

Meeting: SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Wednesday 16 October 2024, 14:15pm

Venue: Remote using MS Office TEAMS

Present:

Dr T WAKELEY (Chair)
Dr B DUNCOMBE
Dr J ELLIS-BRUSH
Dr R HITIBANDARA
Prof R JACKSON (items 161 to 170)
Mrs N MAHIL
Dr T MCLAREN
Dr L STUBBS
Mr V TRIPATHI (Student Representative)

In Attendance:

Ms K ELLIOTT, secretary to meeting.
Mr S ATHEY, Head of Quality and Standards (for item 166 only)

Apologies for absence were received from: Prof R KAMM, Dr S GUSTAFSSON, Ms K WATTS

NB No Sabbatical Officers had been allocated to the School at the time of this meeting.

ACTION

Part I Business

161 Declaration of Interest

There were no declared conflicts of interests.

162 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 19 June 2024 (Paper SLTQC24/25-001) were approved as a correct record.

163 Matters Arising

The Chair noted that the University has developed a guide for Academic Advisors to structure meetings with tutees.

164 Chair's Business

The Chair informed the Committee that the University has introduced a process (Education Action Plans: EAP) which facilitates the continuous review of data sources. The School has recently completed a review of NSS data and will soon have access to graduate outcomes data.

Whilst overall the responses on the NSS do not suggest any major areas of concern for the School, students continue to express disappointment with regard to feedback on assessments. The School has a number of interventions that are being implemented by the Director of Innovation in Pedagogy and Assessment, including encouraging broader use of marking rubrics and defining terms used in assessment briefs.

The Committee noted that an annual summary of the action planning would be reviewed in January each session prior to submission to the University.

AGREED: The Committee agreed that consideration should be given on how to present the emergent action plans to this Committee and also on how to gain student views.

Chair

165 Curriculum Transformation

The Committee was reminded that the School ran MSc and first year of transformed undergraduate courses in 2023/24. The School is looking to learn from the first running of these courses to consider changes that might be made to course structures or to the methods of formative assessment for specific topics.

Mr TRIPATHI, Faculty Student Representative, noted how students from the 2023/24 undergraduate cohort had formed the impression that they had less option choice than students who had studied on the pre-transformed courses. He noted that there were other aspects of the transformed courses that students were very content with.

The Chair noted that the transformed courses have larger units and so include optional units that have consolidated different topics. Overall the courses do cover the same range of topics, although these may be packaged differently.

AGREED: The Chair to liaise with Mr TRIPATHI to understand where students feel there are gaps in access to topics and then to work on appropriate communications with the student body.

Chair &
VT

[Mr S ATHEY joined the meeting]

166 Office for Students B conditions

The Committee received a presentation on B conditions for higher education registration (Paper SLTQC24/25-002) and a report on compliance with B5 conditions (Paper SLTQC24/25-003).

The Office for Students has been the regulator for English higher education institutions since 2018/19. Degree awarding powers are dependent on compliance with conditions defined by the Office of Students. These include “B” conditions which discuss quality standards.

1. Academic experience
2. Resources, support and student engagement
3. Student outcomes
4. Assessment and awards
5. Sector-recognised standards
6. Teaching Excellence Framework participation

Mr ATHEY is supporting the University’s evaluation of its audit trail to illustrate compliance with these B conditions. A recent review has been conducted with regard to the sector-recognised standards, noting that the Office for Students’ standards include consideration of skills that should be exhibited for each classification. The main focus of review for 2024/25 will be condition B4 which looks to evidence that assessments accurately and reliably ensure students are gaining the correct awards.

[Mr S ATHEY left the meeting]

167 QAA 2024 code of practice

The Committee received a briefing on new QAA codes of practice (Paper SLTQC24/25-004).

168 AACSB AOL progress

The Committee received an update to direct and indirect measures for undergraduate courses, to be used for accreditation purposes (Paper SLTQC24/25-005).

The Chair explained that the assurance of learning assesses whether students are achieving the competencies that are defined for the School’s courses.

Members noted the measurements made so far.

A query was raised on why some courses with a placement year do not include this as a measure. It was speculated that this might be due to the need to restrict the number of indirect measures overall.

AGREED: Director of Standards and Quality to be asked to clarify why all courses with placement year do not include this as a measure.

