

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ASSESSMENT

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 13th May 2022 at 2.00pm via Zoom online video conferencing.

### Attendance and apologies for absence:

|                 |                      |  |
|-----------------|----------------------|--|
| <b>Present:</b> | Dr Patrick Gallimore | York Law School (Chair)                    |
|                 | Dr Daniel Baker      | Psychology                                 |
|                 | Dr Jim Buller        | Politics                                   |
|                 | Dr Kevin Caraher     | SPSW                                       |
|                 | Eddie Cowling        | International Pathway College              |
|                 | Dr Jasper Heinzen    | History                                    |
|                 | Matt Johnstone       | YUSU                                       |
|                 | Ekansh Kapoor        | GSA  |
|                 | Dr Alet Roux         | Mathematics                                |
|                 | Dr Katherine Selby   | Natural Sciences/Environment and Geography |

### In attendance:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Prof Michael Bentley       | Physics                                     |
| Dr Martin Cockett          | Chair of Special Cases Committee            |
| Zara Burford               | Representing Online Programmes              |
| Dr Zoe Devlin              | Executive Officer to the Academic Registrar |
| Debayan Dey                | YUSU  |
| Dr Stephen Gow (Secretary) | Academic Integrity Coordinator              |
| Mickey Hollman             | Student & Academic Services                 |
| Dr Juliet James            | PGR Quality and Governance Officer          |
| Christina Karadakova       | Student Services Officer                    |
| Cecilia Lowe               | Head of Learning Enhancement                |
| Claire Pinder (Mins)       | Academic Support Coordinator                |
| Dr Jen Wotherspoon         | Deputy Director SAAA                        |

### Apologies:

|                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Prof. Kate Arnold        | Dean of York Graduate Research School |
| Dr Nicoletta Ascuto      | English (on Maternity Leave)          |
| Laila Fish               | Disability Services                   |
| Kathryn Lucas            | Student Services Manager              |
| Vanessa Richardson-Pratt | Student Administration Manager        |

### **m21-22/54 Welcome**

Apologies were received from Kate Arnold, Laila Fish, Kathryn Lucas, Vanessa and Richardson-Pratt. Incoming YUSU Student Rep Debayan Dey was welcomed to the meeting.

### **m21-22/55 Minutes of previous meeting**

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2022, and 8 April 2022.

It was reported that a potential discrepancy relating to PGT student numbers had been noticed in 8 April 2022 21-22/53 i), which could be amended to “2 students out of 4000”

### **m21-22/56 Matters Arising from the previous minutes**

- **4 March 2022 21-22/27 IPC Academic Misconduct**

It was **reported** that Eddie Cowling and Stephen Gow were working on a paper to be brought to SCA in the 2022/23 academic year **[CLOSED]**

- **4 March 2022 21-22/46 Report from Students**

Chair and secretary meet with GSA to discuss resolution of the feedback template issue affecting Computer Science and Health Science

**ACTION: SG and PG [OPEN]**

- **4 March 2022 21-22/44 Exceptional Circumstances Review**

It was **reported** that a business analysis of EC claims was being conducted. **[OPEN]**

- **4 March 2022 21-22/38 YUSU Proposal Exceptional Circumstances for YUSU Reps**

It was **reported** that no YUSU nominees had elected to take EC **[CLOSED]**

**ACTION: SG and YUSU to report on EC Claims for SABB Officers**

- **4 March 2022 21/22/48 Proposal to Allow Specific Timeframe for Online Examinations Without Need for SCA Approval**

It was **reported** that not having closed exams would have a negative impact on the Chemistry Department, and that guidance should be available to allow Departments such as Chemistry to select the most appropriate examination option for their discipline. **[CLOSED]**

It was agreed a working group would be set-up to look at the approach to Closed exams in 2022/23.

**ACTION: SG, JW and AR**

### **m21-22/57 Chair's Oral Report**

The Chair **reported** that:

- The OIA requested that assessment records be retained for 5 years. There were technological implications to be considered.
- Modularisation and Semesterisation Progression and Awards consultation updates would be cascaded by Chairs of Board of Examiners to Departments for feedback about the impact on disciplines and pedagogies.
- There was a steer in the University for Departments to run closed exams by exception. It was understood that some Departments, such as Chemistry, favoured closed style exams, and some did not, in both cases due to academic integrity, or disciplinary concerns within their area of study.
- Feedback was that Graduation ceremonies went very well, thanks were given to JW and the teams who organised Graduation..
- SCA membership would be considered with regard to wide Department participation on the board of the SCA. Members were encouraged to let SG know where any gaps existed.

### **mSCA21-22/58a Report from Students**

The GSA representative **reported** that:

- Elections for the new GSA board were currently ongoing, with results due in mid-June.
- It was requested that GSA nominees be able to apply for EC claims in the 2022/23 election process.
- Feedback was that Graduation ceremonies went very well, thanks were given to the teams who made this possible.

The YUSU representative **reported** that:

- Feedback was that Graduation ceremonies went very well, thanks were given to the teams who made this possible.
- Thanks were made to the SCA Members for their support, as this would be Matt Johnston's final SCA meeting. New YUSU student representative Debayan Dey would attend future SCA meetings.

