

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ASSESSMENT

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 12 May 2023 at 2.00pm in HG17 Heslington Hall and via Zoom online video conferencing.

Attendance and apologies for absence:

Present:	Dr Patrick Gallimore	York Law School (Chair)
	Dr Jeremy Airey	Education
	Prof. Kate Arnold	Dean of York Graduate Research School
	Dr Daniel Baker	Psychology
	Dr Eddie Cowling	IPC
	Dr Jasper Heinzen	History
	Dr Christian Pillier	Philosophy
	Dr Kevin Caraher	Social Policy
	Dr Alet Roux	Mathematics
	Dr Anna Sotiriadou	CITY College
	Dr Eytan Zweig	LLS
Zhang Teng	GSA	
In attendance:	Dr Zara Burford	Online Programmes
	Dr Stephen Gow (Secretary)	Academic Integrity Coordinator
	Claire Pinder (Minutes)	Academic Support Coordinator
	Louise Parsons	Student Administration Manager (Deputy)
	Dr Jen Wotherspoon	Deputy Director SAAA
Apologies	Jan Ball-Smith	Apprenticeships and Inclusive Learning
	Daisy Bowen	Special Cases
	Debayan Dey	YUSU
	Isabel Jagoe	DHOFO - Philosophy
	Jayne Lawrence	DHOFO - Health Sciences
	Nic Streatfield	Student and Academic Services

m22-23/64 Welcome & Introductions

Members and those attending were welcomed. It was noted that Louise Matson was standing in for Daisy Bowen.

Apologies were received from Debayan Dey and Pierrick, from YUSU, who were visiting CITY College.

m22-23/65 Minutes of previous meeting

The SCA Committee approved the minutes of the SCA meeting held on **Friday 3 March 2023**.

m22-23/66 Matters arising from the previous minutes

OPEN

- **m22-23/54 Update of Priority Areas**
Progression at risk - this would remain an open item, time would be allocated to reflect on normal issues of progression at risk.
- **m22-23/58 Chair's Oral Report -Industrial Action, External Examiners and Institutional Exam Board Contingency**
This was ongoing.
- **m22-23/59 Report from Students**
The GSA rep will meet with the Head of Inclusive Learning to discuss how students can be supported in this area.

This action related to discussion around a report from the GSA representative that students have passed the recommended language requirements but their language level is inadequate to succeed in their programmes - and support that could be put in place to assist those students.

This was ongoing.

- **m22-23/61 Self-Certification data analysis**
The Chair will meet with the YUSU rep and other reps to inform them of the decision. This was ongoing.

CLOSED

- **m22-23/50 Degree Outcomes Data**
Jen Wotherspoon had consulted Kate Arnold about the PG results and what factor may be driving them.

ACTION: Stephen Gow to follow up with Kate Arnold.

- **m22-23/58 Chair's Oral Report - Self-certification**
Student guidance had gone out. It was further noted that a self-certification proposal for three uses in an academic year - with adjustments - had been approved at the University Teaching Committee meeting. UTC had also considered bunched assessments, and a work around to deal with cases where assessments have 72 hour extensions. It was noted that SCA would further review this in the 2023/24 academic year.
- **m22-23/60 PSS working group Exceptional Circumstances progress report**
SCC, Disability Services and SLC were involved in a working group. Student guidance had been issued. A full package of considerations would be made with regard to Exceptional Circumstances and Self Certification guidance, which would be considered in relation to each other.
- **m22-23/63 Artificial Intelligence, Assessment and Academic Misconduct**

A meeting had been convened for the SCA AI working group.

m22-23/67 Chair's Oral Report

- **VLE transformation project: anonymous assessment update**

The VLE transformation project anonymous assessment update was considered and the following points were noted:

- Blackboard will not be supported from September 2023.
- UTC had endorsed on principle that for 2023-24 non-anonymous submissions were standard. This solution was due to the current limitations of the submission system. The submission system was being assessed by the transformation team, and if the transformation team found a workable technical solution, submissions would remain anonymous.
- PSS staff, and SCA members, raised concerns about training timelines for marking on the Turnitin platform, and training markers in unconscious bias.
- In other countries which use non-anonymous assessment, students can appeal their marks, however in the UK this isn't the case.
- It may, therefore, be possible for Turnitin to support anonymous submission by September 2023. If the system would allow anonymous submissions then anonymous submissions should take place.

