Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Wednesday 12th December 2012 at 13.15

Venue: Council Chamber

Present: Dr P Lambert, Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) (Chair)
Ms E Barratt Hacking, Department of Education
Dr D Clarke, Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies
Prof J Copestake, Department of Social and Policy Sciences
Ms H Fouquet, Learning Partnerships Office
Dr F Gillison, Department for Health
Dr R Joiner, Department of Psychology
Prof A Lewis, Psychology
Dr T Skinner, Department of Social and Policy Sciences
Dr S Martin, Department of Education
Dr P McGuigan, Department for Health
Miss A Rees, Student
Prof J Sessions, Economics
Miss H Wade, Students’ Union
Dr C Winnett, Economics

In Attendance: Miss S E Jacobs, Faculty Assistant Registrar (Secretary)
Ms A Hill, Deputy Graduate School Manager

Apologies: Dr J Brice, Graduate School Manager
Dr H Diamond, Politics, Languages and International Studies
Prof S Gough, Associate Dean (Graduate Studies)
Mr S McGall, Learning and Teaching Enhancement Office
Ms H Harrison, Student
Ms M Woodward, Learning Partnerships Office

ACTION

1123. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th November 2012 (paper 64) were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.

1124. **MATTERS ARISING**

   (1) **Minute 1114 (3) Unit Annual Monitoring Report**

   The Committee noted that the amended form, which now includes a section for details of formative assessment, is on the Faculty web page.
The Committee also noted that all Undergraduate and Postgraduate Unit Co-ordinators are expected to use this form for their annual reporting on units. It was also noted that Departments are expected to provide students with summaries of feedback and annual monitoring and that most now make use of Moodle for this.

(2) **Minute 1120 Assessment Offences**
The Chair reported that it had not yet been possible to meet with Directors of Learning and Teaching to discuss any issues arising from assessment offence investigations during 2011/12.

1125. **CHAIR’S BUSINESS**
(1) **Academic promotion**
The Committee congratulated Dr Tina Sinner on her recent promotion to Senior Lecturer.

(2) **Faculty Annual Quality Report**
The Committee noted that the Chair and Secretary have drafted a report for submission to the University Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.

(3) **Feedback on Examinations**
The Committee noted that all Departments in the Faculty provide students with an opportunity for feedback on examinations, although it was noted that for some the feedback is mostly generic.

1126. **PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING**
The Chair was pleased to note that all departments had engaged with the requirement for peer review of teaching activities in the recent months. He was pleased to note that there was a lot of engagement with issues and that a lot of examples of good practice had been identified through the process. The Chair encouraged members to take examples of good practice from other departmental reports.

(1) **Department of Economics**
The Committee received a summary of the peer review activities which have taken place (paper 65). The Committee felt that it should have been possible for the report to include details of outcomes of the process and examples of good practice. Prof Sessions indicated that there was nothing of note to report.

(2) **Department of Education**
The Committee considered a detailed report on activities which have taken place (paper 66), noting that the activities were focused on the improvement of aspects of teaching which were specific to individual programmes. The committee noted that the exercise had led to the development of a research project and commented that the professional development and team work aspects of the activity had been excellent.

(3) **Department for Health**
The Committee considered a detailed report on activities around certain topics (paper 67). The Committee agreed that the identification of a number of themes and the opportunity for staff to choose that which they felt was most relevant to them was a good approach. The Committee noted that there were a number of interesting ideas which could be of
interest to other Departments.

(4) **Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies**  
The Committee considered a summary report on activities (paper 68), noting that the use of Moodle for the peer review of teaching had helped in the engagement of staff with the activity.

(5) **Department of Psychology**  
The Committee considered a summary report on activities (paper 69) noting that there had been a lot of activity under themed headings which related to the teaching groups of the Department.

(6) **Department of Social and Policy Sciences**  
The Committee considered a summary report on activities (paper 70) noting that there had been a wide range of activities. The Committee noted in particular that a number of examples of excellent practice in the use of Moodle had been identified which could be more widely employed.

