

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee - Friday 25 November 2016

**Periodic Subject Review: Responses to the Recommendations
arising from the Review of Academic Development Unit held on
7 December 2015**

Mrs Catherine H Omand, Clerk to the Review Panel

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.

Recommendation 1(a)

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

Response:

The way that the Unit responds to this will be affected by the restructure of the Learning & Teaching Centre (L&TC). A fuller and more detailed response will be given following the restructure.

Recommendation 1 (b)

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

Response:

The way that the Unit responds to this will be affected by the restructure of the L&TC. A fuller and more detailed response will be given following the restructure.

However, one of the outcomes of the University's Recognising Excellence in Teaching (RET) framework has been the development of a Senior Fellow and Principal Fellow network. The network has met twice and plans for a third meeting and a more formal configuration are underway. While this does not completely address the above sub-recommendation, the majority of those recognised at SF or PF are alumni of the PGCAP (24/46) or alumni or currently undertaking the MEd (13/46). We aim to grow the impact of this SFPF group by supporting the leadership of individuals.

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 and 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

Response: Head of ADU

We welcome the move to have ADU staff as members of College Learning and Teaching Committees; however, the way that the Unit responds to this will be affected by the restructure of the L&TC. A fuller and more detailed response will be given following the restructure.

Response: Deans (Learning & Teaching)**Arts**

We have invited the ADU Arts liaison, Angela Jaap, to join the College LTC as a full member and have amended the formal composition of the committee accordingly.

Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences

Amanda Sykes (ADU) has been a full member of the College of MVLS L+T Committee for several years. I also meet Amanda outside Committee meetings and we discuss initiatives (we met recently and she has agreed to lead a College level Assessment and Feedback project that was endorsed by the College at our Learning & Teaching Committee). We have also discussed potential workshops/assessment "surgeries" to help a wide group of College staff.

Science & Engineering

In my first year as Dean, the College's Effective Learning Adviser (Nathalie Sheridan) had a standing invitation to the College Learning & Teaching Committee. This was subsequently dropped despite its value because it became clear that many other people could also offer useful advice and the committee would become too large. Instead, we have invited people from other parts of the University when it seemed most appropriate. For example, Matthew Williamson attended the last meeting to discuss our College NSS Action Plan and our Learning & Teaching Plan. I also intend to invite Amanda Sykes to attend either a future committee meeting or one of the lunchtime meetings that I run on learning and teaching

matters. (We have also invited staff from the Senate Office, Careers and MaRIO during the past year.) Members of the committee interact closely with the Learning and Teaching Centre on several projects and report back to the committee. The Deans have also met Matthew Williamson several times since he assumed his current role.

Historically, CoSE has not run many initiatives for learning and teaching at college level because of the diversity of subjects and pedagogy, with the result that most such projects have been carried out at school level instead. Engagement is not uniformly as strong as it could be and I shall try to strengthen the interaction in areas that could benefit.

We will review the position when the reorganisation of the L&T Centre is complete to ensure that we are working together as effectively as possible with both their staff-facing and student-facing activities.

Social Sciences

The CoSS contact in ADU has typically been given an open invitation to attend our College L&T Committee. There have been a number of staff changes in our contact person but Janis Davidson who has been in post recently has been invited to attend any and all meetings that she is available to attend. I am meeting with her soon to discuss our working relationship. I did so too with Ming Cheng who had the role in the past. Matthew Williamson attended the first Committee of this academic session to discuss our College NSS Action Plan and our Student Experience Plan and Amanda Sykes is attending the next of our meetings to discuss embedding of the Assessment and Feedback toolkit. Amanda has been working for the last year with Susan Deeley in CoSS on a College Assessment and Feedback project.

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

Response:

The way that the Unit responds to this will be affected by the restructure of the L&TC. A fuller and more detailed response will be given following the restructure.

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

Central Timetabling Team

Response:

The way that the Unit responds to this will be affected by the restructure of the L&TC. A fuller and more detailed response will be given following the restructure.

