

**University of Glasgow**

**Academic Standards Committee – Friday 15 April 2016**

**Periodic Subject Review: Report of the Review of Academic  
Development Unit**

**Mrs Catherine H Omand, Clerk to the Review Panel**

**Review Panel:**

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| Professor John Briggs | Clerk of Senate, Convener  |
| Ms Stella Heath       | Director of the Centre for Open Studies, External Subject Specialist                         |
| Professor Karen Lury  | Professor of Film & Television Studies, Senate Assessor on Court                             |
| Dr Rachel Scudamore   | Teaching and Learning Directorate, The University of Nottingham, External Subject Specialist |
| Mrs Catherine Omand   | Senate Office, Clerk to the Panel  |

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Academic Development Unit (which will be referred to as the ADU in the Report) provides support for learning, teaching and assessment across the University, including delivery of credit and non-credit bearing professional development programmes. This review refers to the two current credit bearing programmes: the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) and the MEd in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (online).
- 1.2 This is the first time the ADU has been reviewed as part of the Periodic Subject Review process. Provision of credit-bearing programmes commenced in 2002-03 with the introduction of the New Lecturer and Teacher Programme (NLTP). This was renamed in 2008 as the PGCAP.
- 1.3 The MEd (Academic Practice) was taught from 2005-2009. This was replaced by the MEd in Professional Practice in Higher Education which ran from 2009-2012 and has since been replaced by the MEd Learning in Teaching in HE. This is an online distance learning programme.
- 1.4 The ADU has also offered an online PG Cert in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PGCLTHE) since 2011-12.
- 1.5 The MEd in Learning and Teaching in HE comprises the online PG Cert in Learning & Teaching in HE as the initial 60 credits (although PGCAP participants may also enter the programme), followed by a PG Diploma (PGDip) and then a dissertation year.

**2. Background information**

- 2.1 The ADU is one of four units of the Learning & Teaching Centre. The other three are: the Student Learning Service (SLS), the Learning Technology Unit (LTU) and the Media Production Unit, all are supported by the Administration Unit.
- 2.2 There are five full-time academic members of staff in the ADU: three University Teachers, one Senior Lecturer and one Senior University Teacher. The ADU is

currently in the process of recruiting a sixth member of staff. All staff are research or scholarship active.

2.3 From 2002-03, the PGCAP had been a compulsory probationary requirement for all early career academic staff. However, following a review undertaken in 2014, staff on Research and Teaching contracts are now only required to complete the first 40 credits of the programme (Teaching and Supervision courses (TSC)). Most Teaching, Learning and Scholarship staff are still required to complete all 60 credits

2.4 Both the PGCAP and TSC are accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA).

2.5 Other activities include:

- Statutory Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) three-hour training sessions (normally 350-400 GTAs per year). GTAs are also invited to a series of workshops called 'Developing as a Teacher' in which normally 30-40 participate annually.
- Contributing to the LTC Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshop series
- The University's HEA-accredited CPD framework and recognition scheme: Recognising Excellence in Teaching (RET).
- Participation in the Periodic Subject Review process: providing workshops for staff writing the Self Evaluation Reports (SERs); contributing to support workshops for student panel members; providing commentary on draft SERs and acting as members of the Review Panels.
- Providing support to Colleges, including working with Deans (Learning & Teaching).

2.6 The Review Panel met with: Dr Jane MacKenzie, Head of the ADU; all staff within the ADU; six participants<sup>1</sup> on the PGCAP; two participants on the MEd (one of the MEd participants was based at the University of Umeå, in Sweden and had been skyped into the meeting); three early career/probationary members of staff; Dr Matthew Williamson, the Director of the Learning and Teaching Centre and; Dr Dorothy Welch, Deputy Secretary of Court.

### **3. Context and Strategy**

#### **3.1 Context and Vision**

3.1.1 The ADU provides a broad range of activity and support. Staff undertake research and scholarship which they consider to be important for their credibility and the continuing quality and enhancement of the credit-bearing provision.

3.1.2 It was evident to the Panel that the ADU provided a clear link to the University's Learning & Teaching Strategy, and the ADU was in a strong position to contribute to the Strategy, one of its main objectives being the promotion and recognition of the value of teaching. The ADU supports teachers in enhancing learning and teaching, and also manages the 'Recognising Excellence in Teaching' scheme. In discussion with the Head of Unit, it was explained that the revised PGCAP had been designed to enable staff to become competent teachers with a longer term view of developing their skills and understanding rather than simply being 'trained'. The PGCAP programme provided a critical analysis of practice which the MEd took further.

