

## University of Glasgow

## Academic Standards Committee – Friday 2 October 2015

**Periodic Subject Review: Updated Response to Recommendation 4  
Arising from the Report of the Review of the Centre for Open  
Studies held on 11 and 12 March 2013***Recommendation 4*

The Review Panel considers the currently allocated Art Room to be unfit for purpose due to its size and its lack of accessibility for students with limited mobility. The Panel **recommends** that accommodation of suitable size and accessibility be identified and refitted in consultation with the Centre within the next six months. [Paragraph 4.6.5 and 4.8.1]

**Action: Director, Centre for Open Studies**  
**For information: Head of College of Social Sciences,**  
**Director of Estates & Buildings**

***Initial Response:***

This matter was discussed with Estates and Buildings Colleagues at the meeting on 6 November 2014. Suitable accommodation has not yet been identified and this issue is the subject of ongoing discussions between the Centre and Estates & Buildings.

***Updated Response – April 2015:***

This issue is the subject of ongoing discussions between the Centre and Estates & Buildings. The most recent statement from Estates & Buildings indicates that a survey of access to the Art Room has been undertaken, the costs of making reasonable adjustments to improve access to the room for students with limited mobility will be identified, and the availability of a budget to make these adjustments will be subject to further review. As yet no timescale for this process has been identified and I am awaiting further information from Estates & Buildings.

***Updated Response – October 2015***

Estates & Buildings prepared costs for providing a platform lift at the lower mezzanine staircase and alterations to the corridor fire doors to make them automatic. However, this would still only provide access for smaller wheelchairs, as the proposed platform lift and existing mezzanine area lift could not accommodate larger wheelchairs. As an alternative solution Estates & Buildings are now looking at costs associated with swapping the art room (559) with one of the School of Education administrative offices (556), which is already on the same level as the fully accessible main entrance lift. However, the feasibility and costs for this option would have to be discussed and agreed with the School of Education who currently own rooms 556 and 559. As yet no timescale has been identified and I am awaiting further information from Estates & Buildings.

#### *Recommendation 5*

While recognising the challenges of frequent changes in staffing at senior levels at the Centre, the Review Panel **recommends** that the Centre develop a business plan and development strategy incorporating a clearly articulated vision for the future of the Centre. A draft plan should be circulated to staff for consultation and a final version be sent to the Secretary to Court, within six months of the publication of this report. [Paragraph 4.7.3]

**[Action: Director, Centre for Open Studies, Secretary to Court  
For information: Deputy Secretary to Court]**

#### **Response:**

A draft plan was produced by the previous Director of Centre for Open Studies in August 2013, however it is not clear if this document got beyond the initial consultation stage. Subsequently a review of the Centre has been undertaken by the new Director (appointed September 2014), and a revised strategy for the Centre will be fully implemented by academic year 2015-16.

#### **Updated Response: October 2015**

The implementation of the new strategy for the Centre began in June 2015 following a consultation process with Court, Senate, SMG and CoS staff. The proposal will be fully implemented by the end of October 2015. The strategy involves a reduction in staff costs and an increase in income such that the Centre will be in a break even position by 2019/20.

#### *Recommendation 6*

The Review Panel **recommends** that consideration be given to the enrolment process in MyCampus for the Centre's students to ensure it is more fitted to the nature of the courses offered and the needs of the students/learners, and that staff at the Centre receive adequate support and training in the use and development of MyCampus to accommodate the needs of the Centre as soon as possible after the publication of this report. [Paragraph 4.5.7]

**[Action: MyCampus Team and key staff at the Centre]**

#### **Response:**

Although there have been developments to MyCampus which have helped to make processes more efficient, for example the system can now process refunds and concessions without leaving outstanding balances on student accounts, it is clear that MyCampus cannot be developed to support the enrolment needs of the Centre. A business case to develop an online enrolment system within MyCampus was submitted to Student Lifecycle Support and Development in June 2014, however the outcome of this was that such a development would be very expensive, and there is insufficient resource to support it. As an alternative the Centre is now exploring the possibility of purchasing an off-the-shelf online enrolment system and, subject to gaining agreement regarding the acceptance of online payment, will implement such a system before the start of the 2015/16 academic year. It is understood that MyCampus will continue to hold student records information for the Centre, and such information will be automatically uploaded to MyCampus from the enrolment system, or inputted manually if this is not possible.

#### **Updated Response (Centre) – October 2015**

The Centre has now finalised the procurement process for an online booking and payment system, and signed a contract with accessplanit in August 2015. Timescales have slipped and the system was not in place for the recruitment period leading up to 2015/16. However, the project implementation team is now in place (including representation from the

Hunterian) and the new system will gradually take over from MyCampus as the main booking and payment mechanism for the Centre during the 2015/16 academic year. The system will be fully implemented by 2016/17.

**Updated Response (MyCampus Team) – October 2015**

To note that the SLSD team have not been involved in the procurement of an online booking system for Open Studies but have been kept informed by Open Studies of the project progress.

*Recommendation 7*

The Review Panel **recommends** the constitution of a Strategy Advisory Group at the Centre, upon publication of this report, in order to assist with development strategy and future planning as well as advising on quality enhancement and assurance. [Paragraph 6.4]

**[Action: Director, Centre for Open Studies]**

**Response:**

There was an initial meeting of this group in August 2013, however due to the departure of the previous Director this group has fallen into abeyance. The new Director is currently considering the optimal membership for this group, and it will be reconstituted in 2015.

**Updated Response – October 2015:**

Timescales for this have slipped due to the need to implement the organisational change proposal for the Centre; however this recommendation will be taken forward during 2015/16.

*Recommendation 15*

The Review Panel **recommends** that additional accommodation for GTAs be sought in order to accommodate the high number of staff employed in this capacity. The provision of additional accommodation should not reduce existing accommodation for key staff at the Centre. [Paragraph 4.8.2]

**[Action: Director, Centre for Open Studies]**

**For information: Head of School of Education, Head of College of Social Sciences**

**Response:**

The Centre is unable to provide additional accommodation for part-time tutors within existing resources. However, a working group has now been established to consider ways in which the existing tutor base can be used more effectively and space maximised.

**Updated Response – October 2015:**

The tutor base has been cleared of extraneous material (old IT equipment, filing cabinets etc.), and now provides a more conducive working environment for part-time tutors.

*Recommendation 17*

The Review Panel **recommends** that consideration be given by the University Court, to relocating the Centre for Open Studies on the main campus of the University as part of the campus re-development plans associated with the acquisition of the Western Infirmary site. Such a re-location would place the Centre more centrally, allowing it to be a more visible sign of the University's engagement with the wider community. [Paragraph 4.8.3]

**[Action: Secretary to Court]**

***Response:***

The Centre will be a key partner in the development and delivery of a public education programme to support the relocation of The Hunterian to Kelvin Hall. The Centre is very keen to relocate to Kelvin Hall as soon as space is available. Indications are that this is likely to be during the early part of phase two of the project.

***Updated Response – October 2015:***

Recommendation 17 is that Court consider relocating Open Studies to the main campus as part of the Campus Estates Strategy.

I would very much like to have Open Studies relocated, and will keep that on the agenda. It is not something on which there will be a conclusion for some time to come.