

FLTQC 29 November 2023

Wednesday, 29th November 2023 2:15pm

Teams | Faculty of Science Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee

Attendees

Attended

Florin Bisset

Zoe Burke

Andrew Burrows (Chair)

Sarah Upendra Chandratreya

Susan Crennell

Paula Gabriel

Ffion Gould

Marguerite Hallett (Secretary)

Frances Laughton (for minute 3240)

Zack Lyons

Kate Dunster (for minute 3240)

Sarah Paine

Philip Rogers

Tony Shardlow

Paul Snow

Gitte Sparding (Observer)

Stephen Ward

Miranda Yafi

Did Not Attend

Liz Haynes

Gan Shermer

1.0 New Undergraduate Assessment Regulations (UGAR) for 2023/24 (3240)

The Chair welcomed Dr Frances Laughton and Ms Kate Dunster who had attended to give an introduction to the new [Undergraduate Assessment Regulations \(UGAR\)](#) for 2023/24. UGAR is linked to from the online unit and programme catalogue and from the landing page for student information on exams and assessments. This article summarises key highlights and changes: Assessment Regulations: [Assessment Regulations: Changes for 2023/24 \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

From 2023/24, programmes will run on the old (6 credit units) and new (5 credit units) academic framework. PGT programmes will continue to operate under NFAAR PGT for 2023/24. UGAR comprises the existing regulations that have been rearticulated to work for both frameworks (i.e. pre and post CT courses).

The underlying rules have not changed. Instead, the way in which the regulations have been articulated and presented have changed. Credit quanta values are now in multiples of 5, rather than multiples of 6, and thresholds have been adjusted so that the outcome for students on pre-CT courses is the same as it would have been under NFAAR UG, e.g. students are now required to have at least 40 credits to graduate (under NFAAR UG it was 42 credits).

The IMC UG rules (parameters) have been included in UGAR, i.e. no longer sit separately in IMCA. NFAAR UG and IMCA totalled 222 pages, including 34 flowcharts, whereas UGAR totals 35 pages, including 6 flowcharts. Now that the IMC rules and regulations have been merged, they can evolve together, thereby reducing the likelihood of any discrepancies arising between the two. The concept of 'Parts' has been removed and instead UGAR simply refers to 'final year' and 'non-final year'. DEUs have been renamed Must Pass Units to make it clearer what these are.

Dr Rogers flagged the need to review whether the 50% pass mark will apply to MPharm 4, given it is two years ahead of other UG CT courses, in readiness for Part 2 GPhC reaccreditation in 2024/25. Ms Dunster agreed to follow the matter up outside of the meeting. Dr Laughton and Ms Dunster offered to provide departments with further guidance on UGAR when BEPs are held in the summer.

Professor Burrows thanked Dr Laughton and Ms Dunster for their hard work in making the new regulations much clearer and more streamlined, welcoming in particular flowcharts with the decision codes against them.

2.0 Integrated PhD CDT major change proposals (3241)

The Committee approved the following documentation for major programme change proposals from 2024/25 for CDT renewal bids currently with the EPSRC:

- Context for CDT major change proposals (Paper 29).
- Integrated PhD Statistical Applied Mathematics (SAMBa): Case for Support (Paper 30A) and Programme Specification (Paper 30B):
60 credit taught stage with a 60% progression hurdle; PG Dip/Cert exit awards.
- Integrated PhD Sustainable Chemical Technologies (SCT): Case for Support (Paper 31A) and Programme Specification (Paper 31B).

The Committee noted that the University would be informed before the end of the calendar year whether the CDTs will be funded. Both Integrated PhDs have run in the past. SAMBa is currently funded by the EPSRC. The SCT CDT is not currently funded but was funded in the past; there were two tranches of 5 years' of funding but the CDT did not get funded in the last round.

The programmes have been amended for running from 2024/25. The Committee approved the overall plans, and agreed to revisit more detail, e.g. unit content, if the CDTs get funded. The Committee noted that the EPSRC no longer requires an MRes as the first year of the Integrated PhD. Consequently, the MRes has been removed from SAMBa but has been retained for SCT, although with a different structure from before.

The Committee questioned how the SAMBa part-time route over 2 years would mesh with the Curriculum Transformed version of the course starting 2025/26. **Action:** SAMBa team to review.

