H/02/27/02
CSPC: 19.11.15

Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) held on Thursday 19 November 2015 at 2.00pm in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House

Present:

Professor Ian Pirie (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Learning and Development
Professor Graeme Reid (Vice-Convener)	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSCE)
Dr Adam Bunni	Representation and Democracy Manager, EUSA
Professor Helen Cameron	Director, Centre for Medical Education (CMVM)
Ms Joy Candlish	Head of Academic Affairs (CSCE)
Professor Alexis Grohmann	Associate Dean, Academic Progress (CHSS)
Dr Neil Lent	Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Dr Sheila Lodge	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Mr John Lowrey	Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CHSS)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Students (CSCE)
Dr Ewen Macpherson	School of Engineering
Professor Alan Murray	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Mr Barry Neilson	Director of Student Systems
Ms Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web
Ms Imogen Wilson	Vice President, Academic Affairs, EUSA

In attendance:

Mr Kristian Adamson	CHSS Administrator, Governance
Jeremy Bradshaw	Assistant Principal, Researcher Development
Professor Charlie Jeffery	Senior Vice-Principal
Dr Gavin McCabe	Employability Consultant
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback
Ms Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

Apologies for absence:

Professor Allan Cumming	Dean of Students (CMVM)
Dr Soledad Garcia - Ferrari	ESALA, Edinburgh College of Art
Dr Theresa McKinven	Head of PG Section (CHSS)

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 17 September 2015 were approved as an accurate record, subject to the following amendments:

Item 16 Any Other Business

   a) Typo corrected - Professor Graeme Reid

   b) Study Abroad Progression Committee - annual meetings had been held in the College of Humanities and Social Science and the College of Science and Engineering (rather than in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine as stated).

2. Matters Arising

a) Electronic Business – Children and Protected Adults Policy (matters arising)

The draft Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy that had been brought to the Committee had now been reviewed by the Central Management Group (CMG). Revisions included a change of name, to the Children and Protected Adults Policy. CMG had now approved the policy, subject to final confirmation through the Combined Joint Consultative Negotiative Committee (CSCNC). It was anticipated that this would occur at the end of November 2015, and the outcome of this would be reported back to CSPC.

b) PCIM Follow-Up (item 4)

The Committee noted that Academic Services is in the process of taking forward various follow-up actions from the PCIM project, including:

- working with Colleges to run Board of Studies sessions to discuss progress with the enhanced course descriptor, highlight good practice in writing learning outcomes, discuss team-based approaches to course design, and highlight the implications of the new Consumer and Marketing Authority (CMA) guidance;

- encouraging Schools to remove redundant courses;

- evaluating the impact of the new policy on course and programme handbooks.

c) Proposed Pilot of Examination Arrangements for Online Distance Learning Students (item 5)

Mr Ward updated colleagues on these proposals. It was unlikely that the pilot of examination arrangements would take place as anticipated by the Committee at the last meeting in September 2015, when this item was discussed (as a closed paper). Further details would be made available to the Committee once the position was clarified further.

d) Taught Assessment Regulations 2015/16 (Regulation 15 – Feedback Deadlines)

College representatives were invited to report on any specific opt-outs from the feedback regulation that had been considered by the relevant College committee, in accordance with Taught Assessment Regulation 15.3 (2015/16). This regulation stated….”For other summative assessed work, in exceptional circumstances, where the necessary marking and moderation processes cannot be concluded within 15 working days, Schools may request an opt-out from the relevant College committee”.

The Committee received a tabled paper of the opt-outs from this regulation in 2015/16 from Schools within the College of Science and Engineering. These opt-outs had been approved by the College Learning and Teaching Committee on 20 October 2015.

The Colleges of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine and College of Humanities and Social Science (CHSS) gave verbal updates on the position within their areas. The College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine did not have any opt-outs to report. The College of Humanities and Social Science had received opt-out requests for undergraduate courses from the School of Education. It was understood that there had been some postgraduate opt-outs from CHSS, which would be reported back to CSPC at their next meeting.

The Senior Vice-Principal re-iterated that opt-outs should be seen as the exception and should only be granted where needed to address a specific issue. Every effort should then be made to ensure full compliance with the regulation for the next delivery of the affected course.

> **ACTION: Mr Kristian Adamson to check the position regarding any postgraduate opt-outs from this regulation this year within the College of Humanities and Social Science. Any opt-outs would be reported back to CSPC at the next meeting.**

e) Special Circumstances Task Group Update

The Committee noted that this task group has begun its review of the University's Special Circumstances Policy. At the first meeting the task group had discussed the challenges of taking account of medical documentation (particularly for mental health conditions), alternate approaches to corroborating students' special circumstances (including clarity on the position regarding student self-certification), and varying practices in managing Special Circumstances Committees. The group was also expecting to conduct a review of policy and practice in relation to extensions to coursework deadlines, in the context of special circumstances. An interim report was expected to be presented to CSPC early in 2016.

f) Room bookings (AOB) and pressure on course delivery

At the last CSPC meeting in September, a member had raised a concern about room bookings, in relation to disruption to course delivery at the start of semester 1. Confirmation on the current position had been sought from the relevant service in advance of the meeting and the following had been confirmed:

Concurrent estate development work had caused significant disruption to the teaching estate, delivering a net loss of 30% against the central area total. Business continuity was delivered through a combination of greater use of outlying teaching zones (primarily Holyrood) and the implementation of emergency additional space provided through the College of Science and Engineering, Information Services Group and Schools. Although all teaching was eventually accommodated, it was recognised that an increase in disruption and inconvenience was experienced by students and Schools. The University's Chief Information Officer Gavin McLachlan was currently undertaking a review of recent events, which was due for completion during December 2015. It was likely that key lessons-learned and recommendations would emerge as part of ensuring the elimination of future risk in this area.