1127. **GENERIC MARKING CRITERIA**  
**Department of Social and Policy Sciences**  
The Committee noted amendments which have been made to the First Class section of the Undergraduate Marking Criteria (paper 71).

1128. **NSS 2012 ACTION PLANS**  
The Committee discussed departmental action plans in response to the most recent NSS results. Members identified highlights from each.

(1) **Department of Economics (paper 72)**  
The Committee noted that there has been an improvement in overall scores but that there remained an issue with regard to feedback provided to students. It was noted that the Department has been able to appoint a number of Teaching Fellows and that it is hoped that this will address some of the issues in relation to feedback to students. The Committee noted the useful ‘Guidance for Lecturers’ which was appended to the report.

(2) **Department of Education (paper 73)**  
The Committee noted that the main issue for students continued to be that of feedback and academic support. It was noted, however, that the Department is trialling a number of ideas including feedback for one unit within 1 week of the submission of coursework. The Committee noted that it is not easy for Departments to be able to respond to individual anonymous qualitative comments.

(3) **Department for Health (paper 74)**  
The Committee noted that the overall scores for the BSc Sport and Exercise Science had dropped considerably in 2012 and that the Department had not been able to identify the cause for this. The Committee agreed that the use of the SSLC as a more pro-active body for identifying issues earlier is a good idea. The Committee also noted some examples of good practice in relation to feedback to students.

(4) **Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies (paper 75)**  
The Committee was pleased to note that there was an upward trend in the
scores for this Department. The Committee noted that it is planned that feedback to students on coursework for four units will be uploaded to Moodle as a trial this semester. Members of the Committee indicated that they would be interested to learn how this is received by students. The Committee noted that this would force members of staff to type their feedback.

(5) **Department of Psychology (paper 76)**

The Committee noted that there had been a drop in the satisfaction percentage for assessment and feedback from 80% to 67% but that the Department had not been able to identify a specific reason for this. The Committee noted that teaching staff are being encouraged to more consistently apply marking criteria. Dr Joiner reported to the Committee that the Department had made a lot of changes in recent years, for example moving to more assessed coursework and presentations and the introduction of more seminars, and that he anticipated that the impact of this will be seen in more positive NSS scores in future years.

The Committee noted that the provision of the % scores over the history of the NSS in table form was a useful addition to this report which others might like to replicate in the future.

(6) **Department of Social and Policy Sciences (paper 77)**

The Committee noted the clear action plan and progress in relation to each action point. It was also agreed that the fact that the Department had discussed the proposed action plan with students at SSLC was an example of good practice.

1129. **ANNUAL MONITORING REPORTS FOR 2011/12 FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

The Chair thanked Directors of Studies, noting that the quality of the undergraduate annual monitoring reports for 2011/12 was in the majority of cases greatly improved in comparison with previous years. The Committee was pleased to note that the majority had incorporated the External Examiners' reports and Heads of Department responses to these, with a few exceptions noted below. The Committee was also pleased to note that all Directors of Studies had evaluated the impact and effectiveness of SSLCs on the development and operation of their programmes (the special University-set theme).

(1) **Department of Economics**

The Committee discussed the report for the following programmes (paper 78):

- BSc Economics
- BSc Economics and Politics
- BSc Economics with International Relations

The Committee commented that it would have expected this report to make some reference to each of the individual programmes, although it was recognised that a joint report for the suite of programmes was appropriate. It was also noted that the report made no reference to the Degree Scheme Review which had taken place during 2011/12. The Committee agreed that the Head of Department’s response letters to the External Examiners were not sufficiently detailed. Dr Winnett pointed out that the Department responds in detail in person to the External Examiners
when they are in attendance for Boards of Examiners. It was agreed, however, that a more detailed written response would be expected in the future. The Committee noted that a report had not yet been received from the third External Examiner appointed to these programmes and this should be sought as soon as possible.