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<sup>1</sup> Students are referred to as participants by the ADU and thus will be referred to as such throughout the Report

- 3.1.3 The Panel recognised the skill set being developed by the ADU, but queried whether it took advantage of qualified staff returning to respective subject areas by maintaining contact with PGCAP/MEd alumni, ensuring that PGCAP/MEd work was embedded in School-based activity and that good practice was disseminated. Dr MacKenzie highlighted that many staff who undertook the programme did continue to liaise with the Unit. The Panel considered there was a significant opportunity for the skill set being developed by the Unit to be more integrated into School processes, thereby supporting the participants on the PGCAP as well as expanding the influence of the Unit. The Panel proposed that it would be beneficial to develop a more formal partnership with Schools. The Panel therefore **recommends** that the Unit consult with Deans of Learning & Teaching regarding the possibility of Schools taking more responsibility for supporting staff locally, establishing more formal partnerships with the ADU and to discuss how this might work in practice. The Panel suggests that part of this might involve exploring the possible establishment of School PGCAP mentors, where staff who had already undertaken the PGCAP act as mentors for new staff members.
- 3.1.4 Dr MacKenzie advised that one of the activities undertaken by the ADU was to support Colleges and that there was a member of ADU staff assigned to each College. The Unit often provided support through bespoke workshops, e.g. when the Adam Smith Business School redesigned its Business Management programme, the Unit provided a workshop in programme design. The Panel welcomed such support but speculated as to whether there were further opportunities for the ADU if it had a more formal working relationship with Colleges. As part of fostering that partnership, the Unit could consider giving presentations to College [and Schools], highlighting developments and showcasing examples of good practice. The Head of Unit confirmed that the Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre was a member of the University's Learning & Teaching Committee (LTC). At the meeting with the ADU staff, the Panel was further advised that only one member of ADU staff sat on a College Learning & Teaching Committee (Amanda Sykes is a member of MVLS's committee). In regard to the other Colleges, the College LTC Conveners had not considered it to be necessary or desirable to have ADU staff to attend LTCs regularly, and therefore it had been agreed that ADU staff would be invited only for specific items. The Review Panel **recommends** that ADU staff should be full members of all College Learning and Teaching Committees; that Colleges should engage on a formal and more regular basis with the ADU and that the Unit should be able to advise the College on learning and teaching matters. The Panel further **recommends** that the Unit develops a more formalised process of engagement with Learning and Teaching practitioners across the University. The means by which this is to be achieved should be discussed further with the Deans of Learning & Teaching, as highlighted at 3.1.3.
- 3.1.5 The External Subject Specialist queried what role the Unit would play if the proposed Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) were to be introduced in Scotland. This would clearly have implications for the role of the Unit. The Head of Unit confirmed that the University and the ADU would be well placed if the TEF was introduced in Scotland, since the University's strategy focused on the provision of high quality, excellent teaching.

## 3.2 Strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching

- 3.2.1 The numerous re-designs of the two credit-bearing programmes were mainly in response to changing institutional and sectoral priorities. The Self-Evaluation Report highlighted that this had had a significant impact on workload and the ability to effectively reflect on and evaluate the ADU's programmes of study. The Panel **recommends** that the ADU re-evaluates its priorities and establishes a long-term vision of the role of the ADU within the University.
- 3.2.2 The Unit undertakes a range of activities in addition to the delivery of its credit-bearing programmes, and the Panel asked the Head of ADU whether this placed additional pressure on the Unit, impinging on its time and resources. The Panel anticipated that if more formalised structures were in place, as recommended under 3.1.3, 3.1.4 and 4.3.2, this would provide the Unit an opportunity to plan and manage their provision more effectively.

## 4. Enhancing the Student Experience

### 4.1 Admissions, Retention and Success

- 4.1.1 The SER highlighted that, although there was a formal admissions process (page 9, 3.1.2) to both the PGCAP and the MEd programmes, however, for the PGCAP, new staff have to take responsibility for self-registration onto the programme and, at this point, have to declare their expected teaching load (as the programme assessments and experiential learning approach require all participants to be teaching in HE). While some information is received from HR about the recruitment of new academic staff, this was far from complete. This results in some staff being unaware that they had to apply to the programme themselves, only to be advised later that they should have done so; Schools not being fully aware of which staff were undertaking the programme and therefore failing to put in place appropriate mentoring arrangements, and the ADU not being able to estimate anticipated numbers per session, thereby hindering planning and management of the programmes. The Review Panel **recommends** that Human Resources establish a formal process that automatically registers relevant new employees to the University on the PGCAP at commencement of appointment, and that it informs the ADU and the relevant School of all new registrations.
- 4.1.2 As the PGCAP is mandatory, the number of participants registering for the programme vary, in line with University recruitment of academic staff. When the number of academic staff recruited by the University drops, places are allocated to those not on probation (senior academics, research staff who teach etc.). The SER stated that the maximum capacity was 18-20 participants on each of four distinct routes, i.e. 72-80 participants in total each year. (page 7, 3.1.1). In recent years, the Unit has been at capacity and therefore applicants who are not contractually required to complete the PGCAP are placed on a waiting list. The view of the Panel was that capacity was based on the teaching space available within Southpark House and the preference for having peer group meetings, comprising of 6 participants at a time. Peer group tutors act as advisors of studies to each peer group and: enable greater integration of participants into the programme through enhanced personalisation; provide support for assessment in a way that was less time consuming than offering one-to-one support. The Panel, although acknowledging the preference to teach in local space, **recommends** that consideration be given to using alternative, larger University accommodation to allow for an increase in participation rates and the potential to rationalise delivery of the programme. The Panel recognises the disadvantages of having

