Teaching Committee Minutes – Thursday 15ᵗʰ December 2016, 2.30pm Room 2.33 Informatics Forum

Present: Alan Smaill (Convener), Björn Franke, Sharon Goldwater, Gillian Bell, Paul Jackson, Frank Keller, Christopher Lucas, Ian Murray, Barbara Webb, Alexandra Welsh (Secretary).

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Paul Anderson, Christophe Dubach, Mahesh Marina, Johanna Moore, Helen Pain, Richard Shillcock, Maria Wolters.

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting & 3. Matters Arising:** Minutes were taken as read but a few points were clarified.

   2.1 Item 3.2 from November minutes on Borderline decision policy; it was noted that the action is ongoing and AS will chase this up.

   2.2 Items 7 & 8 from November minutes need to be uploaded to Policy pages. The revised Moderation Practice for MSc Dissertation document is to be included.

   ACTION – F.Keller to provide example of feedback headings (such as strengths, weaknesses, improvements) to students for staff consultation.

   ACTION: F. Keller to provide updated Dissertation Moderation document for upload to TC Policy page by ITO and inclusion in the Dissertation course page by R. Mayr.

   2.3 Item 14 from the November 2016 minutes regarding Special Circumstances covered under AOCB; action is ongoing.

   ACTION – Convenors to chase year organisers on Item 14, Special Circumstances.

   2.4 Item 14 from the November minutes regarding Course Registration covered under AOCB; it was clarified that the course registration process would passed to Personal Tutors and that the words 'revert back' should be taken out. There needs to be a suitable process that staff and students understand.

   ACTION – ITO to amend the November minutes with revised wording.

4. **School/College/IO Responsibilities re. Student exchanges:** BF referred to the 'Study Abroad Responsibilities – IO' document for information. This is also on the Teaching Committee web page. **** See document**

   ACTION – Hiroshi and Johanna to put on PT page http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/ito/staff/pt/students-studying-abroad
   and identify PT responsibilities.
   ACTION – ITO/Senior PT Disseminate document so that split responsibilities can be acted on.

5. **1st Year Tutorials and Articulation between Maths and Informatics Teaching in 1st Year:**
    Michael Fourman was supposed to present this item but is absent. Since there is no further information BF thought it was best to carry this item over to the next meeting.

6. **Use of Mid-Semester 2 Non-Teaching week for SDP for 3rd Year students:** BW advised there will be a Festival of Creative Learning Week from when Teaching Block 3 ends (17th February) until Teaching Block 4 commences (27th February). BW would like to see this week used for UG3 students to concentrate on SDP and form groups/teams. GB advised that Don Sannella has arranged events for UG4 projects such as workshops and presentations during this week,, the Careers Service could also help running sessions to develop softer skills useful for SDP, such as effective presentation skills.

    SG felt that this was a good idea in principal but advised caution.

    ACTION – BF will send out an email advising 3rd years of SDP week. No other course work.

7. **Design Informatics Developments:** BF is presenting this item in Maria Wolters's absence. This may crop up in BoS and is for information only;

    - We're going to split Case Studies in Design Informatics 1 and 2 into two actual courses that will be delivered by two different warm bodies, because the current model is no longer sustainable and leads to a bad student experience. BF advised that this has already been discussed.

    - Dave Murray-Rust (ECA) and Maria Wolters, as incoming Programme Directors, are working on restructuring the courses

    - We're taking advantage of Helen Pain and Ajitha Rajan's initiative, as PGT admissions officer, to take the gathered field approach to MSc recruitment very seriously, and Maria Wolters going to be looking at the personal statements herself. This has already been discussed and is already happening for Design Informatics. The deadline will be in the near future to scan and select the top students. BF commented that College are happy to collaborate with the School.

