H/02/27/02
CSPC: 21.01.16

Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) held on Thursday 21 January 2016 at 2.00p.m. in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House

Present:

Professor Graeme Reid (Vice-Convener)	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSCE)
Dr Theresa McKinven	Head of PG Section (CHSS)
Ms Joy Candlish	Head of Academic Affairs (CSCE)
Dr Sheila Lodge	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Professor Helen Cameron	Director, Centre for Medical Education (CMVM)
Mr John Lowrey	Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CHSS)
Professor Allan Cumming	Dean of Students (CMVM)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Students (CSCE)
Ms Imogen Wilson	Vice President Academic Affairs, EUSA
Dr Neil Lent	Institute for Academic Development
Dr Soledad Garcia-Ferrari	ESALA, Edinburgh College of Art
Dr Ewen Macpherson	School of Engineering
Professor John Stewart	Director, Biomedical Teaching Organisation
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback

In attendance:

Ms Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Dr Gavin McCabe	Employability Consultant
Dr Simon Riley	College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)
Mr Craig Shearer	Head of Student Administration Services
Mr Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

Apologies for absence:

Professor Alan Murray (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Mr Alan Brown	Associate Dean (Academic Progress), (CHSS)
Dr Adam Bunni	Representation and Democracy Manager, EUSA
Professor Lesley McAra	Assistant Principal, Community Relations
Mr Barry Neilson	Director of Student Systems
Ms Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web

The meeting was convened by Professor Graeme Reid (Vice-Convener).

It was reported that Professor Susan Rhind and Professor Lesley McAra were now "ex-officio" members of CSPC as of 20 January 2015, following e-Senate approval of the new CSPC Terms of Reference.

ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to post the revised Terms of Reference on the website at:
http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Committees/CSCP/CSPCRemit.pdf

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> **ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to amend the CSPC membership list at:**
> http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/curriculum-student-progression/members

Dr Alexis Grohmann was formally thanked for his contribution to the work of the Committee, which had been very welcome.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 19 November 2015 were approved as an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising

a) Protection of Children and Protected Adults Policy

The Protection of Children and Protected Adults Policy had recently been submitted to various University committees for approval, the last of which was the Combined Joint Consultation and Negotiating Committee (CJCNC) on 30 November 2015. The policy was now approved, and had been published on the University website for both staff (http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/HumanResources/Policies/Protection_of_Children_and_Protected_Adults_Policy.pdf) and students (www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/policies).

The policy set out how the University protected children and protected adults who came into contact with the University community by ensuring that there were clear guidelines and procedures for identifying risk and reporting concerns. It also set out the University's policy in relation to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme and relevant criminal convictions.

b) Taught Assessment Regulations 2015/16 – Feedback Deadlines (PG CHSS)

Dr Theresa McKinven reported opt-outs from this regulation (exceptions to the 15 working day feedback deadline) from within the College of Humanities and Social Science. The expectation was that the opt-outs would only be required for the coming year, with Schools developing plans for compliance with the turnaround time for 2016/17. The opt-outs were granted to specific taught postgraduate courses in: Law School, Edinburgh College of Art (School of Design) and Moray House School of Education (Professional Graduate Diploma in Education). Dr McKinven provided the Committee with specific details of the rationale for these opt-outs.

3. Student-Led Individually-Created Courses (SLICCs): Phase 1 pilot evaluation and Phase 2 pilot proposal

Dr Simon Riley and Dr Gavin McCabe presented this paper, which provided a summary of the main evaluation findings to date and invited CSPC to formally approve a Phase 2 SLICCs pilot. The Committee approved the paper and agreed that an expanded SLICCs pilot would run in 2015/16, starting in semester 2 and involving up to 100 students. This would provide these students with the opportunity to gain 10 credits at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 8.

The proposals regarding structure outlined in 15a) and 15b) of the paper were approved. The Committee agreed that Schools should be invited to agree to students on their programmes participating in the pilot.