3.0 Welcome and Quorum (3242)

The Chair welcomed members, noted apologies and observed that the meeting was quorate. In particular the Chair welcomed the PGT student rep, Ms Sarah Upendra Chandratreya, MSc

Data Science, and Ms Gitte Sparding, Registry key contact for the Faculty, who was attending the meeting as an observer.

4.0 Declaration of Interest (3243)

There were no declarations of any potential conflicts of interest.

5.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (3244)

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 October 2023 (Paper 32).

6.0 Matters Arising (3245)

M3227 Examination Paper Scrutiny Process:

The Committee noted that the draft Faculty policy on examination paper scrutiny had been amended in line with the feedback provided by FLTQC at its meeting on 18th October and had been circulated to FLTQC members for final approval. The finalised policy had then been emailed to FLTQC members to serve as a minimum for departments to add to as they wish and embed in departmental culture. The Chair had also flagged the new policy at the last Faculty Executive meeting to ensure HoDs were aware.

M3229 NSS 2023 Results:

The Chair clarified that provisional examination marks should not normally be shared before marks are released in SAMIS, because, inter alia, marks might change, e.g. be scaled by the BEU, and a single result release date enables student support to be coordinated.

7.0 Chair's Business (3246)

- Feedback for the Education Board Oversight Committee (EBOC) about learning/teaching (not study) space needs, to inform development of a University strategy:

The Committee agreed that more learning/teaching space was needed given the pressures on the timetable this year.

Dr Z Burke requested more large, flat teaching space for team-based learning / group-work, with capacity for 350 students (or at least 175 with sessions run twice). The biggest flat teaching space currently available has capacity for 162 students. The Committee advised that it should be possible to rearrange the tables and chairs to suit group activities so long as time is allocated at the start and end of sessions for this. Dr Z Burke added that AV needs to be appropriate for group-work too, e.g. having screens around the room, rather than just one screen at the front, so that visibility of what is being projected is accessible to all.

Dr Z Lyons reported that competition for computer labs has increased over the past few years and requested a few more, large computer labs. There are currently only 3-4 computer rooms with capacity for 99 students, which has resulted in a lot of repeat teaching. The Committee noted that larger computer labs could also be used for computer-based examinations, and a number of departments had shown interest in these. Dr Z Lyons suggested that to help reduce pressure on computer labs, larger flat teaching rooms could be equipped with more charging ports and a few PCs for students who do not have their own laptops.

Dr P Rogers reflected on experiences with regard to setting up the MPharm programme based in Plymouth and highlighted a possible need for multipurpose teaching labs, that have modular stacking furniture that comes apart to enable invigilated examinations to be run, and can be

configured in all directions, from a lecture theatre format to working in small groups. Such labs can also have a bank of laptops and a bespoke power system, that are stored in a cabinet and come out at the beginning of relevant classes and go back again at the end. This enables the lab to be a computer lab for 1 hour, a lecture theatre the next hour, and a student workshop room the next hour.

- Units with small numbers of students:

The Chair reported that the EBOC accepted that while it may look like the Faculty has lots of units with small numbers, the vast majority of these share teaching or are project-based and run in labs alongside other projects. The Chair asked departments to keep an eye on optional units that do not appear popular and to cull these as appropriate in order to maximise teaching efficiency.

- Students' Union (SU) Top 10:

Assessment feedback:

Miss F Gould and Miss M Yafi reported that some Science subjects require weekly lab reports (with a summative lab report submission at the end) for which students are not receiving feedback before submission of the next one. The UG student reps requested that at least generic feedback be provided in a timely manner, to help students avoid repeating the same mistakes.

The UG student reps requested provision of standardised feedback because variability in the level of feedback detail is notable between units, particularly when multiple lecturers are marking the same piece of coursework. The Chair asked the student reps to provide unit codes to the Secretary for units for which this is a known issue.

Lecture recordings:

The UG student reps requested easy access to recordings of lectures throughout the year, particularly for students with DAPs, to be made available within as short a time-frame as possible.

- Faculty Assessment and Feedback Lead (Paper 33):

The Chair explained that this is a 200-300 hours / year position for which expressions of interest are being sought. Details should have been circulated to departments already.

Chair's actions (to note):

- Approval of Department of Mathematical Sciences Programme Regulations from 2023/24 onward (approved 10 November 2023) (Paper 34).

- Approval of Department of Computer Science Programme Regulations from 2023/24 onward (approved 28 November 2023) (Paper 34A) (late paper).