8. **Recruitment Report for Teaching Committee; update:** BF presented this item in Helen Pain's absence with the accompanying document 'Teaching Committee Report as of 12.12.2016'. Limits on student admission numbers have been discussed with College. The School aims to improve due to increase in student numbers. The University strategy is to increase student numbers up to 40% by 2020. Schools are allowed to trade off different cohorts however there are concerns that Informatics may achieve the target already. It was acknowledged that there are also political targets regarding Scottish applicant numbers. There could be an outreach offer but this would need to be informed by numbers. **** See document**

9. **Year Organiser Reports:**

    - UG1 - Paul Anderson – Nothing to report

    - UG2 - Rik Sarkar – Nothing to report

    - UG3 - Christophe Dubach – Nothing to report

    - UG4 - Mary Cryan

- UG5 - Mahesh Marina – Nothing to report

- MSc - Paul Jackson – Nothing to report

BF suggested that this item could probably be dropped from the Teaching Committee going forward as items are reported in real time via the Weekly Student Rep Meetings. This is recorded via a blog. Larger, programme level issue could still be tabled at the Teaching Committee however the reaction time might be too late due to turn overs. BF suggested that Student Reps invited to Teaching Committee could be explored.

10. **Report from the Director of Teaching:** BF advised that the Working Group on Teaching Re-organisation plans are ongoing with Neil Heatley. BF noted that the future of the Director of Teaching role has still not been decided. At the moment they are not considering external hire at the moment but splitting the role in to Development and Day to Day operations. It was acknowledged that appropriate support would be required as well as making the roles attractive.

    10.1 Teaching Induction: BF advised that this happens 2x a year for a half day.

    10.2 AGA Fellowship and Edinburgh Teaching Award: BF encouraged all staff to consider applying for Fellowship. UoE has a low rank on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Informatics have 2% formally qualified Teaching Staff. SG asked BF to check training. BF advised that training could be skipped if experience could be proved in a 10-page essay. BF feels that staff need to be pragmatic. The TEF will improve UoE standing as the University cannot afford to be on the bottom rank. School will cover AGA Fellowship.

    ACTION – BW will add link to minutes for this. **UPDATE** – see link below:

    https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/recognition-accreditation/fellowships/experienced-route-hea-fellowship.

    10.3 Meet DoT Session: It was discussed that another session is required. These sessions are run like Town Hall Meetings. Items like split courses could be presented as well as other proposals to offer the students more of a voice and listen to the student's points of view. The School of Informatics need to show presence and improve communication with students. The agenda items would be flexible to allow interaction.

    10.4 Teaching Positions: BF advised that Teaching Only positions are discussed at Strategy Committee. Martin Wright and BF will work on the criteria together. Seven positions could be Grade 8. Training opportunities could be provided as career development over the summer. BF noted that there is a need to ramp up staff due to the student numbers in the cohort.

    IM commented that he has concerns about possible strategy of recruiting externally as this is a managerial approach. IM feels that the Director of Teaching that replaces BF needs to be someone that is known and familiar with the processes.

BF stated that the issues with scalability and lack of structure are linked to historical baggage from 15 years ago as well as the extensive portfolio on offer. It was acknowledged that the School has grown and the courses on offer have grown which means there needs to be a

complete strategic overhaul. There have been strategic discussions and House Keeping. AS, BF and John Longley have become involved with a working group regarding external validation. There is a 20-month timescale for major programme changes. It was recognised that compromises will need to be made in order to best support the mega courses. It was also noted that students view some courses as conversion courses.

It was noted that 20 points are not the same across all years. Numbers, credits and outliers to be taken in to consideration when capturing workload and conducting the consultation.

ACTION – BF to look at workload models and count credits

11. **AOCB:**

   11.1 **Assessment & Progression Tool on EUCLID:** GB advised that from session 2017-18 all course component marks will be entered into EUCLID by ITO using the new Assessment and Progression Tool and current Theon functionality for data capture and Board of Examiners reporting will be decommissioned. As part of this project, the progression rules included in the Degree programme Tables (DPTs) will allow auto-calculation of progression decisions, however our current progression rules into Honours (from year 2) do not accommodate this new functionality.

   11.2 **Next Board of Studies:** BF reminded the attendees that the next Board of Studies meeting will be held on 18th January 2016.

   11.3 **Next Teaching Committee Meeting:** It was agreed that the next Teaching Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday 1st February 2016.