to use Central Room Bookings but, on balance, this should be considered as it would allow for larger scale teaching to be undertaken, which would not only reduce workload issues but would extend capacity to allow other staff to undertake the programme.

- 4.1.3 The Panel noted the high success rates which reflected the quality of provision.
- 4.1.4 The SER highlighted that both progression from the PGCAP to the MEd and external admission to the MEd was low (page 9, 3.14 and 3.16). At the meeting with probationary staff, it was proposed that the associated fee with the MEd may be a deterrent, particularly for University staff. Although the Panel recognised the value of the MEd, the Panel **recommends** that the ADU considers the balance of workload and effort required to continue to offer the MEd and whether there is potential for linkage with the School of Education to provide the MEd as joint provision.
- 4.1.5 At the meeting with staff, the Panel sought verification on the progression rates as identified in Table 3, page 8 of the SER, as to why 49 participants were yet to complete at the end of Session 2014-15. It was confirmed that this was due to the four different entry dates; hence participants completed at different times of the year. Referring to the same Table, it was acknowledged that withdrawals from the programme were due to participants leaving the University.

## 4.2 Equality and Diversity

The Panel **commends** the ADU for the fact that all staff within the Unit had completed University equality and diversity training. It was noted in the SER (page 10, 3.2.1 & 3.2.2) that the ADU had representation on the Disability Equality Group and the Religion & Belief Equality Group. Representation meant that the ADU could both provide information to these groups as well as report back advice and good practice to inform teaching practice. Equality and diversity issues were also brought to the attention of participants and the programmes included consideration of how equality and diversity issues might be considered in relation to the curriculum and classroom practice. One session in the “Enhancing Student Learning” course incorporated a section on equality and diversity and the Single Equality Act. In relation to assessment, the assessment and feedback session in the PGCAP examined diversity of content and questions in assessment, as well as what were considered reasonable adjustments in relation to disability.

## 4.3 Supporting Students in their Learning

- 4.3.1 All of the PGCAP and MEd participants commented on the high level of support received from the staff at the ADU. Staff were approachable and helpful. The Review Panel **commends** the clear commitment of the ADU in providing a supportive environment, as well as providing a high level of support to participants. The level of support given at School level was discussed at the meeting with the PGCAP participants who informed the Panel that there was no local School support; two of the participants commented that they had been advised that participation in the programme was a ‘tick box’ exercise that had to be undertaken. The Review Panel expressed concern regarding this lack of School engagement and apparent lack of awareness as to what the aim of the PGCAP was and what the benefits were to the School; improved teaching and assessment practices leading to an improved student experience, and consequently improved School performance as evidenced by student surveys. Furthermore, the Panel considered the ADU to be a hard working unit that was isolated from the range of learning and teaching developments taking place across the campus, from MOOCs to the development of the new L&T hub. Therefore, in addition to the recommendations made under 3.1.3 and 3.1.4, the Panel **recommends** more formal links are developed between the ADU and

Schools, to encourage a community of learning and teaching practitioners, maximising PGCAP and MEd alumni contacts.

- 4.3.2 The Panel discussed with the PGCAP participants whether or not participation on the programme was incorporated into School workload models. It was confirmed that participation was not universally included and that, in general, the benefits of undertaking the PGCAP were not recognised. The Panel **recommends** bringing to the attention of the Deans (Learning & Teaching) that consideration be given to including participation on the PGCAP as part of School workload models. In addition, recognition of teaching excellence should commence at the beginning of staff careers with progression charted throughout career development. Excellent teaching should be reviewed as part of P&DR.