The Committee noted that Facebook is used increasingly as a means to communicate with students. It was suggested by a student member of the Committee that Departments should ensure that information is also provided via another format as not all students wish to use Facebook.

(2) **Department of Education**

(i) • BA Coach Education and Sports Development (now BA Sport and Social Science) (paper 79)

The Committee noted that this was a comprehensive report. The Committee noted that the External Examiner had made some unusually negative comments about administrative problems. The Committee noted that these had now been addressed through the appointment of new permanent administrative staff. The Committee also noted that the Department of Education had decided to hold programme-specific SSLC meetings.

(ii) • FdSc Sport (Sports Performance) (paper 80)

The Committee noted that there continue to be challenges in relation to the delivery of this programme, in particular in relation to the fact that the majority of students must manage sporting commitments alongside their academic work. A consequence of this was a relatively high drop-out rate (6 students, 10.5%). The Committee noted the positive external examiner’s report, noting that the external examiner was pleased to note that issues and tensions identified in previous years had been resolved and that the programme now benefits from a young and enthusiastic programme team with an appropriate level of support within the Department of Education.

(iii) • BSc Sport (Sports Performance) (paper 81)

The Committee noted that for this programme (and the FdSc referred to above) there continue to be issues in relation to the allocation of Personal Tutors. While these have now been allocated on a sport specialism basis, which works well, providing students with greater contact and support, it is anticipated that this will not be sustainable as a result of changes in teaching responsibilities and the allocation of Personal Tutors for students on other programmes. The Committee noted that no solution had yet been found and therefore that the Department of Education would need to continue to review this.

The Committee noted that a number of comments made by the External Examiner had already become irrelevant as changes had been made to the programme, which were being implemented with effect from this academic year.

The Committee also noted that the students on this top-up BSc are not
considered to be finalists and therefore are not invited to take part in the NSS.

(iv) • BA Childhood, Youth and Education Studies (paper 82)

The Committee noted that in 2011/12 the first cohort of students graduated from this programme, and the first year in which students on the four year variant had undertaken placements. The Committee noted that the External Examiner’s comments were positive, with a few suggestions with regard to improvements which might be made. It was noted, for example, that in response to the suggestion that students should receive clearer ethical guidance greater emphasis will be given to this in the Research Methods units.

(v) • Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset East SCITT PGCE (paper 83)

The Committee noted that the programme had received a Good OFSTED inspection in March 2012. It was also noted that initially the Teaching Agency had reduced the allocation of trainee places for the programme to 18 for 2012/13 which would have meant that the programme would be financially unviable. While this decision was reversed, there has been an impact on recruitment for 2012/13.

(vi) • Swindon SCITT PGCE (paper 84)

The Committee noted that the programme has received positive comments from the External Examiner and students, reflecting the high quality of training and strong student satisfaction. The committee noted that the External Examiner commended the further development of the use of an e-portfolio to support the presentation of trainees’ evidence towards the Professional Standards for QTS and suggested that it is an example of developmental work where educational and practical experiences could be shared with others, for example, other professional training courses in the University or other teacher training programmes.

(vii) • BA Early Years Care and Education (Swindon College) (paper 85)

The Committee noted that this programme is being taught out but that the External Examiner continues to comment positively. The Committee noted that the Link Academic Advisor commented that the programme team have a formative approach to the programme development and have highlighted areas for improvement in the coming year. The Committee noted that the formal response to the External Examiner’s report had not been included in the paperwork. This will be sought for noting by Chair’s action.

(viii) • FD Early Childhood Studies and BA Early Years and Childhood Studies (Wiltshire College) (paper 86)

The Committee noted the positive report for these two programmes. The Committee noted that a high proportion of students (7 of 11) achieved a First Class award for the BA. While it was noted that only the highest achieving students progress from the FD to the BA it was suggested that this is a relatively high proportion. It was noted that the LPO has...
confirmed that appropriate moderation and double-marking has taken place, and that the external examiner has confirmed the standards are appropriate. The Committee was pleased to note, however, that the LPO will continue to monitor the outcomes for the programme.

