Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee

St George's
University of London

Tuesday 23rd June 2020

Minutes

Present: Prof Deborah Bowman (Chair); Dr Aileen O'Brien; Prof Iain Beith; Beth Ward; Dr Carwyn Hooper; Derek Baldwinson; Dr Fran Gibson; Prof Jane Saffell; Jenny Laws; Dr John Hammond; Prof Jane Lindsay; Dr Marcus Jackson; Dr Mark Bodman-Smith; Dr Rachel Allen; Sally Mitchell; Dr Vanessa Ho; Philippa Tostevin; Verity Allison

In attendance: Glen Delahaye (clerk); Soosan Atkins

1.   **Apologies for absence**:

   Reported

   1.1   Apologies for absence were received from: Syed Islam; Dr Saranne Weller

2.   **Minutes**
   To receive and consider: the minutes of the meeting held on 21st April 2020.
   Paper QAEC/19-20/8/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/19-20/8/B
   Reported

   13th Nov 2019 ref 4.5: Internal Quality Audit Report (assessment)

   3.1   A report on the assessment IQA would be submitted to QAEC early in the 2020/21 academic year.

   15th Jan 2020 ref 4.9: To consider how the administration of external examiner reporting could be improved and to report back to QAEC in April 2020 **and** 10th March 2020 ref 3.2: A generic email address for external examiners to submit to would help to ensure proper circulation of reports.

   3.2   After the exam period had concluded, a meeting would be arranged to consider how to improve the EE reporting system, including a generic email address.

   12th Feb 2020 ref 7.4: DFB and QPD would meet to begin outlining the next steps to adapt and implement processes for the approval, monitoring and review of apprenticeships.

   3.3   Derek Baldwinson had begun working with the Systems team to develop a mechanism by October 2020 to provide assurance that apprenticeships could be supported, as one would be launching at that time. **Action: DB to update QAEC by circulation on the outcome of the discussions with the Systems team and of any recommendations to QAEC.**

   10th March 2020 ref 4.6: Jane Lindsay and Rachel Allen would devise a plan for the programme of support for new course directors and would report back to QAEC once they had a sense of what would be valuable.

   3.4   JL and RA expected to be able to report back to QAEC by January 2021 at the earliest.

   10th March 2020 ref 4.7: IB would discuss the Physiotherapy practical labs with colleagues as Head of the Joint Faculty. If required, following IB's discussions, DFB could explore further with Derek Bannister to understand responsibilities in relation to the space.

   3.5   A solution had not yet been agreed, as Derek Bannister and IB had been focussing on other more pressing matters, in particular the preparations for the return to site.

10th March 2020 ref 5.1: Postgraduate programmes typically have an early and late enrolment point each year and there has been an ongoing effort to encourage all courses to synchronize their enrolment to the same time periods.

3.6 Two enrolment points for 2020/21 had been agreed: One for PA in August and one for other courses in early September.

21st April 2020 ref 4.7: QAEC acknowledged the difficulties with matching residency places for international students, but did not consider itself well placed to act on them.

3.7 RA had followed up on the concerns at UMBEC, where it was agreed that no action was required from QAEC. Action closed.

21st April 2020 ref 4.8: Consider the value and purpose of PORT, as well as how it should be captured and connected to other monitoring mechanisms, and to table a paper for QAEC to discuss how it might be implemented.

3.8 There was an aim to relaunch PORT in January 2021 at the earliest.

21st April 2020 ref 5.6: It was agreed that a review should take place into how mitigating circumstances had been enacted and decisions reached with a view to considering consistency across programmes.

3.9 Two separate approaches had been proposed to ensure consistency of mitigating circumstances decisions, one by BCP Education and one by QAEC.

3.10 BCP Education had been considering adding independent members (from other programmes) to mitigating circumstances panels. They had since found that there were already pools of independent members for postgraduate and Faculty courses. There were not currently sufficient volunteers to create a pool for IMBE.

3.11 QAEC had aimed to take a retrospective look at decisions reached with a view to considering the procedure and implementation across all programmes, but this work was set aside for the time being, but would be revisited if there was a cause.

