
Meeting: SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Wednesday 24 January 2024, 14.15pm

Venue: Remote using MS Office TEAMS

Present:

Dr R KAMM (Acting Chair)
Dr I CRAWFORD
Mr K EVJENTH (UG Student Representative)
Dr S GUSTAFSSON
Dr R HITIBANDARA
Prof R JACKSON
Mrs N MAHIL
Dr T MCLAREN
Ms L STUBBS

In Attendance:

Ms K ELLIOTT, secretary to meeting.
Ms F HARDING
Dr B YALABIK (for items 098 to 103)

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr T WAKELEY, Dr M SHULVER,
Dr J ELLIS-BRUSH.

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

ACTION

Part I Business

098 Declaration of Interest

There were no declared conflicts of interests.

099 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 13 December 2023 (Paper SLTQC23/24-018) were approved as a correct record.

100 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

101 Chair's Business

There was no Chair's Business.

102 Curriculum Transformation

The Committee was informed that the School's MRes and MBA courses would be reviewed under the Curriculum Transformation (CT) process this session. Colleagues are also working on tidy-ups of previously approved documents, especially to take into account transition arrangements (where students from pre-CT courses will need to take CT units in their later years of study).

103 Review of School Group Coursework guidance

The Committee discussed potential changes to the School's current group coursework guidance (paper SLTQC23/24-019). Members of the Committee agreed that a review of the current guidance and practices were needed and welcomed the discussion paper.

With regard to the size of groups for coursework, members debated whether to set a normal maximum and also which circumstances would make exceptions to this maximum permissible. A balance is needed between helping students to manage the time to work with others and the importance of giving students an authentic experience to prepare them for future employment. It was noted that MBA courses are able to use coaches to assist with group dynamics, but this could not be transferred across the whole of the School's portfolio. Practical issues with regard to the marking and provision of feedback for units with large enrolments also need to be factored in. Learning outcomes of specific units may impact on whether the team experience is more important than the actual assessment product, in such cases larger groups may be more appropriate.

Potential guidance on a 'normal' maximum and in what circumstances exemptions might be permitted to be brought to a future committee meeting.

With regard to the current requirement that students inform unit convenors of requests for a review of differential contribution by team members 2 weeks before submission, the committee members were not convinced this needed to change. Whilst acknowledging that students may commence assignments just before the deadline, members felt that such behaviour should be discouraged. If students wait, to let the unit convenor know that there are issues within their group, it can be too late to make any meaningful interventions. It was suggested that other changes being considered (as articulated in the discussion paper) might remove the need to revise this element of the guidance. Members were keen on the idea of using contracts which enabled students to set expectations of behaviour within the team and also helped with the provision of evidence when issues do arise.

Include group work contracts and advice on the provision of evidence in new guidance.

With regard to the recommended formula for differential contribution, members were in support of redesigning this. The current formula was considered to permit too wide a variation from the original mark allocated to the actual assessment submitted. The importance of unit convenors discussing low group participation with Directors of Studies was highlighted (as there could be student welfare concerns). Members indicated that all applications of unequal contribution should be reported to Board of Examiners to ensure consistency of practice. It was stated that leaving adjustments to individual unit convenors would require thorough guidelines and potentially a requirement to discussion with Directors of Studies, or indeed to escalate to Directors of Teaching.

The Committee noted that individual unit convenors put a lot of effort into supporting group dynamics but that this might not be scalable to all units.

The Faculty Representative highlighted the importance of team members discussing concerns with each other, giving peers the right to explain anything preventing a specific type of contribution, prior to raising with unit convenors.

Members of the Committee confirmed that the use of group work contracts, in previous institutions where they had worked, had been highly beneficial.

AGREED: Dr Yalabik confirmed that he would provide a revised proposal based on the comments of the Committee and future consultations with key stakeholders.

[Dr Yalabik left the meeting.]

104 Changes to undergraduate courses and unit for 2024/25

The Committee considered changes to School of Management undergraduate courses, and units, for 2024/5 and 2025/6 session. These included pure CT courses, current courses and courses that will include a transfer to CT units in later years of the course.

- a** Updates to CT specific course structures, for entrants in 2023/4 plus (paper SLTQC23/24-020). The Committee received a range of change proposals and approved these noting that additional work would need to be undertaken with Department of POLIS for the BSc International Management and Modern Languages courses.
- b** Updates to courses due to introduction of CT units, for entrants in 2021/2 or 2022/23 (paper SLTQC23/24-021). The Committee received updates to course structures and approved these.
- c** Updates to units (paper SLTQC23/24-022). The Committee received a mix of updates to CT units, noting that separate exercises were being undertaken to tidy up minor errors in paperwork and also revising requisites to ensure all students could access all appropriate units.

With regard to unit changes submitted all were approved with the exception of:

- MN12008 proposed change to assessment rejected as the volume of examination in semester 2 was considered to be unreasonably high and also could cause issues under assessment regulations with regard to amount of failure permitted.
- MN22031 proposed changes to assessments were not considered to be well thought through. The new unit convenor was a member of the Committee and indicated that she could provide details on proven effective assessment for this type of unit.
- MN22159 changes were approved but it was noted that a pre-requisite specifically for BSc Accounting and Finance students would need to be confirmed.
- MN22161 changes were approved, however it was noted that the proposal includes a statement that the assessment should be the same as MN12008. As the latter had been rejected the subject group should be contacted to confirm if they wished to drop the assessment change for this unit to keep it in line with the original assessment for MN12008.

AGREED: Changes approved, other than for MN12008 and MN22031. A revised assessment profile for MN22031 to be presented for Chair's Action to ensure ready for the upcoming option choice period. Updates to MN22159 and MN221621 to be considered separately.

105 Faculty Representatives' Items

The Faculty Representative provided an update on issues raised in recent student meetings:

1. First year students have provided positive feedback on their experience, up to now, on the CT-version of the undergraduate courses.
2. There has been issues with long delays to agree Disability Access Plans due to staff absences within the Student Services team.
3. Students have expressed surprise at lack of access to recordings of lectures for some units. It was appreciated that encouraging in person attendance might be a good reason not to release during teaching period however it was hoped that access would be made available for revision periods.
4. Some students have expressed concern that visiting students are not participating in group assessments as their marks do not count for their own degree courses.

Colleagues noted that the Student Services team are now fully staffed and that they are working to remove the backlog.

106 Annual Reports for on-line MSc courses

The Committee received annual reports for on-line courses (run by the Learning Partnership Office on behalf of the School).

- a MSc Business Analytics, on-line (paper SLTQC23/24-023).
- b MSc Entrepreneurship Management and Innovation, on-line (paper SLTQC23/24-024).

107 Responses to unit evaluations from 2022/23 semester 2.

The Committee received summaries of responses to unit evaluation information provided end of last session:

- a** MBA units (paper SLTQC23/24-025).
- b** MSc units (paper SLTQC23/24-026). The Director of Teaching noted that methods training for 2023/4 had been revised to ensure it was appropriate for the full range of summer projects and dissertations. Lessons had also been learnt, from the experience of a 2022/3 unit, about how to manage unplanned absence of staff due to health issues.

The Chair offered to discuss with the Director of Student Engagement and Experience an improved process for reviewing evaluations for units taken by research students.

- c** Undergraduate units (paper SLTQC23/24-027). The Director of Teaching noted the low response rates for semester 2 units, this will be closely monitored this session.

Part II Business

There were no items under this part of the agenda.

Part III Business

108 Example of Curriculum Planner provided information.

Committee received an example of how unit and course changes are provided by the system Curriculum Planner (paper SLTQC23/24-028).

Part III Business

109 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 16:30pm