#### 4.4 Student Engagement

- 4.4.1 The compulsory nature of the PGCAP had previously limited the level of engagement for some participants. However, from the SER (page 12, 3.4.4) and at the meeting with the Head of Unit, it was confirmed that, although there were still pockets of resistance, this tended to be on an individual basis and appeared to be decreasing. The Head of Unit considered the course redesign had resulted in a much better programme. At the meeting with the six PGCAP participants, only one had indicated that he would not have undertaken the programme if it had not been compulsory. However, it transpired that this participant had undertaken a similar course at a previous institution.
- 4.4.2 Only one of the PGCAP participants had questioned the benefits of the class sessions, finding examples from other subject areas less useful and stating that some of the course material was too theoretical, saying they would prefer more practical elements with specific examples and a direct correlation to their own teaching. Another found the time commitment of the classes inconvenient, whilst other participants stated that the classes were well designed providing an opportunity not only to reflect on their own teaching, but also to examine learning and teaching techniques undertaken in other disciplines. The participants also enjoyed the opportunity to engage with staff from across the University and, although workloads were demanding, the monthly classroom sessions gave participants an opportunity to focus, reflect and discuss different teaching techniques with peers.
- 4.4.3 The PGCAP participants were exposed to a number of ways of teaching which could be undertaken and that there was no one 'right' method. PGCAP participants acknowledged that some practical sessions were more Arts and Humanities orientated, with tasks being predominantly reading based. This did not necessarily align with the requirements of participants from more science-orientated backgrounds. The Panel noted that Year 2 of the old PGCAP programme had been designed to be more focused within the Subject Area.
- 4.4.4 At the meeting with staff, the Panel asked how the ADU was engaging with the internationalisation agenda. It was confirmed that the approach was similar to that taken in relation to equality and diversity issues, in that the Unit tried to ensure staff were aware that the range of students studying at the University had a diversity of educational and cultural backgrounds and of the importance of taking this into account in their teaching and course design.
- 4.4.5 The Panel noted that opportunities for the dissemination of good practice were not fully utilised. There were formal opportunities at the institutional level, such as the Annual Learning & Teaching Conference, but there was a need to support the dissemination of good practice at a more local level. The Panel discussed the potential for staff undertaking the PGCAP to present to their

Schools, and for the Unit to publicise good practice for consideration for adoption more widely in the School, via Moodle or Campus News updates. The ADU could also bring good practice to the attention of School LTC Conveners. Please also refer to 3.1.3.

#### 4.5 Effectiveness of Student feedback mechanisms

- 4.5.1 From the minutes of the Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC), it appeared to the Panel that this feedback mechanism was under-utilised. At the meeting with the PGCAP students, the Panel was advised that workload issues were instrumental in the lack of engagement with the SSLC. However, it was clarified that participants were also given opportunities to provide feedback at the end of each session. The MEd participants agreed that they did not participate in the SSLC but advised that they were given substantial additional opportunities to provide feedback and present their views. It was highlighted that these additional opportunities to provide feedback may make the role of the SSLC redundant. Participants were also invited to provide feedback as part of the annual monitoring process. The Panel **commends** the effective feedback mechanisms in place.

### 5. Enhancement in Learning and Teaching

#### 5.1 Learning and Teaching

##### 5.1.1 Curriculum Design

###### *PGCAP*

- 5.1.1.1 The Panel discussed with the Head of Unit the fact that LT&S staff were required to undertake the full PGCAP (comprising 60 credits) whereas R&T staff were only required to undertake the Early Career Development Programme (comprising 40 credits), and questioned whether this undermined the integrity of the PGCAP. Dr MacKenzie advised that the reduced requirement for R&T staff had been based on the fact that they were likely to have more of a research focus. The reduced obligatory requirement for R&T staff was nonetheless considered sufficient in relation to them developing appropriate teaching skills. However, it was confirmed that in practice 95% of R&T staff completed the full 60 credits to be awarded the PGCAP. Two of the PGCAP participants who met with the Panel were Research Fellows and confirmed that they undertook significant teaching and planned to undertake the full 60 credits as this was a recognised UK-wide qualification. They confirmed that they also benefitted from meeting members of the wider academic community as well as establishing good working relationships with the ADU staff. The Panel deliberated whether the distinction should be made between the two categories of staff.
- 5.1.1.2 The Panel considered the monthly Teaching Development Group meetings, where all courses were designed collaboratively, to be **good practice**. As stated in the SER (page 6, 2.5.3), this approach enabled a commitment to continual evaluation to ensure best provision. At the meeting with the staff, it was confirmed that the monthly Teaching Development Group meetings gave ADU staff an opportunity to formally focus on programme design and development.
- 5.1.1.3 In discussion with the Head of the ADU, it was acknowledged that changes currently being made to the promotions criteria, would place more significance on learning and teaching relative to research could also have an impact on the Unit, with potential for interest in the PGCAP to increase.

## *MEd*

- 5.1.1.4 The Unit has offered MEd provision since 2005 which has been designed for staff with career aspirations in learning and teaching. However, student numbers are low. (Please refer to 4.1.1)
- 5.1.1.5 The Panel met with two MEd participants (one via Skype) who were asked about their experience of the programme. The participants responded that the programme had provided them with an opportunity to reflect critically on teaching and assessment and their interest in learning and teaching has consequently been enhanced. The opportunity to interact with other students on the programme was also valued. It was noted that participants on the programme had a mixed background and for those with a research background, some of the material was less engaging. Online learning provided flexibility, but it could also be prescribed. Group forums were considered more engaging.
- 5.1.1.6 Workload was flagged as an issue by both PGCAP and MEd participants, with no recognition for undertaking the programme as part of a workload model. Please refer to 4.3.3.