21st April 2020 ref 6.13: The student societies had also been moving online, arranging such activities as meditation and support groups. QAEC welcomed these initiatives and suggested that Comms be made aware of them to ensure the available opportunities were widely communicated to students.

3.12 Comms were being made aware of new opportunities as they became available.

4. **QAEC Annual Programme Monitoring Summary Report session 2018/19**
To receive and consider: the summary report and QAEC Annual Programme Monitoring Action Plan
Paper QAEC/19-20/8/C

Reported

SEAG

4.1 APMRs feed into both QAEC, through the annual summaries from monitoring committees, and SEAG, which receives action plans arising from APMRs. The timing of this was not aligned, meaning that QAEC was informed of concerns long after SEAG had begun work to address them.

4.2 SEAG was currently submitting an annual report to ESSC, which could also be submitted to QAEC.

Course Director responsibilities

4.3 A business case prior to the periodic review of the MSc Sports Cardiology had been requested. This had not happened in advance of the review in January 2020 and there had been no response to the actions set by the panel. The Course Director's capacity to respond had been constrained by Covid-19 and many competing demands, but there were wider questions about engagement with quality assurance processes by course directors and how to facilitate that engagement if it were lacking, whether due to pressure of work or other reasons.

4.4   Deputy course directors had been proposed as a means of improving the capacity and responsiveness of course directors.

4.5   A role descriptor for course directors would also act as a useful starting point for ensuring clarity of responsibilities in relation to quality assurance and other tasks, consistency across course directors and supporting the planned staff development for course directors. **Action: JLi, RA, JH to agree a role description for course directors.**

Resourcing for Master's in Physician Associate Studies (MPAS).

4.6   The 18-19 report from TPCC again made explicit reference to insufficient resourcing of the MPAS and the lack of central support for the examinations function both of which have quality implications.

4.7   The programme was due for review in 2020/21 and this would provide an opportunity for the business case to be reviewed though ESSC and an adequate resource base for the programme to be put in place. Plans were in development for the Registry to take responsibility for examinations, which would help to ease the burden.

5.   **SOLTS**
To note and consider: an oral update on SOLTS and an opportunity for members to convey questions or concerns

Reported

5.1   Student engagement with, and participation in, SOLTS had been an issue and there was considerable variance, with response rates ranging from 1% to 66%. There had also been problems with entering data into SOLTS, which needed to be completed manually. Additionally, students did not always receive emails sent through the SOLTS system meaning that the loop was not being closed.

5.2   It was acknowledged that there continued to be issues with SOLTS and that there was a need to work collaboratively to resolve them. A functioning module feedback mechanism was needed for SGUL.

5.3   Solutions were being sought for larger programmes that had a high volume of lecturers and therefore an increased administrative burden, such as populating the teacher data automatically.

5.4   An action tracker was in development to provide an institutional overview of issues raised through SOLTS. It would need to be determined where accountability for the tracker and follow up on actions would sit.

5.5   Colleagues were thanked for their comments and feedback on SOLTS, which was continuing to help shape the system.

Agreed

5.6   QAEC would revisit SOLTS in six months to review progress in addressing the questions that had been raised and the changes that had been made to address the issues discussed.

6.   **Periodic Review and Validation**
To receive and consider: an update on recent and upcoming reviews and validations
Paper QAEC/19-20/8/D

Reported

6.1   MA Medical Ethics, Law and Humanities, MSc Occupational Therapy/OTD and MSc Anatomical Sciences and Practice had been due to be validated for a September 2021 launch, but had now been delayed as a result of the impact of Covid-19. They were now expected to launch in September 2022.

6.2 MRes Clinical Practice and MSc Physician Associate Studies would be reviewed or revalidated in the 2020/21 academic year.

