

Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee



Monday 16th November 2020 2pm-4pm

Minutes

Present: Prof Rachel Allen (Chair); Prof Jane Lindsay; Dr Carwyn Hooper; Derek Baldwinson; Dr Fran Gibson; Dr John Hammond; Prof Jane Saffell; Jenny Laws; Dr Marcus Jackson; Dr Mark Bodman-Smith; Sally Mitchell; Sarah Jones; Dr Saranne Weller; Prof Iain Beith; Dr Vanessa Ho; Baba Sheba; Syed Islam; Dr Aileen O'Brien

In attendance: Glen Delahaye (clerk); Soosan Atkins; Emma Catlow (from 3pm)

1. Apologies for absence:

Reported

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from: Eoin Jardine; Dr Godfrina McKoy; Philippa Tostevin

2. Minutes

To receive and consider: the minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2020.

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/A

2.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Action points and matters arising not covered elsewhere

To receive and consider: the action points arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere.

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/B

Reported

2.2 The progress against the action points was considered and agreed without further updates.

4. QAEC Terms of Reference and Membership 2020-21

To receive and confirm: the Committee's ToR and membership for 2020-21

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/C

Reported

4.1 The Terms of Reference had been considered by QAEC on the 7th October 2020, where it agreed that they should be rewritten to better reflect the aims both to quality assure and to enhance by creating different sections and themed groupings within them.

4.2 The Terms of Reference were presented to QAEC again, with adjustments made to separate responsibilities for quality assurance and enhancement.

Agreed

4.3 That the individual terms of reference could be separated even further to make it easier to understand the Committee's function. **Action: GD and RA**

5. QAEC Schedule of Business 2020-21

To receive and confirm: the Committee's schedule of business for 2020-21

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/D

Reported

5.1 The schedule of business had previously been considered at the 7th October 2020 meeting, but had not yet been agreed.

Agreed

5.2 That the schedule of business should be mapped against the terms of reference to ensure that they were consistent and that one or two themed meetings could be added to ensure dedicated time to enhancement activities. **Action: GD and RA**

6. **IQA Assessment**

To receive and consider: the report and recommendations of the Internal Quality Audit on Assessment

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/E

Reported

- 6.1 QAEC acknowledged the contributions of the IQA Assessment Group and other members across the organisation who took part in the audit.
- 6.2 The group had agreed five key recommendations, which in short aimed to:
- develop an institutional guidance document for assessment
 - establish a learning, teaching and assessment strategy
 - establish training to ensure that staff are adequately supported,
 - establish a group that would have oversight of assessment across the institution,
 - determine which committee or group responsibility for considering and taking forward recommendations in relation to assessment can be assigned to
- 6.3 There was a lack of resources around curriculum design and assessment available that could be provided to course teams who were developing new programmes, which made it difficult to support them. The recent introduction of the guidance for the design of online assessments had been an excellent example of how quickly effective guidance could be developed when needed.
- 6.4 It was suggested that an additional piece of work be developed that would sit between the learning and teaching strategy and the proposed guidance, which could provide a more prescriptive approach prompting course teams to consider aspects such as diverse assessments, alignment with frameworks and balance of workloads.
- 6.5 There would be a need to revisit the recommendations of the Degree Classification Task and Finish Group, which were considered by QAEC in February 2020 and linked closely to ensuring consistency in assessment.

Agreed

- 6.6 An Assessment Advisory Group would be formed and would have responsibility for agreeing what shape the proposed group with oversight of assessment across the institution would take, including whether it would have responsibility for approval, staff development, pedagogic matters etc. **The following members volunteered to join the group: Prof Jane Lindsay; Soosan Atkins; Dr Fran Gibson; Dr Carwyn Hooper; Prof Iain Beith; Sally Mitchell; Prof Jane Saffell**
- 6.7 The development of guidance and the framework would be the priority, as it would benefit the new courses currently in development.
- 6.8 Ensuring that training was made available would also be a priority. The new course teams, in particular, would be able to benefit from it.
- 6.9 A committee would be developed to perform for the entire institution the equivalent function of what MAC performs for Medicine. It would allow the sharing of good practice and could approve regulations prior to their submission to monitoring committees. As a starting point, the Terms of Reference for MAC could be reviewed to help determine the purpose and remit of the new proposed committee.
- 6.10 **Action: GD to find a suitable date for the Assessment Advisory Group to meet.**

7. **Assessment and Feedback Project**

To receive and consider: the Assessment and Feedback Project Final Report (March 2020), which arose from the IQA Feedback.

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/F

Reported

- 7.1 There was a need to move away from short-lived groups and audits and to establish sustainable institutional expertise around assessment.

