

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ASSESSMENT

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 29th October 2021 at 2.00pm via Zoom online video conferencing due to Covid-19 lockdown.

Attendance and apologies for absence:

Present:	Dr Patrick Gallimore	York Law School (Interim Chair)
	Dr Daniel Baker	Psychology
	Dr Jim Buller	Politics
	Dr Alet Roux	Mathematics
	Dr Katherine Selby	Natural Sciences/Environment and Geography
	Dr Nicoletta Ascianto	English
	Matt Johnstone	YUSU
	Ekansh Kapoor	GSA
	Prof. Kate Arnold	Dean of York Graduate Research School
	Eddie Cowling	International Pathway College

In attendance:

Zara Burford	Representing Online Programmes
Dr Zoe Devlin	Acting Head of Online Partnerships
Dr Jen Wotherspoon	Deputy Director SAAA
Dr Stephen Gow (Secretary)	Academic Integrity Coordinator
Charlotte Chamberlain (Mins)	Academic Support Coordinator
Cecilia Lowe	Head of Learning Enhancement
Dr Martin Cockett	Chair of Special Cases Committee
Robert Simpson	Special Cases Manager

Apologies:	Laila Fish	Disability Services
	Dr Kevin Caraher	SPSW

21-22/11 Welcome

Patrick Gallimore opened the meeting and **noted** that he was acting Interim chair, pending approval. Apologies were received and the Chair **welcomed** Eddie Cowling of the International Pathway College as a new member of the committee.

21-22/12 Minutes of previous meeting

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2021.

21-22/13 Matters Arising from the previous minutes

- **20-21/65 Update on SCA membership**
Chair to cover in Chair's Report

- **20-21/84**

Covered by a later item on the agenda.

- **21-22/9 ECA Policy Proposal**

It was **reported** that the ECA Policy had raised significant discussion in departments and that guidance had been sent to departments, following some push back around implementation. It was noted that an E:Vision task is due to go live in January.

It was also **noted** that 4 day extensions to deadlines would have an impact on the 20 day turn around policy for feedback, and that a 25 day policy may be preferable. As this policy is owned by the University Teaching Committee, it was advised that this matter be referred to UTC for consideration.

It was also **noted** that this policy does not apply to Postgraduate Research students, and that both Academic and Professional services staff workload implications would need to be carefully managed.

The student representatives **noted** that communications will need to be delicately phrased to prevent students seeing the 4 days as the new deadline.

ACTION: Proposal for 25 day feedback to UTC (SG)

ACTION: Raise concerns about workload of ECA policy to Mike Bentley (SG)

21-22/14 Chair's Oral Report

Patrick Gallimore **noted** that he had taken on the role of Interim chair, pending approval. Applications were requested for the role of deputy chair, with expression interest to be given following the meeting.

ACTION: SG

21-2/15 Report from Students

The YUSU representative reported that :

- A low number of nominations for course representative positions, with 130 nominations for over 350 positions.
- An ASC casework report had been sent to UTC. This report noted a statistically negligible increase in overall case numbers, with cases primarily split between Academic Misconduct and exceptional circumstances.
- There was some concern around upcoming industrial action, and a need to ensure forward planning.

The GSA representative reported that:

- Postgraduate course representative elections had started, with voting due to commence w/c 1st November

- Work was ongoing with a number of departments to look at taught postgraduate supervision, following a number of concerns and queries from students.
- Work was ongoing with the Academic Integrity team on materials and campaigns designed to bring attention to academic misconduct issues.

21-22/16 SCA Chair and membership update

It was **noted** an update on the SCA chair had been covered in the Chair's update, and that expressions of interest in the deputy chair role would be gratefully received. It was also **noted** that 2 new members from Arts and Humanities faculty, were needed and that an approach should be made to Faculty Learning and Teaching Groups.

ACTION: Contact A&H FLTG requesting 2 representatives for SCA (SG)

21-22/17 SCA confirmation of Priority Areas 2020/21

The Committee **confirmed** areas of priority for the upcoming academic year. It was **noted** that whilst Student Reps are not listed against all projects, they will have some input into all relevant workstreams. It was **requested** that expressions of interest in any particular workstream be either added to the document, or sent to the secretary.

ACTION Committee members are asked to send requests to join specific projects, either via email to sca@york.ac.uk, or by commenting on the document (ALL)

21-22/18 Undergraduate External Examiners Report

The committee **received** and **noted** the report.

The committee **noted** the praise for York's variety of assessment, innovation and quick adaptation to online assessment, with the IPC especially commended for their improvement. It was also noted that finding suitable and willing External Examiners had become more difficult during the pandemic, and that this may have an impact in future years.

The Committee received the report and agreed with the recommendations. In addition, the following were noted:

- **Difficulty of recruiting external examiners:** It was highlighted that it is becoming more difficult to recruit External Examiners and this matter needs to be addressed.
- **Grade inflation vs Value added:** In response to a point in the report about grade inflation, it was **noted** that the University is now bottom of the Russell Group for awarding Good degrees with a 3% decrease in 2:2 awards. While standards must be maintained there must be an institutional discussion about our approach to value added.

- **Automatic progression of first years and fail repeat:** It was **noted** by the Committee that there are certain anomalies of performance in department due to the automatic progression of first year and a distinct decline in numbers of fail repeat students - this should be monitored. This is expected to have some impact on SCC caseload.
- **IPC:** The Committee **noted** the improvement of IPC's report and the commendation of the STEM team.
- **Addressing major issues:** The Committee **noted** the need to catch major lingering issues raised by External Examiners with lack of Annual Periodic Reviews.
- It was also **noted** that the timings of exam boards had been brought up over a number of examiners reports. The committee **agreed** not to act on this, due to the changes being brought in by semesterisation.

ACTION: Report to be shared with the Digital Assessment working group (SG)

ACTION: To inform UTC of the difficulties in recruiting external examiners(SG)

21-22/18 Date of the next meeting

The committee **noted** that the date of the next meeting as December 3rd 2021 at 2pm via Zoom online video conferencing.