6.3 BSc Occupational Therapy would be revalidated in the 2020/21 academic year. QAEC was informed that a request had been made for the revalidated course to launch in September 2021, which would require the normal 12-month lead-in time to be shortened. The request had not yet been put in writing. **Action: GD to liaise with the BSc Occupational Therapy course team to provide QAEC with sufficient information to reach a decision by circulation.**

To receive and agree: a proposal for the CPF to be subsumed by the PgCert HRSM for governance purposes

Paper QAEC/19-20/8/E

Agreed

6.4 That the concept of sharing modules should continue, as it provided a rewarding multi-professional and interdisciplinary experience to students.

6.5 QAEC approved the proposal for the Common Postgraduate Framework to be subsumed by the PgCert Healthcare Research Skills and Methods.

7. **Coronavirus**
To receive and consider: an update on maintaining quality and standards under exceptional circumstances, previously discussed by QAEC in April 2020

Paper QAEC/19-20/8/F

Reported

7.1 The paper provided an update to the April 2020 report to QAEC on the immediate actions taken in response to the closure of the campus to students and staff from 25th March 2020.

7.2 SGUL was moving away from BCP structures and decision-making was returning to SGUL's "business as usual" committees. The strategy for managing the Return to Site (RTS) had been articulated in a bespoke Project Plan within which RTS governance arrangements were mapped onto existing structures.

7.3 Executive Board would be asked to consider the continuing need for the *Force Majeure* regulations when it meets in July 2020.

To consider: how to quality assure the framework from CIDE an CiTE for online programme delivery

Reported

7.4 The significant amount of pressure on academic staff since the site closure and move to blended models of delivery was acknowledged.

7.5 A proportionate and flexible system for assuring the quality of the hybrid model of teaching in the autumn term was required.

7.6 CIDE had developed a health-check document with a RAG system aligned to the principals of the online education framework. A series of meetings had been arranged with course teams, in which the document would be used to encourage them to reflect on the principles and identify any further actions required.

Agreed

7.7 **Action: SM, DB and GD to review the health-check document and agree how it could be operationalised as a formal method of quality assuring online teaching that was not burdensome to course teams.**

8. **Programme Specifications for 2020/21**
To receive and consider: an update on the status of 2020/21 programme specifications and plans for 2021/22 specifications.

Paper QAEC/19-20/8/G

Reported

8.1 Compliance with CMA expectations is overseen by the Consumer Protection Compliance Group. This group is a subcommittee of QAEC, chaired by Paul Ratcliffe and supported by ERCOM. Programme Specifications have been identified by the Group as a key source of information for prospective students.

8.2 SGUL publishes programme specifications on its website to provide prospective students with information about SGUL's courses and updates these on an annual basis to take into account any changes to courses.

8.3 The QPD office had been gathering 2020/21 programme specifications from course directors for upload to the website since before the decision to deliver the 2020/21 term remotely. As a result, the specifications did not accurately reflect how courses would be taught.

Agreed

8.4 The 2020/21 specifications would be published with a disclaimer to note that the contents are subject to change.

9. Modifications
To consider: a proposed modification to MPAS programme regulations on the interruption of study

Reported

9.1 The MPAS course team wished to make in-year modifications to the programme regulations on the interruption of study.

9.2 QAEC's input was sought on whether such a modification would qualify as a major modification and therefore the deadline would already have passed.

Agreed

9.3 Further information was required and should be submitted to QAEC in ahead of the meeting. **Action: GD to liaise with Jeannie Watkins, JLa and DB.**

10. Any other Business

10.1 There were no further items of business.

11. Dates of Meetings in 2020-21

7 October 2020	19 January 2021	20 April 2021
16 November 2020	22 February 2021	19 May 2021
8 December 2020	25 March 2021	22 June 2021

11.1 All meetings will start at 2pm.

Matters for Report

12. *Degree Outcomes Statement
To receive and note: the Degree Outcomes Statement, which was submitted to Senate on the 10th June 2020.

Paper QAEC/19-20/8/H

13. *Approved request to defer review of Paramedic courses
To receive and note: the request to defer the review of Diploma/BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practice and BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, which has been approved through Chair's Action.

Paper QAEC/19-20/8/I

GD/August 2020