

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee - Friday 26 January 2018

**Periodic Subject Review: Updated Response to Recommendation 4
Arising from the Review of Academic Development Unit (now
Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Unit - LEADS)
held on 7 December 2015****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:

Most of our teaching takes 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 ADD staff time. Each participant requires ~3 hours of ADD 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 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 about 20% and, we believe, the quality of the student experience would be severely reduced.

Having said this, we are likely to be teaching an additional cohort in the coming academic year (starting January 2018) to accommodate the increased demand for places on PGCAP/TSC. In order to support this increased workload, and to streamline our teaching support, we have redesigned some of our teaching to reduce our individual workload. For example, we have removed the requirement for participants to complete self-directed learning tasks should they miss a session, as these required individual feedback from ADD staff and instead have introduced suggested self-directed study and a requirement to attend 80% of all teaching (as per University policy). This requirement has been clearly set out in the course handbooks for all elements of the PGCAP.

The PGCAP/TSC, PGDip and MEd are also undergoing significant redesign to create a single, coherent, integrated programme that will support staff to enhance and extend their academic practice. This programme will be aligned to the UKPSF and will be part of the RET framework and will have both an on-campus and an online version to support as many of our potential participants as possible. This new course will begin in September 2018 and Dr Michael McEwan (with a focus on PGCAP) Dr Nathalie Sheridan (with a focus on PGDip and MEd) are leading the redesign of this integrated programme.

In order to respond to this recommendation we are also arranging and delivering larger non-credit bearing classes (see recommendation 5) to ensure that we prioritise our time for the teaching that requires the most input from us. We are also investigating the requirements of the participants supported by our non-credit-bearing teaching to ensure that we are providing the most useful support and training for these members of teaching staff (usually Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)).

Updated response – January 2018

The 80% attendance requirement was included as part of the minimum requirements for the award of credits. There may have been a miscommunication regarding the reference to 'University policy' in the sense that the exact details of the attendance requirement (i.e. 80%) are not a University policy, but rather the inclusion of an attendance requirement as part of the minimum requirements for the award of credit is allowed as per the University Calendar.

The non-generic programme regulation that this 80% requirement replaces was, in effect, 100% attendance. Accordingly the new 80% requirement allows greater flexibility on the part of the student (i.e. the staff member attending PGCAP) regarding occasional missed classes. Moreover, at present most classes are taught on more than one occasion, and attendance out with an applicant's scheduled class time is encouraged in the instance of a missed class. We have also developed our VLE presence to include greater support for self-directed learning to enable learners to engage with relevant materials both in the instance of a need for greater support, but also in the instance for 'catching up' after a missed class. This self-directed learning will be enhanced as we develop the aforementioned 'integrated programme' over the next 12 months and will facilitate an enhanced blended course.

We have had some instances where the attendance requirement has proved tricky in our shorter 10 credit courses (where a missed class sometimes equates to 30% of contact time). For this year we are operating on a pragmatic basis by providing alternative opportunities to demonstrate engagement with the learning activities from a missed class, but we will review the attendance requirement as the integrated programme is further developed.

It is our firm belief that an attendance requirement is entirely practicable with the flexible measures we have in place, and this is particularly successful in year 1 of the PGCAP. In essence, the attendance requirement is practicable in year 2 also. The inclusion of an attendance requirement continue to highlight the importance of PGCAP and development in learning and teaching as a key area of academic development. However, when developing our new integrated programme we will ensure further flexibility is included to enable any student who cannot attend a PGCAP session has alternative means to engage with learning opportunities (e.g. by enhanced online presence and improved blended learning options) whilst both still meeting the minimum requirements for the award of credit and minimising the impact of a missed session.