8.0 Programme Annual Monitoring Reports 2022/23 (3247)

The Committee approved the Annual Monitoring Reports 2022/23 for the following Learning Partnerships Office / Department of Computer Science programmes:

- BSc (Hons) Applied Computing licensed to Bath College (Paper 35):

Dr F Bisset reported that the programme had now taught out; everything had run smoothly in its final year (2022/23). Bath College will support students beyond graduation for career progression, e.g. references.

- International Foundation Year (IFY) licensed to Bath College (Paper 36):

Dr F Bisset reported that she had met with the Faculty Head of Marketing to help raise awareness of the IFY and increase recruitment. Dr F Bisset also reported that IFY students still do not have access to University of Bath Students' Union clubs and societies.

- MSc Computer Science online degree (Paper 37).

- MSc Artificial Intelligence online degree (Paper 38).

Dr Z Lyons reported that the online programmes are 100% distance learning, with 3 intakes a year per programme (September, January and April). Delivery is largely pre-recorded material that is made available to students, with asynchronous interactions taking place on a version of Moodle. Each programme is capped at 28 students per intake, resulting in approx. 170 students per year across both programmes. Conversations are happening currently about increasing numbers for next year. The programmes were included in PTES for the first time in 2023. Some

of the questions were inappropriate, e.g. about resources on campus and personal tutoring, so a bespoke set of questions for online programmes will likely be introduced. OUEs provided variable feedback but generally had quite low response rates. Improvements are planned with regard to closing the loop on student feedback and setting clearer expectations, e.g. via Town Hall sessions.

9.0 Degree Apprenticeship Quarterly Monitoring Reports (3248)

The Committee noted the MSc Computer Science Degree Apprenticeship Quarterly Monitoring Reports: May - July 2023 (Paper 38A) and August - October 2023 (Paper 38B) (late papers). The Committee noted that the robustness of coursework moderation had been improved. The Committee also noted that an Ofsted inspection of all the University's Degree Apprenticeship programmes was due before the end of the calendar year.

10.0 Feedback from Committees (3249)

Academic Programmes Committee (APC):

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2023 (Paper 39).

Education, Quality and Standards Committee (EQSC):

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2023 (Paper 40), in particular approval of:

NFAAR exemption request changes for MPharm and MPharmacol Phase 3 CT courses starting 2023/24 (approved 27 September 2023).

NFAAR PGT exemption request for MSc Biotechnology (Healthcare Technologies) / (Sustainable Biotechnologies) and placement variants from 2023/24 (approved 17 October 2023).

Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee (CPAC):

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2023 (Paper 41).

Student Experience Advisory Board (SEAB):

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2023 (Paper 42).

Education Advisory Board (EAB):

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2023 (Paper 42A) (later paper).

11.0 Department Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (DLTQC) Minutes (3250)

The Committee noted the minutes of the meetings held on:

Department of Life Sciences: 8 November 2023 (Paper 43).

Department of Chemistry: 8 November 2023 (Paper 44).

Department of Computer Science: 15 November 2023 (Paper 45).

Department of Physics: 8 November 2023 (Paper 46).

12.0 Any Other Business (3251)

Miss F Gould reported that students had requested a week for consolidating / catching-up on learning, around week 6/7, in which tutorials, workshops and labs would continue but there would be no new content, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Results from a student survey on this matter would be presented to the next FLTQC meeting. Dr Z Lyons reported that the Department of Computer Science currently had a consolidation week in week 6, during which any lectures that took place would comprise Q&A or quizzes. Dr T Shardlow reported that the Department of Mathematical Sciences would likely be more supportive of a consolidation week than a reading week and that he would take the matter to the next DLTQC and SSLC meetings for discussion. Dr P Snow reported that the Department of Physics already had a consolidation week in Year 1 of courses that had gone through Curriculum Transformation (CT) and it is planned for Year 2; the concept might be rolled forwards into later years. Dr Z Burke reported that some units in Biology and Biochemistry UG and PGT courses had a consolidation week in week 6/7. Dr Z Burke agreed that the concept was worth considering and feedback to this effect had been received from students. Dr S Crennell commented that Natural Sciences students had not raised varying consolidation week practices between departments as an issue, but she would take the matter to the next SSLC meeting for discussion. The Committee acknowledged that if content is removed from week 6/7 it would need to be taught elsewhere.