(ix) • FD Early Years (Swindon College) (paper 87)

The Committee noted that this programme is being taught out with no new recruits in 2011/12. It was also noted that the linked top-up BA for this programme is now delivered by Oxford Brookes University, to which many graduates have progressed.

(3) Department for Health
(i) • BSc Sport and Exercise Science (paper 88)

The Committee agreed that this was a thorough report, noting that the programme had undergone a Degree Scheme Review during 2011/12 and that the majority of recommendations from this had already been acted upon. The Committee noted that the Department for Health intended to send unit statistics to External Examiners when asking them to comment on a sample of work in advance of a Unit Board of Examiners. It was noted, however, that this would not be in the form of SAMIS generated Business Objects reports.

In response to a query regarding the Programme Evaluation Survey (PES) which students had been invited to complete towards the end of 2011/12, the Committee noted that most Directors of Studies in the meeting were unaware of the results of the PES. The Secretary agreed to investigate how Directors of Studies had been informed of the results.

(ii) • FdSc and BSc Addictions Counselling, (delivered by Action on Addiction) (paper 89)

The Committee noted that the report included a comprehensive update on actions taken since the previous report. It was also noted that the new External Examiner had commented positively about the programme. The Committee noted that a relatively low number of students progressed from the FdSc to the BSc programme (5 of 14), with the majority progressing to employment in the field. The Committee noted that there had been some issues addressed by the Standing Committee for the Division for Life-Long Learning in relation to high unit averages. The Committee noted that 4 of the 7 graduates of the BSc programme had achieved a First Class award and it was agreed that the LPO should be asked to monitor this and to ensure that the University’s policy with regard to the consideration of scaling is applied.

(iii) • FdSc and BSc Sport (Coaching) (Weston College) (paper 90)

The Committee noted that the retention rate was low for this programme (7 of 13). This is partly explained by the fact that most students progress from a BTEC programme to the FdSc and find the transition difficult. While the College has provided additional support to aid the transition, there continue to be problems. The Committee noted that the students and the External Examiner had identified weaknesses in their skill sets as the
primary reason for a high rate of failure. While the College acknowledges this, it is not clear what action is to be taken to address the problem. The Committee noted that the final intake for the programme will be in 2012/13 with all students expected to complete their studies in 2013/14. The Committee agreed that the LPO should monitor progress in this area. The Committee noted that the External Examiner commented that the establishment of processes and staff development had helped to ensure that issues raised in previous years had been addressed.

(iv) • FdSc and BSc Sport (Health and Fitness) (City of Bath College) (paper 91)

The Committee noted that actions from the previous report had been addressed. It was noted, however, that there are issues in relation to staffing levels which have not yet been fully addressed. The Committee also noted that the Link Academic Advisor comments that the programme team might give more thought to broader programme content improvement which might help with recruitment and retention. The Committee noted that the External Examiner had not yet submitted a report for this programme despite a number of requests.

(v) • FdSc and BSc Sport (Sports Therapy) (Swindon College) (paper 92)

The Committee noted that this was a positive report, noting that programme delivery and progression from the FdSc to the BSc is working well.

(vi) • FdSc and BSc Sport (Coaching) (City of Bath College) (paper 93)

The Committee noted that the External Examiner raised an issue in relation to the use of marginal failing marks (eg 39%). The Committee noted that the programme will be moving to the NFAAR with effect from 2012/13 and that a consequence of this has been the development of extended grading criteria which will emphasise the implications of marks close to classification thresholds.

(vii) • FdSc and BSc Sport (Health and Fitness) (Weymouth College) (paper 94)

The Committee noted that there are only a small number of students on the programme and that it is being taught out over the next two years. The Committee noted that the External Examiner had not yet submitted a report for this programme despite a number of requests (this is the same External Examiner as referred to in relation to Paper 91).

