate assessment to form part of the MLitt Conversion programme. Whilst it is acceptable for MLitt students to share teaching with Honours students they must be enrolled on courses at the appropriate level and with an appropriate credit value to ensure that the requirements for the award of MLitt are met. *[Paragraph 4.1.2]*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

For information: **Assistant Director, Senate Office, Convener of College Board of Studies, Dean of Graduate Studies .**

Response: **Head of Subject**

Course proposals for MLitt (conversion) courses corresponding to every Philosophy Honours course running this year were submitted in time for the first meeting of the College Higher Degrees Committee. Some changes have been requested by the committee but once approval is obtained it will be possible to enrol this year's cohort on the new courses.

Recommendation 2

The Panel **recommends** that alongside a curriculum review the Subject ensure all programmes and course specifications are current and complete, and that all courses are detailed in full through the Programme Information Process (PIP) and are therefore included in the course catalogue. No programme specifications were available online for any of the current taught postgraduate programmes. Programmes were, however, showing in MyCampus and appearing on student transcripts perhaps indicating that the official approval process had not been followed correctly. The Panel **recommends** that the Academic Standards Committee explore whether any action is required to ensure that all course and programme specifications are complete and that all courses and programmes are subject to the proper approval processes. *[Paragraph 4.1.3]*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject, Senate Office, Convener of ASC, Clerk of ASC**

For information: **Convener of College Board of Studies, Dean of Graduate Studies**

Response: Head of Subject

As part of the curriculum review, the programme specifications for both PGT courses will be revised and submitted for approval by the Higher Degrees Committee later this year.

Response: Senate Office/Convener of ASC/Clerk of ASC

The review sub-group hasn't yet met as we are still in the preparation stage (gathering info on practice elsewhere, etc). A major review of the approval processes is underway and it will attend to these points in due course.

Recommendation 4

The Panel **recommends** that the Subject undertake (as a matter of urgency with regard to the MLitt Conversion) a comprehensive review of all ILOs at programme and course level to ensure that:

- they are consistent with both programme and course level aims;

- ILOs are consistent with University guidance on ILO structure, language and subsequently with the principle of constructive alignment;

- ILOs are appropriate to the intended level of study and the corresponding SCQF Level.

This review of ILOs should be undertaken as part of a wider curriculum review, which is addressed separately in a later recommendation at 3.5.11. *[Paragraph 3.1.5]*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

For information: **Academic Development Unit**

Response: **Head of Subject**

As described in the response to recommendation 1, new courses for the MLitt (conversion) are currently going through the approval process. This includes formulating ILOs appropriate for the degree.

Recommendation 5

The Panel **recommends** that the Subject review the programme aims of the MLitt Philosophy (General) and MLitt Philosophy (Conversion) programmes to ensure that these are clearly explained and available. It was suggested by the Panel that some of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) from the MLitt programmes may be better suited as programme *aims. [Paragraph 2.1.3]*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

For information: **Academic Development Unit**

Response: **Head of Subject**

As described in the response to recommendation 2, the programme specifications for both PGT degrees are currently being considered by the subject, and revised versions will be submitted for approval later this year.

Recommendation 13

The Panel **recommends** that the Subject, together with the School of Humanities and the College of Arts, consider what options are available to secure an adequate, consistent and dedicated budget for the provision of Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), conducts a risk assessment relating to the continued availability of GTAs and, if necessary, put in place sufficient mechanisms to minimise the risk of over-reliance upon GTAs. In undertaking this the

Subject is encouraged to reflect on the College of Arts policy on the role of GTAs. *[Paragraph 3.9.10]*

For the attention of: **Head of College**

For information: **Head of Subject, Head of School**

Response: **Head of College**

The GTA budget formula has been in place since 2010 but transitional arrangements were put in place to deal with large numbers in 2013, due to a Home/EU overshoot. We would expect to do this in exceptional years. In addition, the School of Humanities received four extra staff due to heavy recruitment. Therefore increased resourcing followed increased income: Schools are incentivised in R & T in accordance with the University's emerging strategic priorities. Both are done according to agreed formulae.

As regards the GTA formula, this can be changed at any time by CMG on the initiative of Heads of School. There are clear procedures which will allow Heads of School to bring this issue to the College Management Group. This is therefore an issue for discussion between the Subject and the School and this recommendation should be addressed by them in the first instance.