For the aspect of the pilot that related to SLICCs for additional credit, a SLICC could be viewed as an elective course for additional credit that Year 1 and Year 2 undergraduate students could opt into for the summer 2016 vacation period. The last pilot involved students of good academic standing at the time of submission of their SLICC proposal (and starting their SLICC), and this approach was to continue in the expanded pilot. Permission to register for a SLICC would need to be signed off by the Personal Tutor. Final SLICC assessments would be submitted by students in early September 2016, before the start of the academic year, and would be reviewed by a Board of Examiners in the School of Education in late September 2016.

Discussion was held on the status of the credit achieved within the expanded pilot. It was noted that when running reports on EUCLID for progression purposes, SLICC courses would look like any other credit, therefore, it would not be plausible to remove them from the calculation. The Committee agreed to move now to a position in which students would be able to count these credits towards their programmes and towards progression (where the relevant Degree Programme Table allowed for it, not in place of compulsory/core credit etc.) For the expanded pilot, given that the Board of Examiners would not be meeting until late September 2016, the credits would remain un-awarded at the time of decisions made on progression, hence they would be for additional credit at the time of the progression review.

The Committee further agreed that the expanded pilot involving SLICCs for additional credit (described under 15a in the paper) would only involve Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 8 courses, and would not include SCQF Level 10 courses.

A small task group would oversee and manage the next pilot, with representatives from IAD and Schools, including Dr Gavin McCabe and Dr Simon Riley.

> **ACTION: Dr Simon Riley and Dr Gavin McCabe to circulate information on the expanded SLICCs pilot to Heads of Schools, Directors of Learning and Teaching, and Senior Tutors, and to seek agreement from Schools to participate in the pilot.**

4. Timing of semester 1 examination diets: December 2016 and December 2017

Mr Craig Shearer presented this paper to the Committee. The paper was formally approved.

It was agreed to add two days to the December examination diet in 2016 and one additional day in 2017.

The December examination diet would now end on 21 December 2016 (rather than 19 December 2016) and the December examination diet would start on 8 rather than 9 December 2017.

These additional days would assist the University to provide an examination schedule that minimised the number of students taking more than one examination per day.

In line with what was previously agreed for the December 2015 revision period, it was agreed to ask Schools to make every attempt to organise their provision wherever possible in order to avoid teaching activity on Thursday and Friday of week 11 in 2016 (e.g. if possible to avoid

scheduling lectures, tutorials, laboratory sessions or other teaching activities on those days). Although this related primarily to undergraduate provision, Schools were to take it into account for any postgraduate taught (PGT) provision where there were PGT students with December exams (and disregard this for programmes in which none of the UG/PGT courses that students took involved examinations in semester 1).

> **ACTION: Ailsa Taylor - the amended examination diet dates to be published at** http://www.ed.ac.uk/news/semester-dates
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> **ACTION: Ailsa Taylor – a message was to be sent out from the Convener of CSPC conveying the Committee's agreement about avoidance of teaching activity on Thursday and Friday of Week 11 in 2016 wherever possible. This would be sent to Directors of Teaching, College contacts, CSPC members.**

5. New Degree Programmes Edinburgh Medical School: Biomedical Sciences

Professor John Stewart presented this paper, and provided the Committee with an overview of the collaboration with Zhejiang (including showing a short video). The Committee commented on programme proposals and curriculum structures for two new planned initiatives, one of which involved collaboration with Zhejiang University in China with the establishment of a University of Edinburgh Institute (ZJU-UoE Institute). For the ZJU-UoE Institute, students would be enrolled in both Universities and awarded a degree from each University (currently referred to by the Quality Assurance Agency as a "double award").

Ms Imogen Wilson raised a concern about the compulsory formal military training that would take place within Zhejiang University at undergraduate level. It was noted that in China, the degree awarding powers rested with the Ministry of Education, and that military training was compulsory. Professor Stewart noted that he understood that this military training aspect would not be specifically recorded as University of Edinburgh credit, therefore not appearing on University of Edinburgh transcripts.