(4) Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies

(i) • BA Modern Languages and European Studies (paper 95)

The Committee agreed that this was a thorough report. It was noted that the External Examiners for this programme had questioned their role at Programme Boards of Examiners and that this has prompted discussion at University level with regard to the role of External Examiners following the adoption of the NFAAR. The Committee noted that while the responsibilities of External Examiners in relation to Unit Boards of
Examiners have recently been clarified, and strengthened, they are currently still expected to attend Programme Boards of Examiners.

(ii)  
• BA Language and Politics (paper 96)

The Committee agreed that this was a thorough report.

(iii)  
• BSc Politics with Economics, BSc Politics with International Relations (paper 97)

The Committee noted that a Moodle page has been developed for reports on student feedback for students to access which will be used for the first time at the end of Semester 1. Members of the Committee indicated that they would welcome a report on how this is received.

(iv)  
• BSc International Management and Modern Languages (paper 98)

The Committee noted that communications with the School of Management, with which this joint programme is delivered, have improved in the past year. It was also noted that the External Examiners had raised similar issues in relation to their role at Programme Boards of Examiners as referred to above in relation to Paper 95.

(5)  
Department of Psychology  
• BSc Psychology (paper 99)

The Committee noted that the proportion of students achieving a First Class award for this programme remains high at 31%. The Committee also noted that the External Examiner had suggested that an expectation that the mean mark for all units should normally be no higher than 65% was unrealistic when students are producing work which warrants a mark of 80%. The Committee highlighted as an example of good practice that the Department had established three working parties to review small group teaching, communications and assessment and feedback to address issues raised in the NSS.

(6)  
Department of Social and Policy Sciences  
(i)  
• FdSc Funeral Services (paper 100)

The Committee noted that this was a very positive report in spite of the challenges presented by the decision to withdraw the programme. The Committee noted that the Head of Department response letters to the External Examiners’ reports had not been included in the paperwork.

(ii)  
• BSc Social Work and Applied Social Studies, BSc Applied Social Studies (paper 101)

The Committee agreed that this was a comprehensive report which showed that the Department had responded to student feedback. It was noted that no reference was made in Section D of the report to responses to, for example, the NSS. The Committee felt that at least a reference to the Departmental NSS Action Plan as an appendix would have been desirable.
(iii) • BSc Social Sciences, BSc Sociology, BSc Social Policy, BSc Sociology with Human Resource Management (paper 102)

The Committee commented that this was an extremely detailed and comprehensive report. The development of a Unit Convenors’ Handbook was noted as a useful accompaniment to the existing Regulations and QA Code of Practice. The Committee noted that there had been difficulties in relation to the strategic decision to withdraw the BSc Sociology with Human Resource Management and commented that it is important that steps are taken to ensure that all students are supported to the end of their studies, including those who will return from placement in future years.

(iv) • BSc Social Work (Wiltshire College) (paper 103)

The Committee noted that this programme is licensed to the Wiltshire College and therefore that students on this programme are included in the Wiltshire College NSS. The committee noted the detailed and positive comments made by the Link Academic Advisor for this programme.

1130. UNIT AND PROGRAMME CHANGES

(1) Department of Economics

The Committee noted that a decision has been taken to suspend recruitment to the MSc Economics (Development) for 2013/14.

(2) Department of Education

(i) The Committee considered proposed changes to the MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (paper 107).

The Committee approved the following proposals, which will now be forwarded for consideration by the Academic Programmes Committee:

- Withdrawal of the Part-time MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (THED-APM35) with effect from 2013/14, as a result of low recruitment numbers.
- Withdrawal of the MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages with DELTA (THED-AFM36) with effect from 2013/14, as a result of low recruitment numbers.

The Committee also approved the following changes to the programme (to take effect in 2013/14), noting that they were fully supported by External Examiners and students:

- Creation of a new unit entitled: Language Awareness (ED5XXXX) which will replace PL50730 Teaching the English Language which is currently delivered by the English Language Unit.
- Creation of a new unit entitled: Teaching and Assessing English as an International Language (ED5XXXX) which will replace PL50730 Teaching the English Language which is currently delivered by the English Language Unit.