## *The PG Cert in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*

- 5.1.1.7 The PG Cert in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education had initially been developed for the international distance-learning market. In discussion with the Head of the ADU, it was suggested that it had been designed for more experienced teaching staff and so perhaps had been too specialised to attract a wider international market, whilst the Open University had a well-established and well-known provision. The PGCert was suspended in 2015/16 in order to facilitate the redesign of the second year of the PGCAP. The Panel affirmed that this had been the right decision. [However, please see item 7.1 regarding support for staff at collaborative institutions.]

## **5.1.2 Approach to Intended Learning Outcomes**

- 5.1.2.1 At the meeting with the MEd participants, it was confirmed that they were able to negotiate one or two of the ILOs in relation to the dissertation. This gave flexibility to decide what to study and to agree on what was the most valuable for the participant. The Panel **commends** the co-creation of ILOs for the MEd dissertation between supervisor and MEd participants.
- 5.1.2.2 From the SER (pages 17&18, 4.2.17 and 4.2.18), the Panel noted that ILOs were established first when new courses were being designed. ILOs, once drafted, were discussed and refined at the Teaching Development Group meeting (see 5.1.1.2). In addition, the ADU drafted ILOs for most teaching sessions, ensuring these linked to the course ILOs. The session ILOs were explicitly referred to in each session. Course ILOs were also closely linked to the marking criteria. The Panel **commends** the ADU's integration and use of Intended Learning Outcomes throughout the programme, with explicit references made to ILOs at each session in marking and feedback.

## **5.1.3 Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching**

- 5.1.3.1 The Panel noted from the SER (page 18, 4.2.21 and 4.2.22) the course "Learning with Technology" was taught online, with assistance from the Learning Technology Unit, and was designed to specifically address learning technologies.
- 5.1.3.2 At the meeting with staff, the Panel was informed that the ADU had recently held an away day, at which the role of technology on future learning and teaching had been discussed. This had included how to support and equip



staff in the use and incorporation of technology into teaching as well as the use of blended learning.

5.1.3.3 Moodle was used as both a resource and communication tool. The Panel queried whether Moodle could be further used to include FAQs, responses to queries and open discussion with other participants.

5.1.3.4 The ADU also used the University-supported classroom response system YACRS (Yet Another Classroom Response System).

#### **5.1.4 Assessment**

5.1.4.1 The Panel considered the ADU's distinction between assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning to be **commendable**. As stated in the SER (Page 3, 2.2.3), assessment was designed to encourage engagement and was itself a learning activity. The PGCAP participants confirmed that they were aware of the ADU's distinction of assessment *for* learning and *of* learning.

5.1.4.2 The SER highlighted the wide range of both formative and summative assessment methods employed by the ADU (page 19, 4.3.1). All PGCAP assessment was practice-based and required critical reflection. At the meeting with the PGCAP participants, they confirmed that they found the self-directed study aspect of the programme, as well as the use of case studies to be very beneficial, as it allowed for individuals to input their own concepts and ideas. The MEd participants considered formative tasks and peer feedback to be well integrated into the programme. The Panel **commends** the range of practice-based assessment methods used.

5.1.4.3 The Panel noted from the SER the flexibility of assignment submission deadlines for the PGCAP (page 20, 4.3.9) where, if a participant was unable to submit, normally due to workload, an opportunity was given to submit for the next Exam Board deadline i.e. an extension of three to four months. One of the PGCAP participants, whilst appreciating this flexibility, indicated that the possibility to a three to five day extension would be preferable, than automatically allowing a three to four month extension. In relation to the MEd, three-day extensions were given and further extension could be requested by the normal University process in MyCampus. It was noted that the submission of a MEd group task had been negotiable and this had been helpful. One of the MEd participants, advised that, the benefit of making the process less mechanical, tended to allow for more interaction between staff and participants. The Panel **commends** flexibility provided for assignment submission deadlines which takes into account work commitments, but suggests whether extensions, as permissible for MEd participants, could be given to PGCAP participants.

5.1.4.4 The MEd participants had indicated that it would be useful if there was an option to replace the dissertation by writing a research paper for publication, if it could be demonstrated that ILOs had been achieved. The Unit may wish to consider the potential for alternative assessment formats to the dissertation for those who would prefer to evidence achievement of the learning outcomes in alternative ways. This may also make the MEd more attractive to Research Fellows.

