

Part A

Paper

1. Welcome and apologies

Attending: A Mullender (Chair), G Langton (Minutes), S Ledwith, N Williams, H Jones, V Moyses, E Howell, J Nixon, T Reeves, D McDermott, D Gregory (10:20), D Cole, T Munby (both at 11.10) and L Livesey (12:10).

Apologies: V Coulter, T Smith, J Garnett, M Daly, C Wilkes, O Halliday, B Gill and C Lushington.

2. Minutes of AQSC December 2008

P1

The Committee accepted the minutes as a true record of the December 2008 meeting.

3. Matters arising

c. Review of GFTU online courses

This item was taken first by the Chair as the contributing member (NW) was attending the Committee for this item only. The Chair outlined the concerns of the College in relation to online learning; the quality of the service to learners, the resource base and the set-up of the programmes. NW distributed a student guidance booklet that outlined the online learning process. He additionally outlined the method of delivery – with students registering with Ruskin College and attending an eighteen hour introductory course on guided learning. A sample of the submitted coursework is moderated internally and marks are confirmed by an external moderator.

Action: NW and HJ to check current tutor agreements for compatibility with online teaching and report to the next meeting

NW leaves the meeting at 10:18

a. Strategic Review of Academic Groups

The Chair introduced the item saying that the Strategic Review was a new initiative for the College. Though no precedent exists, the nature of the review (both self / peer and external at once) it was devised to assist the College's academic groups with clarity of direction with external input. The Committee heard from the Quality Officer that the Review is arranged for 20th April. SL added that DG submitted a short paper to the L/ILTUS programme board.

DG joined the meeting at 10:20

The Chair asked DG his views on how the Review would be administered. The Committee agreed that the papers would be submitted to the Panel on May 3rd 2009.

Action: GL and AM to draft agenda.

Action: GL to confirm the final makeup of the panel.

b. IfL and CPD for FE staff update

The Committee heard from EH that the progress of staff joining the IfL is not fully monitored and there is a need to devise a process for this monitoring. JN reported that topping-up a current teaching qualification to a level acceptable under the new requirements was proving problematic.

Action: GL to work with PH to establish a process for recording staff registration with IfL.

Action: AM and JN to explore the process of topping-up teaching qualifications.

c. Review of GFTU online courses

This item was taken first as the contributing member (NW) was attending the Committee for this item only.

d. Induction Week planning for part-time students

HJ reported that it has been agreed that part-time students will be required to attend the whole of Induction Week in future. Joining instructions informing students of this requirement will be distributed by the end of the first week in August.

e. Student finances, especially with regard to part-time students

The Committee heard from HJ that offer letters sent to potential students will include a PTG1 (part-time student finances) form. This form has to be countersigned by both the Academic Registrar and a representative from Finance. It was clarified that this form applies to undergraduate students only. SL brought the Committee's attention to the fact that the College's registration to ratify part-time Master's degree Career Development Loans had lapsed. This was in hand and a member of the Governing Executive just needed to sign the required papers.

Action: HJ to clarify part-time students' eligibility for loans and ensure that the process of registration is completed.

f. QA Portal

The Committee heard from the Quality Officer that a CD-rom with the programmes on it is in the post. The portal will be uploaded when the new server is in place.

g. Probationary term

The Committee heard from HJ that all undergraduate students will be subject to a probationary term from September 2009. In response to a question raised by DMCD, the Chair confirmed that there will be no student appeal against 'failing' the probationary term because it constitutes a failure to meet the conditions of a legal contract.

h. Student representatives on AQSC

The Committee heard that the student representatives from the L/ILTUS and SW boards have been elected and the Quality Officer informed. EH reminded the Committee that, from the Short Course Group, 'Ransacker' students were the most available but are only with the College for one term and have gone home by the time of the AQSC if it falls in week 11. GL reiterated that the AQSC representatives do not have to be the same people as the PB representatives. The Committee further discussed the timing of the AQSC, with the Chair emphasising the difficulty of timing the various Boards and Committees. SL suggested that the AQSC be held at the start of each term rather than the end, though EH pointed out that this would still effectively bar Short Course students from attending as it would be too soon for them to know one another.

Action: AM to review the Committee timetable to maximise student rep attendance.

i. E-repository for students' work

The Committee heard that students will now sign at enrolment contacts will be altered to allow the College to hold and distribute their work electronically.

j. Library Loans Procedure

VM reported that students' feedback on the reference only books was not positive and the library was considering a short weekend loan period for popular titles. The Committee agreed that larger numbers of copies of each title would be more effective, and that one copy of any heavily-borrowed title should be retained as reference-only.

4. Minutes for review:

P2-P7

a. Programme Boards – Spring term

- i. BA Social Work – the minutes were tabled and accepted by the Committee
- ii. Short Courses – GL apologised to the Committee for not circulating the minutes of the Short Course Board, EH reported that work to align the College's short course offer with the QCF is ongoing with partners, for example, the WEA and Oxfordshire County Council Adult Learning. All the provision will be aligned with the QCF and is likely to operate from September 2010 as term-long courses. Ruskin's Summer School will continue in some form but will be affected by the changes. It was suggested that the group look into online learning for future development of the College's short course provision. The Chair requested that this item be brought to the Committee in the summer as a substantive item to allow full discussion.
- iii. No other minutes were available from the Spring term Programmes Boards. Items **P3** to **P7** were not therefore taken by the Committee.
- iv. VM raised the issue of Library representatives on Programme Boards, suggesting that student representatives take issues directly to the Library whenever possible to speed up resolution. JN and DMcD added that tutors would bring issues to the attention of the Library if students raised them with programme teams.
- v. There followed a limited discussion on issues raised at other PBs:
 - i. L/ILTUS – SL requested that the TU Partnership Short Course team be invited to the next meeting of the Governing Executive to raise the group's profile. DG mentioned that the results of the forthcoming L/ILTUS review would be presented to the Executive in due course. The Chair agreed and suggested that Council may be a better forum for presentations at its summer meeting.
 - ii. HSS – TR raised the link between recruitment and marketing, including for programme teams. HJ suggested that a stronger link could be created if members of the programme teams attended meetings of the Outreach and Recruitment Committee and that the Marketing Officer would soon be circulating an events calendar. The Chair reminded the Committee that the Outreach and Recruitment Committee has an overview of whole-College provision.

