St George's University of London

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee

13 March 2019

Minutes

Present: Professor Deborah Bowman (chair), Dr Vanessa Ho, Dr Marcus Jackson, Derek Baldwinson, Muhammad Omar Hijazi, Dr Rachel Allen, Professor Jane Lindsay, Dr Fran Gibson, Dr Aileen O'Brien, Professor Roberto Di Napoli, Godfrina McKoy, Jenny Laws, Dr John Hammond, Derek Baldwinson, Verity Allison, Dr Janette Myers, Pippa Tostevin

In attendance: Glen Delahaye (clerk), Dr Rachel Parker (for Agenda item 4), Dr Julie Leeming (for Agenda item 8)

1.   Apologies for absence

1.1   Apologies for absence were received from: Professor Jane Saffell, Dr Saranne Weller, Syed Islam

2.   Minutes

To receive and consider: the minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2019.
                                        Paper QAEC/18-19/5/A
Agreed

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 note: the action points arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere.
                                        Paper QAEC/18-19/5/B
Reported

3.1   That a number of the action points were on the agenda for today.

3.2   *To explore the option of including some specific questions on feedback in the external examiner form* - The proposal had been to include binary questions on the External Examiner report form. These had been drafted and would be shared with Jane Saffell.

3.3   *To report on discussion with Dr O'Brien about the way in which SSWC would report to QAEC* - A discussion had been held and it had been agreed that the report in the summer would focus on key issues arising that SSWC would like to bring to QAEC's attention and that the committee need not wait for the annual report if there were matters that arose in the academic year that should be escalated to QAEC. The action was closed off.

3.4   *A number of External Examiners had not yet submitted their reports, but this was being followed up by the registry. Also, responses to externals had yet to be sent* - An updated table indicating the number of External Examiner responses that had been submitted was appended to Paper B. A significant number of the outstanding reports were for BSc Intercalating. FG would discuss with Dr Paris Ataliotis. **Action FG**

3.5   *DB to meet with RE to discuss the remaining recommendations arising from the report* - DB had contacted the Healthcare Practice course team with regard to discretionary panels and they had been supportive of discontinuing discretionary panels for Healthcare Practice students.

4.   Initial Proposal Healthcare Research Skills & Methods

To receive and consider: the Initial Proposal Form for Healthcare Research Skills & Methods

4.1 Rachel Parker was in attendance to present the proposal.

Reported

4.2 The course aims to provide core research training to postgraduate, pre-doctoral medical and allied health professionals within St George's Trust and the Joint Faculty. The course contents are based largely on the existing Common Postgraduate Framework (CPF) stand-alone modules.

4.3 The teaching and learning environment would include online learning, making use of MOOCs and Panopto. The course's flexible format would suit the needs of its students, who were anticipated to be diverse and to have limited availability.

4.4 The Business Case for the course had been approved by ESSC earlier that day. A number of the modules and the resources to deliver them were already available through the CPF.

Agreed

4.5 The proposal was approved.

5. Monitoring Committee Reports (schedule of business)

To receive and consider: FQC annual monitoring report

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/D

Reported

5.1 There had been issues raised by course teams in relation to admissions and administrative support and one course director had requested this be brought to QAEC's attention. However, as administration was based in Kingston, this would instead be considered through Faculty meetings.

5.2 Course directors appreciated the work of the Data Improvement Group and would welcome further support.

To receive and consider: TPCC annual monitoring report

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/E

Reported

5.3 There had been a shortage of personal tutors. An initiative to develop guidelines and standards for supervision across undergraduate and postgraduate degrees would be welcomed.

5.4 Several courses had not undertaken formal PORT or do not have access to PORT records for staff teaching on their courses.

Agreed

5.5 That an update on PORT and its administration would be valuable for QAEC. **Action SW**

To receive and consider: UMBEC annual monitoring report

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/F

Reported

5.6 The report had not been received and would be deferred to the 10th April QAEC.

To receive and consider: Annual reports – research degrees

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/G

Reported

5.7 New Best Practice in Research Supervision courses had been added to training available for supervisors.

5.8 A number of long-term overtime students had completed since enhanced monitoring was introduced, a process which includes more frequent updates to ensure that students are progressing and are supported through the final stages of their degree. Some students had praised this system, as it had helped them to complete.

5.9 There wasn't currently a system of collecting peer review publications and submissions, although it was usually covered by six-monthly reports. It was recognised publication could be a distraction during the PhD period.

6. Review of Admissions Processes

To receive and consider: a report on systems, student experience and staff experience
Paper QAEC/18-19/5/H

Reported

6.1 It was noted that Qpercom, which was used in MMIs to enable assessors to record their scores on a tablet, had been very helpful.