#### **5.1.5 Engagement with the Code of Assessment and Assessment policy**

The use of pass/fail, rather than the University's Code of Assessment, when grading the PGCAP assignments was explored at the meeting with the Head of Unit. There was discussion about whether this approach might act as a disincentive for staff to try to achieve beyond a minimum threshold level. The Panel further suggested that if a 'merit' or 'distinction' was awarded, this could

provide an opportunity for staff to include this as part of their Performance & Development Review (P&DR). Dr MacKenzie advised that the pass/fail outcome accurately reflected achievement of the ILOs, focusing on development rather than achievement. She advised that the assessment and feedback form used by the ADU gave a clear indication of these different levels of achievement (please refer to 5.1.6.1). At the staff meeting, it was verified that this was standard for PGCAP type provision across the sector. At the staffing meeting, the Panel was advised that, using the Code of Assessment grading scheme could potentially be unfair, as staff from different subject areas had varying experience with written assignments; those from the College of Arts and Social Sciences using essay type assessment more frequently than staff from the College of Science & Engineering and MVLS. The use of Pass/Fail removed pressure from participants. The Panel was satisfied that the reasons for using the pass/fail grading and not the University's Code of Assessment were appropriate for the PGCAP. It was noted that the Code of Assessment was used for the MEd.

### **5.1.6 How do students receive feedback on assessed work**

5.1.6.1 At the meeting with staff, the Panel was provided with copies of the assessment and feedback form used by all staff. The form clearly highlighted the required learning outcomes and gave a precise indication as to how well the participant had performed. Feedback was provided for every piece of work whether formative or summative. The generic detailed feedback form was considered **good practice** with potential for University-wide dissemination.

5.1.6.2 The SER stated that participants were supported in their assessments on the PGCAP by the peer group tutor and on the MEd courses a named assessment tutor or dissertation supervisor. All summative assessments were submitted and feedback returned using Moodle (page 19, 4.3.1). The PGCAP participants confirmed that they were able to discuss aspects of their teaching with staff which they found to be very beneficial and considered part of the learning process. The SER also highlighted that External Examiners regularly commended the quality and quantity of feedback given (page 19, 4.3.6). The Review Panel **commends** the level of feedback provided.

5.1.6.3 The PGCAP and MEd participants confirmed that they received good quality and helpful feedback in an exceptionally timely manner. The SER highlighted that as PGCAP was a developmental programme, ADU staff fed-forward on formative drafts, as well as detailed feedback on what was required to meet ILOs (page 20, 4.3.11). The PGCAP and MEd participants confirmed that they recognised the feed-forward structure, receiving advice for the next assignment. The MEd participants advised that this was a very positive aspect of the MEd programme. The Review Panel **commends** the feed-forward approach to feedback and the quickness of return of feedback.

## **5.2 Engaging and Supporting Staff**

### **5.2.1 Probationer and early career support**

Probationary/early career members of staff advised that they had been well supported and had been allocated mentors. They confirmed that teaching loads had been reduced during their first year, but had increased to normal hours during the second year due to a member of staff leaving the ADU. The workload model used by the ADU was transparent with an equitable workload across the ADU. Probationary staff were active members of the Teaching Development Group and contributed to discussions as part of the Unit.

## **5.2.2 Ongoing support and development**

- 5.2.2.1 The complex role of the Unit was acknowledged with staff providing credit-bearing and non-credit bearing provision, as well as supporting staff at College/School and individual level. It was evident to the Panel that the staff within the Unit were extremely dedicated, but were being pulled in different directions with little opportunity to reflect on and promote their provision more strategically. Please refer to 3.2.2.
- 5.2.2.2 At the meeting with staff, it was highlighted that the PGCAP participants had various opinions on the benefits of the classroom sessions. The Panel was advised that attempts had been made to introduce a number of different examples into these sessions to make them as relevant as possible.
- 5.2.2.3 The Panel was concerned over the range of provision undertaken by the ADU and although staff were dedicated, hard-working and extremely committed, the Panel was unsure how long this could be maintained, and was concerned about the additional pressure placed on staff when a staff member left or if there was a long term absence. At the meeting with the probationary staff it was noted that teaching loads had not been reduced as much as originally planned due to a member of staff leaving. The Panel **recommends** that the ADU explore opportunities for the rationalisation of non-credit bearing provision as this impinged on the time available for credit-bearing delivery. (Please also refer to 4.1.2 and 4.1.4).

## **5.3 Resources for Learning and Teaching (staffing and physical)**

- 5.3.1 There were currently 5 full-time academic members of staff (there was one vacancy). All staff contributed to teaching. It was evident at the meetings with all participants that the staff were highly regarded.
- 5.3.2 All teaching was undertaken within Southpark House, where there were two seminar-type rooms with a capacity of 20 and 10 respectively. (please refer to 4.1.2)

## **6 Academic Standards**

### **6.2 Approach to setting, maintaining and reviewing academic standards**

- 6.1.1 Programme approval and annual monitoring was undertaken by the School of Education and College of Social Sciences. As per standard University processes, staff, participants and External Examiners were consulted in relation to the revision of programmes.
- 6.1.2 The Panel noted the level of detail to which the ADU responded to External Examiners comments. The Panel **commends** the good use and effective responses to External Examiners.