Accommodation for core teaching in semester 2 was well advanced, with a small number of outstanding issues to resolve. Arrangements were currently being made to secure some additional space to further alleviate pressure on semester 2 core teaching.

g) Study abroad update

Members were updated on recent reflective discussions on study abroad across Colleges and support services, and plans for future developments, following the College (Humanities and Social Science and Science and Engineering) Study Abroad Progression Board meetings held earlier this year. The Committee agreed to establish a short-life task group to focus this work.

3. Assessment and Progression Tools Project (CSPC 15/16 2 A)

Mr Barry Neilson presented this item.

Colleagues were updated on the latest developments and discussed future plans for this project. All recommendations outlined in the paper presented were firmly endorsed, including:

- a recommendation for open discussions to occur with Schools regarding progression rules and options for any systems development to be able to support these;

- recommendations regarding programme and course administration (e.g. relating to defining compulsory and core modules);

- a recommendation to move to the position whereby ratified semester 1 course marks are all published after semester 1 Boards of Examiner meetings (rather than being ratified by a Board at the end of semester 2). This recommendation was particularly firmly supported by the Committee. Opt-outs would only be approved if there was a firm pedagogical reason for this;

- a recommendation for work to clarify the stages, roles and responsibilities of Boards of Examiners, timelines and publication of outcomes.

Draft proposed key dates for 2016/17 were circulated for consultation.

Members discussed progression rules, and it was noted that approximately 60% of undergraduate programmes had some sort of elevated hurdle into honours study. It was agreed that removal, or harmonisation of the use, of elevated hurdles wherever possible would be extremely desirable. It was further suggested that an analysis of students who fell short of elevated hurdles would help us to further understand the impact of it. Further discussion would be required in some areas on any professional body requirements with regard to elevated hurdles.

The Assessment and Progression Tools project would continue its work with colleagues in Schools and Colleges in developing the tools which would support the assessment and Board of Examiner processes, led by the Steering Group.

4. Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Third Party Credit Rating Policy (CSPC 15/16 2 B)

The Committee approved this policy, subject to some further minor amendments that had been identified since the policy had been circulated. The policy was to be published on the Academic Services website.

> **ACTION: Pippa Ward in Academic Service to finalise policy and publish on the website at:**
> **http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/policies**

5. Student-Led Individually Created Courses (SLICC) Pilot (Verbal Update)

Dr Gavin McCabe gave a verbal update to the Committee on this item.

The Committee discussed how to approach the evaluation of the pilot and agreed in principle that, unless the pilot highlighted any particular issues, a larger SLICCs pilot would run in 2015-16 commencing in semester 2 with students undertaking their SLICCs during the

vacation period as previously. Dr McCabe would bring a paper to CSPC in January 2016 on this. Any more detailed queries from members regarding the evaluation, or aspects that members felt should be covered in the evaluation were to be communicated to Dr McCabe directly over the next few weeks at gavin.mccabe@ed.ac.uk

6. Semester 1, 2015 Examination Timetable (CSPC 15/16 2 C)

The Committee received a briefing paper on semester 1 (2015/16) examination timetable scheduling, for information.

7. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report (CSPC 15/16 2 D)

A report on the latest discussions at the Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) was received for information. Members expressed the view that it would be beneficial for Senate to be represented on this Committee by Senate Committee Conveners or Vice-Conveners, given the strategic importance of the Committee.

8. Academic Year Dates 2017/18 and Provisional Academic Year Dates 2018/19 (CSPC 15/16 2 E)

The academic year dates for 2017/18 and provisional academic year dates for 2018/19 were approved as presented.

> **ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to pass approved 2017/18 academic year dates to Communications and Marketing for the semester dates page on the University website: http://www.ed.ac.uk/news/semester-dates**
>
> **ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to ask Student Administration for resit dates for 2017/18 and circulate to colleagues/include on relevant semester dates page.**

9. Student Discipline Officers 2015/16 (CSPC 15/16 2 F)

The Committee approved the revised Student Discipline Officer list for 2015/16. Dr Antony Maciocia had replaced Professor Alan Murray as a Student Discipline Officer. Dr Sarah Henderson (Deputy Director, Postgraduate Taught) was added to the list (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine), and Professor Sue Rigby was removed.

> **ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to revise Student Discipline Officer 2015/16 list and publish on the website at: http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Discipline/StudentDisciplineOfficers.pdf**

10. CSPC Concessions Report 2014/15 (CSPC 15/16 2 CLOSED G)

The Committee noted the contents of the (closed paper) CSPC concessions report.

11. Any Other Business

Professor Graeme Reid extended his thanks to Professor Pirie on behalf of the Committee for all of his support and leadership in his time as Convener of CSPC (since 2011). Professor Pirie was due to retire in December 2015, at which point Professor Alan Murray (Assistant Principal, Academic Support) would become Convener of CSPC.

Dr Antony Maciocia was no longer a co-opted member of the Committee - Dr Maciocia now occupied a position under the Terms of Reference 5.4 (a senior member of staff within the College who has responsibility for maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience), by way of his recent appointment as Dean of Students in the College of Science and Engineering.

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Services, 3 December 2015