> **ACTION: Professor Stewart agreed to clarify the position further on the military training issue in relation to credit/transcripts, and report back to the March 2016 CSPC meeting.**

Proposals regarding regulations and policies (e.g. assessment regulations including progression rules, special circumstances guidelines) were currently under development and would be presented to the March 2016 meeting of CSPC.

The Committee approved the paper as presented.

In approving the paper, the Committee agreed to an opt-out from the normal University of Edinburgh Curriculum Framework (the opt-out being that students would have the opportunity to study at least 40 credits per year from across the University in year one). It also agreed an opt-out from the normal University of Edinburgh academic year, on the understanding that the planned academic year structure would involve more teaching weeks than the University's current academic year structure. In addition, with reference to the University's Dual/Double/Multiple Awards Policy, the Committee agreed to operate a double awards model for this programme.

> **ACTION: Professor Stewart to report back to the March 2016 CSPC meeting with proposals for ZJE-UoE regulations and policies.**

It was anticipated that Senate would be asked to approve the proposals relating to the ZJE-UoE programme in June 2016, and CSPC would be asked to deal with the detailed regulatory aspects of the proposals.

6. Special Circumstances Task Group: Interim Report

Mr Tom Ward presented this item. A paper updated the Committee on interim task group proposals for clarifying the University's practice in handling special circumstances cases, and dealing with requests for coursework extensions.

In general CSPC welcomed and endorsed the task group's initial recommendations, including strongly encouraging the group to consider how EUCLID could support business processes for handling special circumstances.

CSPC discussed some specific issues in more detail:

- It discussed the respective roles of Special Circumstances Committees (SCC) and Boards of Examiners (BoE). It agreed that SCC decisions regarding whether there were special circumstances and their impact on the assessment process should be binding. On balance, it agreed with the task group that, while SCCs could make recommendations regarding the appropriate action to take, BoEs must have the flexibility to make a final decision on this since they may have information and expertise that the SCC does not have. It did, however, emphasise that it was important for SCCs to provide very clear information regarding the impact of the special circumstances, to allow a Board of Examiners to make a final decision regarding the appropriate action to take.

- In principle, CSPC welcomed the idea of making it explicit that alternative forms of corroboration to medical documentation could be appropriate for both physical and mental health issues. The Committee did however express reservations regarding whether it would be appropriate to accept corroboration from other students, since this might put undue pressure on those other students and place students without networks of friends at a disadvantage. It also expressed some reservations regarding corroboration from family members for similar reasons. It was suggested that the task group may wish to have further discussion regarding the appropriate position on these issues.

- CSPC noted that Schools should avoid inadvertently 'double-counting' the impact of special circumstances by taking them into account both for coursework extensions and special circumstances. Holding information about special circumstances and coursework extensions on EUCLID would assist Schools to address this issue.

- The Committee confirmed that Schools should put in place SCCs for the courses / programmes for which they are the 'lead' School. The consequence of this was that students whose special circumstances impacted on different courses in different subject areas or Schools would have those special circumstances considered in multiple SCCs, meaning that there was a risk of inconsistent treatment regarding the same circumstances. While accepting that this was not ideal, the Committee felt that it was unavoidable in practice, and that the alternative (of BoEs accepting recommendations from the SCC that owns the student's programme) would lead to the equally undesirable position of students on the same course receiving differential treatment for equivalent circumstances. The Committee therefore confirmed that the SCC of the BoE owning the

course would make recommendations regarding all students on that course, and that the SCC of the BoE owning the programme would make recommendations on award / progression for all students on that programme. In this context, it emphasised that the way to ensure consistent treatment in these circumstances was to have clear and consistent policy.

A number of issues were identified which would require further discussion by the task group.