Sec

169 Managing amount and time available for provision of feedback on assessments

Given QA code of practice requirement to provide individual feedback on summative assessments within a maximum of three semester weeks, the Committee discussed processes to manage the volumes of feedback required for larger units.

Mr TRIPATHI, Faculty Student Representative, commented that unit convenors tend to keep students informed if they are struggling to get feedback completed within the three week timescale. His view is that students are happy with a slight extension over the three weeks if this means that the feedback received has more depth of information. It is the experience of receiving minimal feedback that students are concerned by.

The Committee was informed that a recent EQSC meeting stipulated that feedback should be accompanied by marks as this aids understanding.

The Chair noted that academics want to provide feedback to students on how to improve performance in assessments. However, the current guidelines do not support the volumes of students that the University now recruits each session. Members of the Committee agreed that feedback should be provided in time to enable students to improve performance prior to next assessment (which might be a second assessment in same unit, or for examinations, or prior to the next semester). There was some suggestion that it was not helpful to provide marks and feedback on 100% coursework units prior to same semester examinations, as for some students this could be disruptive to their preparations for the examinations. Mr TRIPATHI commented that receiving feedback just before examinations did not enable discussion with unit convenors, he noted that there was a mix of views amongst the student body about how helpful feedback received at this time was to them.

AGREED: Chair to raise at next EQSC meeting and to highlight comments from the student representative to the Director of Innovation in Pedagogy and Assessment.

Chair

170 School processes for supporting students to appropriately reference assessments

The Committee noted support provided to students on appropriate referencing (Paper SLTQC24/25-006).

For undergraduate courses online training is being offered, supported by Study Support and the Library. Information is also being added to assessment briefs.

For MSc courses, the School has trialled a quiz that tests students' understanding of appropriate referencing. Students who do not achieve a threshold on this quiz are then offered support for an essay that is zero weighted.

[Professor JACKSON left the meeting.]

171 Units for long-term archiving

The Committee received a list of units to be used for long-term archiving (Paper SLTQC24/25-007).

AGREED: The units listed will be used for long-term archiving, if any errors are noted by members these should be reported to the secretary. Sec

172 Faculty Representatives' Items

The Faculty Representative noted that he was working with the University of Bath's Students' Union on a proposal to re-introduce reading time for examinations. Students were experiencing issues with completing examinations that contain a lot of text (such as some accounting examinations) and it was hoped that a short time to read the paper would help to reduce anxiety. Committee members noted that the examination papers were designed so that they can be completed in the timeframe. Students should be mindful about their time-management when taking examinations. Papers with multiple questions, or a lot of text to read through, usually include an indicator of the time that should be allocated to specific sections of the paper. However it was recognised that some students might benefit from some reading time. For operational reasons, the approach to reading time would have to be consistent across the University.

AGREED: The Committee was willing to support an investigation of the feasibility of introducing reading time for examinations, if this received University-wide support. VT

Part II Business

173 Committee membership and terms of reference

- a The Committee noted terms of reference at <https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/faculties-and-school-learning-teaching-and-quality-committees-terms-of-reference/>
- b The Committee received membership for 2024/25, noting SU Sabbatical Officer and PGT student representative still to be confirmed (Paper SLTQC24/25-008).

174 Update on QA code of practice changes

The Committee received information on the changes that have been approved to QA33 (Paper SLTQC24/25-009).

Part III Business

175 AACSB ISeR outcome letter

The Committee noted an outcome letter from accreditation submission (paper SLTQC24/25-010).

176 Chair's Action

- a The Committee noted Chair's Action given, following electronic circulation, regarding updates to the School's unequal contribution process (paper SLTQC24/25-011).
- b The Committee noted Chair's Action given to permit students from another academic department to study an MN unit, for 2024/25 session only (paper SLTQC24/25-012).
- c The Committee noted Chair's Action given to process updates to two undergraduate core units, which will be taught for first time as transformed units (paper SLTQC24/25-013).

177 Committees

The Committee noted minutes from range of University committees:

- Education Advisory Board May 2024 (paper SLTQC24/25-014).
- Student Experience Advisory Board July 2024 (paper SLTQC24/25-015).

Part IV Business

178 Any Other Business

A request has been received from the School's accreditation team, seeking to change the date of the December meeting. The secretary will contact members to investigate the viability of changing the date from 4th to 11th December 2024.

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 16:20pm