6.2 That the improvements to the admissions process had been recognised and that the monthly admissions updates were valued.

6.3 One of the remaining difficulties with the administration of MMIs was securing people to take part in them. Although a number of colleagues had expressed an interest in taking part, the process they are required to go through was not well-managed, particularly regarding HR requirements. Subsequently many potential MMI participants had not completed the application process.

6.4 That it was unclear where ownerships of the MMI process lay and that the barriers needed to be identified.

Agreed

6.5 That DFB would follow the MMI process up with the Director of Human Resources and report back to QAEC. **Action DFB**

7. Student Records

7.1 To receive and consider: an update on Student Record progress, including on Guidance and Standards
Paper QAEC/18-19/5/I

Reported

7.2 The registry filing room had been tidied up and files moved to a new temporary location in Jenner wing.

7.3 A document covering the Management and Retention of Student Records would be presented to the next meeting of QAEC and would address the contents of the core student record.

7.4 The COO was convening an information systems group that would take an overview of the storage of data across the whole organization. QAEC would feed into it and the group would report into Executive Board.

7.5 QAEC members discussed the extent to which interactions with students could and should be recorded consistently, taking into account current systems.

8. Degree classification

To receive and consider: a summary paper on the results of an internal review of possible causes for degree inflation at St George's
Paper QAEC/18-19/5/J

Reported

8.1 An initial review of degree inflation at St George's had taken place, in which course directors were asked to respond to two questions:

a) Are you aware of any changes within your course that could have contributed to the increase? For example, in curriculum design, marking practice, student support or any other factor that could influence degree outcomes.

b) Taking the 2017-18 performance of current final year students into account, as well as assessments completed thus far in 2018-19, do you expect to see a further increase in 1st and 2:1 awards?

8.2 Iain Beith had been undertaking a more in-depth review of Paramedic Science, which was separate from this review. He would be reporting to FQC on the 27th June 2019.

8.3 This initial review and responses by course directors suggested changes in admissions criteria as a potential reason for the inflation. However, the OfS data published in December 2018 had already been adjusted to account for entry qualifications and other changes to the graduate population. Despite these adjustments, there remained an unexplained increase in first and upper-second class awards at St George's.

8.4 It was agreed that the next stages of this review should take an evidence-based approach and should consider applying Iain Beith's approach to other courses.

Agreed

8.5 That degree inflation was a serious concern for St George's.

8.6 It was agreed that DB would convene a group including Julie Leeming, Vanessa Ho, John Hammond and a representative from the exams team, nominated by Jenny Laws. **Action DB**

9. Revised Programme Proposal Form

To receive and consider: a revised Programme Proposal Form that combines previous templates into a single form to be cumulatively completed through validation process stages

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/K

Reported

9.1 The Programme Proposal Form had been drafted, but QPD was not yet ready to submit it to QAEC. The item was deferred.

10. Programmes under development – monitor (schedule of business)

To receive and note: an update on Programmes currently under development

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/L

Reported

10.1 The Paper had been written prior to the ESSC meeting that had taken place that morning.

10.2 International Health and Medicine had since been scrutinized at ESSC, but was deferred pending further information.

10.3 The Business Case for MA Healthcare and Biomedical Education had been approved at ESSC.

11. Feedback Policy

To receive and note: notes from the meeting to consider the next steps to developing a revised Feedback Policy, following the IQA

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/M

Reported

11.1 A meeting had been held to consider the current Feedback Policy. It was found that staff and students did not have much familiarity with the policy, although students were aware of the turnaround times.

11.2 The meeting had a student perspective from the VP Welfare & Education.

11.3 Another meeting would be held on the 14th March 2019. Following this, a Feedback Strategy, Policy and Framework would be developed and would be submitted to QAEC.

Agreed

11.4 It was difficult to see where to position the Feedback Policy institutionally within a Learning and Teaching Strategy. **Action: JS**

12. MBBS Teach Out Plan

To receive and note: an update on the MBBS teach out plan

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/N

Reported

12.1 The MBBS group had been under recent scrutiny, due to the recent GMC visit and periodic review.

Agreed

12.2 The Teach Out Plan would be deferred to QAEC in April.

13. Data Improvement Group Terms of Reference

To receive and note: the Terms of Reference of the Data Improvement Group (DIG)

Paper QAEC/18-19/5/O

Reported

13.1 That a meeting had been held on the 6th March 2019 and the dates had been fixed for the next three meetings.

Agreed

13.2 The Group would be added to the approved group list. **Action QPD**

14. Any other Business

14.1 There were no other items of business.

15. Dates of Meetings in 2018-19

Wednesday 10 April 2019
Tuesday 14 May 2019

All meetings will start at 2pm (unless otherwise stated) and take place in H2.5 (unless otherwise stated).

GD/March 2019