## **7 Collaborative provision**

### **7.1 Supporting staff in transnational context**

From the SER (page 28, 6.1) and from discussion with the Head of Unit and staff, it was evident that arrangements to meet the needs of transnational participants were inadequate. It had been challenging to provide equal opportunity and support for participants' beyond the University. Currently, there were staff based in Singapore and China, responsible for the delivery of University of Glasgow degrees and, as such, it was mandatory for them to undertake the PGCAP. In 2011/12, when the first appointments were made, staff had undertaken the PGCLTHE, although this was considered not ideal as it was not aimed specifically at University of Glasgow staff. In addition, workload was high for staff where the PGCLTHE was completed in one year

as compared to the PGCAP over two years. Furthermore, the PGCLTHE only ran in alternate years, due to the low uptake of the programme. In 2014/15, given there were seven members of staff based at Singapore Institute of Technology needing to undertake the PGCAP, it was considered to be a large enough group to make it feasible for 2 members of ADU staff to travel to Singapore to teach a consolidated version of the year 1 PGCAP, teaching in a one-week intensive teaching package. The Unit recognised that this was not ideal, particularly as significant components of the programme including experiential learning, reflective practice and tutor observations were excluded, and this had an impact on the overall participant experience. In Session 2015-16, only one member of staff had enrolled on the PGCAP from a GU partner institution overseas and, as it had not been feasible to fly staff to Singapore to deliver the taught elements of the PGCAP for one person, the participant completed the PGCAP by distance learning, using self-directed learning tasks. The Panel recognised the difficulty in offering the PGCAP on-line and the reduced opportunity for peer support, but suggested this was a necessary compromise. Therefore, the Panel **recommends** that the Unit considers re-designing an on-line PGCAP to accommodate participants based overseas. The revised version should not be to recruit a new market but to support staff based overseas.

## **8 Summary of perceived strengths and areas for improvement**

### **8.1 Key strengths**

The Panel identified a number of strengths:

- Clearly dedicated staff committed to the provision of a supportive environment
- Strong cohesive team
- Quality of programmes
- Well-designed practice-based assessment requiring critical reflection whilst offering flexibility and collaboration between staff and participants
- Good quality feedback processes, in particular the assessment marking pro-forma and emphasis on feeding forward
- Distinction made between assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning
- Use and development of Intended Learning Outcomes explicitly referenced in each session and in assessment
- Monthly Teaching Development meetings with courses designed collaboratively with staff from the Unit
- High success rates reflecting quality of provision
- Clear strategic link to L&T strategy

### **8.2 Areas for improvement**

The Review Panel highlighted the following areas as opportunities for improvement:

- Development of a more established partnership with Colleges and Schools, providing a more formalised process of engagement with Learning & Teaching practitioners across the University
- Re-evaluation of priorities and establishment of a long term vision for the role of the ADU: What is it trying to achieve? What is its role? The Unit should consider highlighting its central role in the enhancement of learning and teaching across the University in a more pro-active, rather than reactive, manner

- To consider opportunities to rationalise provision
- Consider providing an on-line PGCAP to accommodate participants based outside the UK
- Resolution of the admission process with Human Resources having responsibility for ensuring all appropriate staff are informed of the requirement to register for the PGCAP and for informing the ADU of staff appointed and expected to register. ADU should advise Human Resources of any exemptions
- Participation on the PGCAP to be considered as part of Schools' workload models

### **8.3 Conclusion**

The Review Panel, guided by the views of the External Subject Specialist, **confirmed** that, at the time of the Review, programmes offered by the School were current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the discipline, and of practice in its application.

The ADU staff had clearly built a very successful and highly valued relationship with participants through their work. This suggested a respectful and student-centred approach to learning. The ADU was very responsive to requests for support, but the Panel considered there was scope for more direct engagement between the ADU and Colleges and Schools. Schools, in general, required greater involvement with activity and outcomes of the PGCAP, ensuring skills being learnt were highlighted, being made use of, and disseminated.

The Panel concluded that it would be of benefit for the ADU to consider rationalising some of their provision and having a more formal relationship with Schools and Colleges might help to address some of the ADU workload issues, as well as developing the learning and teaching community.