- We need to make it clear what is the difference between the "good reason" for coursework extension and that of special circumstances. In addition, when quoting "good reasons" for extension to course work, it needs to be clear whether a short term relapse or an exacerbation of a chronic condition will be deemed a "good reason".

- The Special Circumstances Policy should clarify which school is responsible for the special circumstances recommendation – owning programme, or owning course.

- The Special Circumstances Policy should specify the decisions available to the SCC, clarifying decisions that can be made by Schools, and which decisions require College approval.

- The task group will need to consider the timing of when SCCs should be scheduled, liaising closely with the Assessment and Progression Tools task group, which will be considering the key dates associated with Boards of Examiner activities.

- Should there be a case for a policy of 'notify as soon as special circumstances are known'? An online solution could enable this by allowing the form to be submitted in a 'notification' state, without substantial detail.

7. Postgraduate Degree Regulations: Leave of Absence

The Committee agreed to clarify the definition of leave of absence in the postgraduate degree regulations for 2016/17 (and to mirror this as closely as possible in the undergraduate degree regulations), with draft text proposed as follows:

'Leave of absence is required for compulsory and optional activities related to the programme of study that are not undertaken on campus in Edinburgh. Students must seek formal approval from the School for any leave of absence to study away from Edinburgh that is 60 calendar days' duration or longer. Permission may be sought at admission or during the period of study. All approved leaves of absence must be recorded in the student record. Study location changes of less than 60 days must be agreed with the Supervisor or Personal Tutor, but do not need formal approval from the School and need not be recorded in the student record. This regulation does not apply to students on a recognised distance learning programme'.

The final draft assessment and degree regulations would come to the April 2016 meeting of CSPC for approval.

8. Approval processes for action where a student has failed to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme

Mr Tom Ward presented this item. This paper invited the Committee to discuss proposals for changes to the levels of delegation for action under Taught Assessment Regulation 63.

The Committee agreed to amend this regulation within the Taught Assessment Regulations for 2016/17, and also ask the Special Circumstances Policy review group to take account of this.

Changes to levels of approval were approved as presented in the paper, subject to authority for 'requiring the student to be examined at a subsequent diet either after repeating some or all of the coursework or without repeating the coursework' resting at School level by Boards of Examiners, rather than at College level (if contained within the same academic session).

Colleges would be responsible for maintaining records of their decision-making under Taught Assessment Regulation 63, and reporting this data annually to CSPC as part of its annual report on concessions which would be expected at each September CSPC meeting. CSPC would then be able to monitor patterns and trends in concessions approved by Colleges.

> **ACTION: College representatives to ensure that concession data reported annually to CSPC each September. The 2015/16 concession data would be analysed in September 2016.**

9. PCIM Post-Project Update

This paper was received for information.

Committee members were asked to encourage Schools to close redundant courses which had never had any enrolments, or had not within the last three years. Reports were being generated with Student Systems which identified gaps in course information and courses with no enrolments, and these were being distributed to Schools and Colleges. Exemplar course descriptors had also been identified and posted on the wiki.

10. Review of the Academic Year

Mr Tom Ward presented this item. The Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) were due to consider a proposal in the following week, for the University to consider a review of the academic year. This was in response to concerns that had been raised about the asymmetry of the current academic year and the associated exam diet implications and limitations on types of assessment. If LTC agreed, there would be a review of the academic year, involving modelling and analysis of options, benchmarking and consultation. Two possible options included examining semester 1 courses in January rather than December, or trying to start semester 1 earlier in order to bring symmetry for revision/exam diets, and create more space for revision. Further options would also be explored, with the expectation that a decision would be arrived at by Senate in June 2016.

11. Dignity and Respect Policy

Mr Tom Ward presented this item. The Dignity and Respect Policy had been updated and was to be approved by Central Management Group and University Court at their meetings in January/February 2016. The main changes to the policy affected staff; it was substantively unchanged for students.

12. Any Other Business

There was no further business.

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services, 10 February 2016.