### **m21-22/59 Revisions to Regulation 7: Discipline and Academic Misconduct (Mickey Hollman)**

The Committee **considered** the proposed new Regulation 7 which it was asked to endorse,

and was asked to approve a small task and finish group to review the academic misconduct policy and write the procedure for considering serious and repeated academic misconduct offences under Regulation 7. The cover sheet SCA21-22/37 was summarised and the following points were noted:

- Regulation 7 should be taken to the YGRS board for consideration with respect to PGR student experience.
- A task and finish group which could include Rich Andrews could be created to look at the scope of Regulation 7 in regard to its use of the term Academic Misconduct should be considered with respect to the Academic Misconduct policy, and with regard to a definition of VLE (digital campus) spaces.
- Research can become out of date- so there are added issues to suspension for PGRs

**ACTION: Juliet James to contact Mickey Hollman regarding taking Regulation 7 to the YGRS board for consideration.**

**ACTION: Juliet James to check part 7.4.2 which refers to academic years so it maps to PGR timescales.**

**ACTION: SG to convene a task and finish group, Rich Andrew from YUSU ASC to be invited..**

#### **m21-22/60 Revised policy on thesis and assessment requirements and proposed University requirements for journal-style PGR theses (PGR) (Juliet James)**

The Committee **considered** the proposed assessment-related changes to the Policy on Research Degrees (PORD) with regard to recommendation to YGRS PGR Policies and Programmes Committee (PPPC). The following points were **noted**:

- Key Proposals included: A revision of the section on the nature of the thesis, including links to [draft guidance on journal-style theses](#); Further clarification around the use and approval hybrid and online oral examinations; Two proposals to help resolve issues relating to the revise and resubmit examination outcome; A revised embargo and redaction section; Clarification around the use of text-matching software, including a policy question.
- Committee Members were advised to let Juliet James know of any queries prior to the 7 June YGRS PGR Policies and Programmes Committee (PPPC).
- It should be built into the assessment related changes to the Policy on Research Degrees (PORD) that difficult cases should be referred to SCA.
- The proposed assessment related changes would enhance PGR student wellbeing.
- Wording around embargoing of theses would be clarified.
- The University Library offers students support regarding copyright queries.

The committee **recommended** the proposed assessment-related changes to the Policy on Research Degrees (PORD) with regard to recommendation to YGRS PGR Policies and Programmes Committee (PPPC).

**ACTION: Juliet James to assess PGR assessment-related practices at other institutions with regard to thesis wording and software arrangements and discuss with SCA secretary.**

#### **m21-22/61 Exceptional Circumstances Working Group - interim report (Mike Bentley)**

The Committee noted and commented on the interim report on the progress of the working group which is reviewing the Exceptional Circumstances Policy. The following points were noted:

- There were concerns about the impact of self-certified extensions upon progression dates.
- OIA guidance which predated the impact of Covid, supported the inclusion of short self-certified extensions as a new sector norm.
- It was recommended that short self cert extension claims should be submitted prior to the release of any assessment material in order to be approved.
- SCA Committee Members to reflect upon feedback policy during the 2022/23 academic year.
- There were concerns regarding limiting EC claims to a portion of assessment credit, a time-limited approach was favoured by YUSU.
- Self-certified EC extensions could be assessed by Professional Support Service staff against a clear criteria (points of escalation), who would refer more serious/numerous claims from students to academic colleagues where appropriate. This would remove some administrative burden from academic colleagues.
- The proposed move to include a pathway for students with caring responsibilities to be included on a Student Support Plan was welcomed.

**ACTION: Patrick Gallimore, Stephen Gow, and Jen Wotherspoon to discuss the interim report and provide feedback to the Exceptional Circumstances Working Group.**

#### **m21-22/62 Exceptional Circumstances - Self-certification Data analysis (Stephen Gow)**

The Committee considered the report on the data for Self-certification of exceptional circumstances and considered the proposals for continuation of the policy in 22/23 academic year. The following points were noted:

- Data analysis showed that the Exceptional Circumstances Self-Certification mean claim per student was 2.3 in the 2021/22 academic year, and that PGT and 2nd year UG students were the most likely to use the facility.
- The rate of self-cert EC claims may increase in 2022/23 as the cost of living crisis impacts on student mental health.

- It was suggested that the number of self-certs that a full time student could submit in a single academic year be capped to three.

**ACTION: Stephen Gow to consult Departments about the number of self-cert EC Claims they regard as appropriate per full time student.**

**ACTION: Stephen Gow to consult Departments about Proposal 3 - The central E:vision system becomes the only way to apply for self-certification.**

#### **m21-22/63 York Online: New Policies For ECAs And LOAs/Study Breaks (Zoe Devlin)**

The Committee considered the proposals against approval of recommendation to University Teaching Committee. The following points were noted:

- The model proposed for the Online Programmes is significantly different from that used for campus programmes but this was due to the nature of programmes.
- The online programmes now better understand and consider the impact on students for ECA's and LOA's/ Study Breaks.
- The proposal paper, once recommended, will go to the SCC for approval.
- Implementation of the new policies would require about nine to twelve months, and would require student system resource.
- Students undertaking ISM could have either a long term ECA, or an LOA, depending which most suited their needs.

**ACTION: Zoe Devlin to consider Proposal 13 in relation to alignment with the Guide to Assessment.**

#### **CATEGORY II**

#### **m21-2/64: Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was **noted** as 7th July 2022 at 2pm via Zoom online video conferencing.