### **Commendations**

The Review Panel commends the Academic Development Unit on the following, which are **listed in order of appearance** in this report:

#### **Commendation 1**

All staff within the Unit had undertaken University Equality and Diversity training. [Paragraph 4.2]

#### **Commendation 2**

The clear commitment of the ADU to provide a supportive environment, providing a high level of support to participants outside of class. [Paragraph 4.3.1]

#### **Commendation 3**

The effective feedback mechanisms in place. [Paragraph 4.5.1]

#### **Commendation 4**

The co-creation of ILOs for the MEd dissertation between supervisor and MEd participants. [Paragraph 5.1.2.1]

### **Commendation 5**

The ADU's integration and use of Intended Learning Outcomes throughout the programme, with explicit references made to ILOs at each session in marking and feedback. [Paragraph 5.1.2.2]

### **Commendation 6**

Distinction between assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning [Paragraph 5.1.4.1]

### **Commendation 7**

The range of practice-based assessment methods used [Paragraph 5.1.4.2]

### **Commendation 8**

The flexibility provided for assignment submission deadlines, taking into account work commitments [Paragraph 5.4.1.3]

### **Commendation 9**

The level of feedback provided [Paragraph 5.1.6.2]

### **Commendation 10**

The feed-forward approach to feedback and the quickness of return of feedback. [Paragraph 5.1.6.3]

### **Commendation 11**

The good use of and effective responses to External Examiners. [Paragraph 6.1.2]

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been made to support the ADU in its reflection, and to enhance provision in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer and are **grouped together** by the areas for improvement/enhancement and are **ranked in order of priority within each section**.

### **For the attention of ADU**

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Panel **recommends** that the Unit consult with Deans of Learning & Teaching regarding the possibility of Schools taking more responsibility for supporting staff locally, establishing more formal partnerships with the ADU and to discuss how this might work in practice. [Paragraph 3.1.3]

**For action: Head of ADU**

**For information: Deans (Learning & Teaching)**

**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

In addition, the Panel **recommends** more formal links are developed between the ADU and Schools, to encourage a community of learning and teaching practitioners, maximising PGCAP and MEd alumni contacts. [Paragraph 4.3.2]

**For action: Head of ADU**

**For information: Deans (Learning & Teaching)**

**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

## **Recommendation 2**

The Review Panel **recommends** that ADU staff should be full members of all College Learning and Teaching Committees; that Colleges should engage on a formal and more regular basis with the ADU and that the Unit should be able to advise the College on learning and teaching matters. The Panel further **recommends** that the Unit develops a more formalised process of engagement with Learning & Teaching practitioners across the University and this should be discussed with Deans of Learning & Teaching as highlighted under Recommendation 1. [Paragraph 3.1.4]

**For action: Head of ADU and Deans (Learning & Teaching)**  
**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

## **Recommendation 3**

The Panel **recommends** that the ADU re-evaluates its priorities and establishes a long-term vision of the role of the ADU within the University. [Paragraph 3.2.1]

**For action: Head of ADU**  
**For information: Deans (Learning & Teaching)**  
**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

## **Recommendation 4**

The Panel, although acknowledging the preference to teach in local space, **recommends** that consideration be given to using alternative, larger University accommodation to allow for an increase in participation rates and the potential to rationalise delivery of the programme. [Paragraph 4.1.2]

**For action: Head of ADU**  
**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

## **Recommendation 5**

The Panel **recommends** that the ADU explore opportunities for the rationalisation of provision of non-credit bearing activity as this impinged on the time available for credit-bearing delivery. [Paragraph 5.2.2.3]

**For action: Head of ADU**

## **Recommendation 6**

The Panel **recommends** that the ADU considers the balance of workload and effort required to continue to offer the MEd and whether there was potential for linkage with the School of Education to provide the MEd as joint provision. [Paragraph 4.1.4]

**For action: Head of ADU**  
**For information Head of School of Education**  
**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

## **Recommendation 7**

The Panel **recommends** that the Unit considers re-designing an online PGCAP to accommodate participants based overseas. The revised version should not be to recruit a new market but to support staff based overseas. [Paragraph 7.1]

**For action: Head of ADU**  
**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

**For the attention of the Director of Human Resources**

**Recommendation 8**

The Review Panel **recommends** that Human Resources establish a formal process that automatically registers relevant new employees to the University on the PGCAP at commencement of appointment, and that it informs the ADU and the relevant School of all new registrations. [Paragraph 4.1.1]

**For action: Director of Human Resources**

**For information: Head of the ADU**

**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**

**For the attention of Deans of Learning & Teaching**

**Recommendation 9**

The Panel **recommends** bringing to the attention of the Deans (Learning & Teaching) that consideration be given to including participation on the PGCAP as part of School workload models. In addition, recognition of teaching excellence should commence at the beginning of staff careers with progression charted throughout career development. Excellent teaching should be reviewed as part of P&DR. [Paragraph 4.3.2]

**For action: Deans of Learning & Teaching  
(Arts, Science and Engineering and Social Sciences)**

**For information: Head of the ADU**

**For information: Dean (Learning & Teaching) MVLS**

**For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre**