UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Standards and Audit Committee held on 8 December 2020.

PRESENT: Professor Frank Haddleton (Chair)

Dr Mairi Watson
Catherine Rendell
Karen Barton
Janette Bowyer
Dr Jo Cahill
Liz Gormley-Fleming
Jackie Hulse
Petros Khoudian
Karthik Bonkur
Dr Susan Grey
Julie Kelly
Dr Barbara Brownie
Dr Marianna Lilley
Alison McLauchlin
Dr Cheryl Holman
Veronica Earle

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisa Uttley
Stephanie Keegan
Mel Golder

28 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received for this meeting.

29 STANDING ORDERS

The Committee noted the Standing Orders of the Academic Board.


30 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION

The Committee noted changes to the Terms of reference and Composition.

(Agenda paper 3, refers).

31 MEMBERSHIP

The Committee noted changes to the Membership and welcomed Scott Isaacs in new category 10 and Dr Sherael Webley and Naomi Hewitt as acting Associate Deans (Academic Quality Assurance) for the School of Life and Medical Science.

(Agenda paper 4, refers).

32 MINUTES - 13 OCTOBER 2020

The Minutes were approved subject to a correction of attendance. Dr Michaela Cottee had been present at this meeting.

(Confidential Agenda paper 5, refers).

33 MATTERS ARISING

All remaining actions were identified for consideration at this meeting, or for consideration later in the Academic Year.

(Confidential Agenda paper 6, refers).
CHAIR’S OVERVIEW

The Committee received an update from the Chair.

34.1 OfS launched a consultation on changes to the regulation of Quality and Standards on 17 November 2020. The Consultation document and Executive Summary had been distributed to members and was also available on the OfS website. The proposals included:

- new, clearer definitions of ‘quality’ and ‘standards’, which would probably replace the expectations, core practices and common practices laid out in the current UK Quality Code (this raised questions on the future of the UK Quality Code and its role in standardising expectations for quality and standards across the UK, as OfS regulation only covers England);
- the setting of more challenging minimum baseline requirements for student outcomes (e.g. on student continuation, student completion and progression to employment or further study), which included baseline requirements at subject level and for collaborative partnerships. It also suggested that these baseline requirements should be absolute, rather than benchmarked to the type of student population at a provider;
- how these indicators would be used for risk-based monitoring of quality and standards (which included enhanced monitoring for providers with an increased risk of a breach of one or more of the ‘B’ conditions of registration, with intervention at subject level if necessary);
- OfS’ approach to intervention and to gathering further information about concerns about quality and standards.

34.2 These proposals would also mean changes to the OfS ongoing conditions of registration related to Quality and Standards (B1 to B5), although the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) was not in scope for the consultation.

34.3 Members had been invited for their views on the proposals made in the consultation document and would be included in the University’s response. OfS’ approach to regulating quality and standards would then follow in mid-2021.

34.4 The Academic Development Committee had agreed to a proposal to allow students that were unable to study abroad this year to defer to next year (2021-2022). This would mean that the student would defer their graduation by a year, so a large uptake was not expected. This would be communicated to Schools.

34.5 The Committee received an update from Mairi Watson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) on the end and start of term arrangements.

34.6 The Government had provided additional guidance on the start of term arrangements. Thanks were offered to all involved in the move to online teaching which commenced 30 November 2020.

34.7 The additional Government guidelines restricted the number of students that could return to campus from the 4 January 2021. Deans had been asked to prepare a list of courses that involved practical activity so that students could have a staggered return in January 2021.

34.8 By 25 January 2021 it was expected that the vast majority of students would return to campus with the addition of late arrivals from International and some Post Graduate students up to 23 February 2021.

34.9 The COVID testing programme would run alongside commuting students and lack of face to face would help the staged return of students.
34.10 Students would be encouraged to have asymptomatic testing once they return to campus. Thus far a small number had tested positive and so cases remained low on campus. International students would have to undertake NHS-led testing.

34.11 KPI3 on blended/flexible learning from Academic Year 2021-2022 was a large piece of work to move all programmes and modules onto the new curriculum management system.

34.12 There would be very little flexibility to approval deadlines of module and programme specifications. Any changes needed to meet the deadlines set.

34.13 A consolidation of what had been learnt over the last nine months would help to shape the teaching and learning in the future as things moved into settled practice.

34.14 The KPI slide would be circulated to members which explained the University's blended learning journey which intended to bring everything together in one place.

34.15 Student and staff communications would be circulated following the meeting to reinforce the message to Students and arrangements.

35 ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORTS ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Committee received part 1 School Annual Reports on Academic Standards and Student Experience from Associate Deans of School (Academic Quality Assurance).

(Minutes 36-43 are confidential and available to members and Officers in attendance only.)

36 SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

Dr Barbara Brownie ADoS AQA presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.1, refers).

37 SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Alison McLauchlin ADoS AQA presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.2, refers).

38 SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK

Dr Cheryl Holman ADoS AQA presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.3, refers).

39 HERTFORDSHIRE BUSINESS SCHOOL

Veronica Earle ADoS AQA and Dr Michaela Cottee ADoS L&T presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.4, refers).

40 HERTFORDSHIRE LAW SCHOOL

Dr Barbara Henry ADoS AQA presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.5, refers).

41 SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

Dr Marjolein Groefsema ADoS AQA presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.6, refers).
SCHOOL OF LIFE AND MEDICAL SCIENCES
Dr Stefanie Schmeer ADoS AQA presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.7, refers).

SCHOOL OF PHYSICS, ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE
Dr Marianna Lilley ADoS AQA presented the paper.
(Confidential Agenda paper 8.8, refers).

ONGOING AUDIT OF THE OPERATION OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS
This item was deferred to the next meeting.
(Confidential Agenda paper 9, refers).

SUMMARY OF AUDIT PROGRESS 2019-2020
The Committee received a report from Catherine Rendell, Deputy Director of Academic Quality Assurance.

45.1 The recommendations were noted by the Committee and also that there were no essential recommendations outstanding. ADoS AQA were asked to note the recommendations on placement work-based learning. The information concerning placements would be clarified outside of the meeting.
(Confidential Agenda paper 10, refers).

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF ASAC FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020
The Committee noted the report from the Chair.
(Confidential Agenda paper 11, refers).

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP COMPLIANCE AND OPERATIONAL STRATEGY GROUP (DACOS)
This item was deferred to the next meeting.
(Confidential Agenda paper 12, refers).

STUDENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING GROUP (SPMG) REPORT 2020-2021
(Confidential Agenda paper 13, refers).

AMENDMENT/ENDORSEMENT OF THE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022
The Committee noted the arrangements for the review/revision of:

49.1 UPR AS11 (Schedule of Awards).

49.2 UPR AS12 (Assessments and Examinations (undergraduate and Taught postgraduate) and Conferments (University-delivered provision)).

49.3 UPR AS13 Assessments and Examinations and Conferments (Partner Organisation-delivered provision)).
49.4 UPR AS14 (Structure and Assessment Regulations - Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes).

49.5 UPR AS17 – ‘Academic Quality Polices and Procedures’.

49.6 The Committee members were asked to note the UPRs that this committee was responsible for and were asked that any proposed amendments be made in time for the next meeting on 26 January 2021.

50 ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE PROGRAMMES BY PROFESSIONAL, STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BODIES

The Committee received a report from Jan Bowyer, Associate Director of Academic Quality Assurance.

50.1 The Committee considered information concerning the programmes to be delivered during the academic year 2020-2021 by the Schools of the University of Hertfordshire or its partner organisations which had been accredited, re-accredited or were in the process of accreditation by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

50.2 ADoS(AQA)s for the Hertfordshire Business School, Hertfordshire Law School and The School of Physics, Engineering and Computer Science were asked to complete their actions indicated in red and all ADoS(AQA)s were asked to check the report for any inaccuracies.

(Confidential Agenda paper 15, refers).

51 PROPOSAL TO HOLD EXAMINATION BOARDS BY MS TEAMS

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

(Confidential Agenda paper 16, refers).

52 VALIDATION AND PERIODIC REVIEW APPROVAL DEADLINES

The Committee received a report from The Chair.

52.1 The Academic Development Committee had recently re approved the deadlines for the approval of UH programmes following validation or periodic review (i.e. sign-off of the AQ3 or AQ4). The following deadlines applied to courses for launch at the start of the academic year (September) 2020. A follow up email would to be distributed to all schools.

(Confidential Agenda paper 17, refers).

53 CHECK LIST FOR COMMUNICATIONS

The Committee agreed the outcomes of this meeting.

54 PEOPLE DEVELOPMENTS

There were no people development needs identified as requiring referral to the Manager of People Development, Department of Planning, Development and Change.

55 RISK

There were no risks identified as inherent in the matters dealt with by the Committee during the meeting but not discussed when the item concerned was taken.

56 EMERGENCY BUSINESS

There was no emergency business.
57 CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk’s report substituted Part II of the agenda.

There were no indications that Members wished to comment on any item in the Clerk’s report which had been received and therefore the report was taken as noted and approved.

(Confidential Agenda paper 22, refers).

57.1 ACADEMIC QUALITY

Programmes, Courses and Collaborative Agreements

The reports confirmed by the Chair of the Student Educational Experience Committee and ratified by the Vice-Chancellor for the period 9th June – 2nd Oct 2020 with the summary of conclusions and recommendations. (Part 2)

57.2 ACADEMIC SERVICES

The amendments/revisions to the Academic Services publications for the period 30 September 2020 – 26 November 2020 (Part 3)

Publications are available for inspection online at: http://www.study2net1.herts.ac.uk/ptl/common/agq.nsf/Homepage?ReadForm

Members and named alternates wishing to view or obtain copies should refer to this site.

57.3 MATTERS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION

There are no matters for this meeting.

57.4 STUDENT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE (SEEC)

Publication of the minutes of the meeting of the Student Educational Experience Committee held on 29 September 2020.

https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/234382/2020-09-29-SEEC-Minutes.pdf

57.5 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND DEADLINES 2020-2021

The schedule of meetings to take place at 09.30 hours in the Central Committee Room/or MS Teams:

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<tr>
<th>Date of meeting</th>
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<th>Date for notification of items</th>
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<tr>
<td>26 January 2021</td>
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<td>22 June 2021</td>
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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Academic Standards and Audit Committee will be held on Tuesday, 28 January 2021 from 09:30 hours in the Central Committee Room - MacLaurin Building. Items for the agenda should be notified to the Clerk, Mel Golder, ext. 3285, email: m.golder@herts.ac.uk by Tuesday, 7 January 2021. Supporting papers should be lodged with the clerk no later than Tuesday, 14 January 2021.

It will be assumed that items from the Schools have been submitted with the approval of the Dean of School.