Most of our teaching does take place in our dedicated local teaching space although we book alternative, larger University accommodation regularly. The capacity of our teaching space is not the primary limiting factor for participation in our credit-bearing programmes,

participation is limited by ADU staff time. Each participant requires ~3 hours of ADU staff time to provide a personalised, tailored peer observation of teaching with detailed feedback and a one-to-one tutorial aimed at enhancing the individual participant's teaching. This activity is key to the success of the PGCAP/TSC and is always evaluated highly. If all of our current participants (~80 per year) were to be taught as one cohort rather than the current 4 cohorts our contact time would reduce by only about 20% and, we believe, the quality of the student experience would be severely reduced. However, in order to respond to this recommendation we are this academic year arranging and delivering larger non-credit bearing classes (see recommendation 5).

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

Response:

The way that the Unit responds to this will be affected by the restructure of the L&TC. A fuller and more detailed response will be given following the restructure.

In an attempt to respond to this recommendation and the previous one we are arranging larger class sizes for GTA statutory training which runs for ~350 GTAs per year.

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

Response:

ADU has considered the balance of workload and effort required to essentially run two PG certificates that lead into a single MEd and are essentially removing the PGC in Learning & Teaching in HE from our provision with a view that the main route of entry onto the MEd LTHE should be University of Glasgow practitioners mainly those who have completed the PGC in Academic Practice, rather than those external to the University. With this in mind we have successfully negotiated that the MEd in its entirety will be free for UoG staff as of the 16/17 session and have introduced a new and robust APEL system to enable participants who have not completed the PGCAP or equivalent PGC to be granted accreditation based on experience. This has resulted in us having the largest cohort of participants the MEd has ever had.

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

Response:

The way that the Unit responds to this will be affected by the restructure of the L&TC. A fuller and more detailed response will be given following the restructure.

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

Response:

The Performance, Pay and Reward team have reviewed the application process for registering applicants onto the PgCAP and it is evident that the application process requires a significant level of personal information to be input to the online application (see online guidance from the Learning Teaching Centre's website). The PPR team are not in a position to provide personal information pertaining to Education, Work Experience, References, and relevant supporting documentation relating to Route Planning for all applicants to the Early Career Development Programme. Noteworthy is the requirement for each applicant to provide expected teaching responsibilities for both semesters to include the number of lectures, tutorials, seminars and lab practical sessions. Details are also required in relation to supervising students undertaking research and the approximate timing of when supervision is likely to take place.

It is difficult to see what steps could reasonably be undertaken to improve the current process by which staff are registered onto the Early Career Development Programme, whereupon the participant receives a welcome email from the PPR team advising them to enrol onto the PgCAP or TSC programme. Applications to University Taught Courses are applicant led and it is neither viable nor appropriate for a staff-facing Service to submit an application on behalf of a staff member.

In conclusion therefore, based on the reasoning outlined in the rationale above, recommendation 8 cannot be taken forward by Human Resources.

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 & Engineering and Social Sciences)**

For information: Head of the ADU

For information: Dean (Learning & Teaching) MVLS

For information: Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre

Response:

Arts

It is not clear whether this recommendation is intended to refer to the allocation of workload by Heads of School or to the University-agreed workload model, for which drivers have been agreed by each College. In the College of Arts these drivers are defined by a policy document agreed in August 2012. Workloads are allocated by Heads of School, who are to respect reduced loads for 'probationary' (now ECDP) staff on open-ended contracts. It is my understanding that PGCAP is formally incorporated into School allocations of workload through the ECDP, and that early career staff receive a significant reduction in teaching workload.

Science & Engineering

I understood that the reduced hours for staff on the ECDP reflected participation in PGCAP. If this is not the case, it should be addressed across the university and I will promote it through the College Management Group.

Concerning P&DR, it has been agreed that all student-facing staff should include at least one objective to enhance the student experience. I was asked to draw up a list of exemplars but this task has since been taken on by the Recognising Teaching Excellence Working Group.

Social Sciences

I will pick up with the Heads of School (and CMG) the matter of workload but I had understood that the reduced hours for staff on the ECDP reflected the fact that they are required to participate in the PGCAP. If all colleges are expected to include a specific PGCAP allowance in workload models, would it be possible to be given clarity on the hours that should be granted for participation so that we all make the same provision?

The matter of recognising teaching excellence is something that we have raised in connection with P&DR for the last two years in CoSS. All members of staff in CoSS are expected to have a teaching objective and Heads of School are expected to ensure that (a) this happens; and (b) that appropriate support and development is provided where teaching performance is not as anticipated and recognition is given where excellence is demonstrated. In addition, as Dean, I write to all Heads of School and L&T Convenors each year to invite them to nominate colleagues for the College Teaching Excellence Awards.