(ii) The Committee approved changes to the Programme Specification for the MA in Education programmes (paper 123), noting that these included reference to the timing of the consideration of part-time students by Boards of Examiners and some tidying up of details to bring the document into line with other changes which have been approved since the last version.
(3) **Department of Health**

(i) The Committee approved proposed changes to the following undergraduate units for implementation in Semester 1 of 2012/13 (paper 108):

- HL10038 Introduction to Human Biomechanics
- HL33064 Theoretical Biomechanics
- HL30059 Physical Activity and Health Across the Lifespan

(ii) The Committee noted that the Academic Programmes Committee has approved the termination of the programme-level agreement with the City of Bath College for the FdSc and BSc (Hons) in Sport (Health and Fitness) with immediate effect (paper 109).

(4) **Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies**

(i) The Committee considered a proposed change in title for the BSc Politics with International Relations, to the BSc Politics and International Relations, to take effect from the 1st August 2013 (paper 110). The Committee agreed that the proposal should be forwarded for consideration by the Programmes and Partnerships Approval Committee (PAPAC).

(ii) The Committee approved proposed changes to PL50837 Using IT in the Translating and Interpreting Industry (paper 111).

(5) **Department of Psychology**

The Committee approved proposed changes to Undergraduate Year 2 units (PS21014, PS20106, PS20107, PS20108, PS20109); new Undergraduate Year 2 units (PS2XXXX Health Psychology for introduction in 2014/15 and PS2XXXX Psychopathology for introduction in 2013/14); and a new final year undergraduate unit (PS3XXXX Psychology and Neuroscience of Blindness), (paper 112).

(6) **Department of Social and Policy Sciences**

(i) The Committee considered proposed major changes to the MSc Wellbeing and Human Development, including a change in title to the MSc in Well-being in Public Policy and International Development (paper 113).

The Committee noted that the proposed change in title followed a recommendation arising from the Degree Scheme Review of the programme during 2011/12 that the title of the programme should be reconsidered.

The Committee noted that intake numbers have been low for the programme but that the proposed target intakes with the new title were much higher (increasing from the current actual number of 6 to intakes of 15, 20 and 25 in the future). The Committee felt that the market analysis did not really provide a basis for the projected numbers although it noted that the proposed new title is expected to be more marketable because it better explains the programme and distinguishes it from the MSc International Development. The Committee felt that the target numbers should be reviewed and potentially reduced to a more realistic level. It was noted that targeted marketing of the newly named programme would be key to its success.
The Committee noted that the Department of Social and Policy Sciences had been reviewing all of its postgraduate programmes and therefore felt that it should be possible for the proposal to be more obviously linked to the Department’s strategy.

The Committee noted that it is intended that all units will be available via Distance Learning and therefore that will mean that the programme will be particularly attractive to part-time students.

The Committee noted that the Programme Description would need to be amended so that it was clear which units and credits would be necessary for the award of the Postgraduate Certificate and the Postgraduate Diploma.

The Committee agreed that subject to further work on the proposal documents as indicated above, it could be forwarded for consideration by the Programmes and Partnerships Approval Committee.

(ii) The Committee approved proposed changes to the BSc Social Work (Wiltshire College) for 2013 (paper 114). The Committee noted that the External Examiner had not been consulted in relation to the proposed changes and agreed that they should now be informed.

1131. UNIT AND PROGRAMME MATTERS
The Committee noted details of unit and programme changes which have been approved by Chair’s action (paper 115).

1132. FACULTY COMMITTEES
The Committee noted the minutes of the following committees:
- Department for Health Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, 3.10.12 (paper 116)
- Department of Psychology Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, 26.9.12 and 7.11.12 (paper 117)
- Department of Economics, 31.10.12 (paper 118)
- Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies, 24.9.12 and 16.10.12 (paper 119)