TM and DC joined the meeting at 11:10

b. Outreach and Recruitment

The latest minutes of the Committee were not available.

5. Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review

P8

The Chair thanked CW and GL for serving on the panel as the College's nominated reviewers. The College had received a draft report from the review Coordinator, stating that the panel found more examples of good practice than areas where changes to College process and procedure are recommended. The full report will be published prior to the next AQSC.

Action: GL to bring the full report and action plan to the next AQSC.

6. Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL) – update and plans for next year and moderation **P9**

The Chair thanked the observation team for their work so far and reminded the Committee of the need to have 50 percent of the teaching staff per year observed in this observation year and the next. DMcD suggested that students should know about the OTL scheme so they are prepared in advance for their teachers being observed .

Action: GL and HJ to review the Regulatory Framework and Learning Support Handbook to establish the best place for the OTL information for students.

7. Suitability procedure **P10**

TM introduced this item to the Committee. The procedure is required to meet GSCC requirements for the BA Social Work. The draft before the Committee was the result of work done by AM, GL and the BA Social Work programme team and following review at this committee would be put forward as part of the programme management arrangements in the forthcoming revalidation of that programme.

HJ left the meeting at 11:45

The Committee discussed the proposal and agreed to seek legal advice on the soundness of the procedure.

Action: GL to make typographical amendments and pass the updated document to Chair and TM

8. (Re)Validation update

- i. Social Work (SW) **P11**

The Committee heard that the papers have been submitted to OUVS and GSCC and that the team is confident of a successful event.

A short break was taken 12:00 – 12:10

LL joined the meeting at 12:10

- ii. CertHE Law / CertHE Labour Relations and Law **P12**
- iii. BA(Hons) ILTUS **P13**

The above two items were taken together by the Chair as the revalidation events will be held in tandem.

The Committee heard from DG that the student handbooks and programme specifications for both programmes have been completed for the preliminary event. The Committee discussed the title of the CertHE exit award and agreed it would be changed to CertHE International Labour and Trade Union Studies.

- iv. FdA Writing for Performance **P14**

The Committee heard from GL that the papers for the preliminary event have been distributed to the Panel. TR told the Committee that his reservations with the proposal are well documented and, though he found the initiative exciting he hoped the preliminary event would clarify the validation process. The Committee discussed the required staffing levels for the proposal, including the management of

students on placement and the tutor team. EH commented on the strength and experience of the tutors in their fields but possibly not in the pastoral requirements of 'Ruskin' students, a view which was echoed by TR. AM informed the Committee that it was anticipated the programme would need to recruit around 15 students in its first year. TM reminded the Committee of the need to establish links with placement providers in advance via Memoranda of Agreement. This was in hand. The Committee agreed to put the proposal to preliminary validation.

DG left the meeting at 12.25

v. CertHE Combined Studies **P15**
JN reported that the reports and C15 are complete. The paperwork would be reviewed in conjunction with GL with a view to finalising the documents for the preliminary planned for mid June 2009. The Committee discussed the potential progression routes, with the Law degree at Oxford Brookes University being added as a possibility for students taking law modules. The Chair extended the thanks of the Committee to JN for all the work done so far.

JN left the meeting at 12:40

12. Regulatory Framework

P18

This item was taken out of sequence on the request of the Chair.

9. Data for annual reports

P16

The Committee heard that GL will form a group to look into the production of data for the annual OUVS reports and SAR. A meeting with the College's MIS advisor (Giles Orr) has been made for 9th April 2009 to review the production of data from the Target MIS program.

10. National Student Survey 2008/2009

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The Committee heard that the College's current response rate was at 38%, up from 32% at this stage last year. Should there be more than 50% response then the College will have its results published and full benchmarking against the sector will be possible. The Committee urged the relevant programme teams to remind students that they are eligible to complete the survey until the end of April 2009.
[Postscript: 53% return rate achieved at the time of writing]

11. Counsellor's report

P17

The Committee welcomed and received the report.

12. Regulatory Framework

P18

This item was taken out of sequence on the request of the Chair.

The Chair introduced the item by telling the Committee that the proposed changes to the Regulatory Framework were intended produced to integrate the MA programmes into the Framework. SL and LL brought various typographical inconsistencies to the attention of the Committee. The section on plagiarism would be removed as the revised RF would form part of the student handbooks for each programme and the information need not be duplicated. AM noted that the omission of regulations with regard to dyslexic students could be rectified at a later date following substantive discussion. The Committee passed the Framework to be sent to OUVS for approval following the agreed typographical and order changes.

Action: GL to amend the Framework and distribute.

EH left the meeting at 12:55

SL left the meeting at 13:15

TR left the meeting at 13:15

Next meeting: 19th June 2009 at 2pm