- 7.2 Academic Integrity was suggested as a possible topic for the next IQA, following the QAA's publication of a new [Academic Integrity Charter](#), which aimed to provide a baseline position upon which providers could build their own policies and practices to ensure that qualifications were genuine, verifiable and respected.

Agreed

- 7.3 A synthesis was needed between the Assessment and Feedback Project and the IQA Assessment. **Action: SM to review the recommendations of the Assessment and Feedback Project and map them against the recommendations of the IQA Assessment.**
- 7.4 The proposed Assessment Advisory Group would then take responsibility for the actions of the Assessment and Feedback Project.
- 7.5 As suggested by the Assessment and Feedback project report, it was agreed that a single institutional lead should be appointed to coordinate, with CIDE's support, work on evaluating progress.
- 7.6 A brief summary of QAEC's discussions around the Assessment and Feedback Project and IQA Assessment would be provided to Programmes Forum and BCP Education. This would help to keep staff informed and to allow them the opportunity to highlight areas that QAEC may have missed. **Action: SM**
- 7.7 The next QAEC meeting would include an agenda item to consider the topic of the next IQA. Academic Integrity would be included as a suggestion. **Action: GD**

8. Updated Exam and Assessment Procedure

To receive and confirm: Procedure for additional assessment and examination arrangements for students with disabilities or Specific Learning Difficulties

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/G

Reported

- 8.1 The Updated Exam and Assessment Procedure had undergone changes to criteria of acceptable diagnostic evidence for examination adjustments. The procedure was presented to QAEC on the 7th October 2020, but was deferred, as the Committee had a number of questions that were not addressed through the paper and agreed that it would be helpful for Emma Catlow, the Disability Adviser, to attend QAEC to present the procedure.

Agreed

- 8.2 The procedure was approved, subject to a box being added at the beginning of the procedure to reassure students that adjustments for students with disabilities or specific learning difficulties would continue to be available for remote examinations and indicating the types of support that would be offered, including for students who required scribes or who wished to attend the exam on-site. **Action: EC**

9. Coronavirus

To receive and consider: an update on maintaining quality and standards under exceptional circumstances

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/H

Reported

- 9.1 Executive Board had agreed that the need for Exceptional Circumstances regulations in their current form had diminished, although access to the campus remained limited and this had a bearing on the capacity to deliver and assess programmes. Thus:
- the redesign and reapproval of assessment tasks that cannot be delivered as validated had reverted to monitoring committees;
 - progression and award decisions in the 2020-21 academic year would be taken in accordance with approved schemes of assessment and programme regulations.
 - The facility for Examination Boards to scale marks would be considered later in the cycle.
 - Students would be required to provide evidence to support mitigating circumstances claims (unless the claim related to a diagnosis of Covid-19 or Covid-19 symptoms).

- 9.2 Some confusion continued to exist among course teams as to which aspects of the force majeure regulations still remained, particularly around making modifications to programmes.
- 9.3 A framework had been developed by CIDE and CTiE and a process to ensure that course teams were engaging with the principles within it. In view of the fact that online delivery was likely to be the predominant experience of students, the Committee was asked to discuss ways in which the roll out and impact of the Framework could be audited.
- 9.4 The guidance from the OfS was that institutions who were able to demonstrate that teaching was equivalent in terms of quantity and quality would be less vulnerable to complaints and requests for tuition fee refunds.
- 9.5 Response rates and feedback received from student through SOLTS had been encouraging.
- 9.6 Annual monitoring would take place this year, but additional questions specific to Covid-19 had been added to APMR forms. Course teams had been encouraged to take a light-touch approach to completing APMRs this year, to allow them to focus more on online delivery of teaching and assessment.

Agreed

- 9.7 **Action: DB to send a further message to course directors to clarify which process they would need to follow depending on when they wanted to implement their proposed change and whether its purpose was to mitigate against Covid-19.**
- 9.8 The Committee agreed that it would be useful to receive a SOLTS report in January to evidence student satisfaction in the quantity and quality of online teaching. **Action: MJ**
- 9.9 **Action: DB to remind course teams to take a light-touch approach in completing APMRs this year.**

10. Any other Business

10.1 There were no further items of business.

11. Dates of Meetings in 2020-21

8 December 2020	25 March 2021	22 June 2021
19 January 2021	20 April 2021	
22 February 2021	19 May 2021	

All meetings will start at 2pm and will take place online until further notice.

Matters for Report

12. *Revised Online Assessment Guidance and Form

To receive and note: The revised guidance to support the design of online assessments for the use in academic 2020/21

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/I

To receive and note: the form for submitting amendment requests

Paper QAEC/20-21/2/J

GD/Nov 2020