Discussion also related to the use of Artificial Intelligence. The following points were noted:

- Turnitin was used by CITY College to identify AI plagiarism to good effect.
- Students would be permitted to use Chat GPT if it was referenced appropriately.
- It would be important to test all new systems to ensure they- identified cases of plagiarism where AI GPT software was used.

ACTION: Chair of SCA to produce a risk assessment report on non-anonymous assessment in 2023-24 for consideration by UTC.

- **Self Certification Adjustments**

The Chair of the SCA noted that a full package of considerations would be made with regard to Self Certification adjustments, and exceptional circumstances guidance, which would both be considered in relation to each other.

- **PSS ECA working group update**

This discussion was included in item **m22-23/67**

- **Industrial Action, External Examiners and Institutional Exam Board Contingency**

It was noted that due to a Marking and Assessment boycott, the Chair of the SCA had met with the PVC for TLA, the Deputy PVC for TLA, and AD's for TL&S in Sciences, Social Sciences, and Arts and Humanities, and Jen Wotherspoon to reflect on responses for progression and award. The Chair of the SCA and Jen Wotherspoon had planned a response. It was further noted that:

- The University had engaged an Institutional Examiner, Becky Huxley-Binns who would be part of a group to approve progression and award rules.
- Adjustments could be made to the compensation rules for UG students who were at 80 credits or more.

- There would be an uneven distribution of lost credits across Departments.
 - The overall principle was that any decisions would be made only after students had completed any reassessments.
 - The overall aim was for all submissions to be marked in due course, and students would graduate with a full set of marks.
 - All plans were subject to caveats, such as PSRB requirements for example.
 - Some first year work would not be marked.
 - There was a risk that staff who had gone on industrial action may decline to mark submissions to catch up with marking missed as a result of industrial action.
- **Artificial Intelligence**
see CAT 2 paper Generative artificial intelligence SCA update for Research Committee
 - **Membership of the committee - update.**
It was noted that the Chair of the SCA would confirm continuing appointments for 2023-24. Two new members were required and offers were received.

m22-23/68 Report from Students

There was no report from the YUSU representative.

The GSA representative noted that:

- Many international students were concerned about non-anonymous assessment, citing concerns with relation to culture in their home countries around offering gifts to academic members of staff, and requesting better marks.
- Students were concerned about the impact of the marking and assessment boycott on graduation dates.

m22-23/69 Changes to the Policy on Research Degrees - new 6 month correction period

Changes to the Policy on Research Degrees - new 6 month correction period was endorsed/ approved. It was noted that:

- This was a small change which would have many benefits. The proposed change was that students would have an extra option of a six month correction window. This brought the University in line with comparative institutions, and would be advantageous to many PGR students.
- Select members of SCA were unclear about the application of rules, so it was recommended clear communication of the implementation of the new correction period could be an opportunity to clarify the rules about corrections periods more generally.
- All members of the SCA endorsed/ approved the proposal.

ACTION: Professor Kate Arnold to let the SCA know how quickly forms could be adjusted with this amendment.

m22-23/70 Exceptional Circumstances and Self-Certification Working Group Update and in principle proposals

Exceptional Circumstances and Self-Certification Working Group Update and in principle proposals were endorsed. The following points were noted:

- The working group sought endorsement of the first stage identified in the accompanying paper for an amendment to the Exceptional Circumstances policy. This would have immediate resource implications since approval would move from EC Committee to an EC

Officer, who would hold responsibility for the process, and can delegate to others.

- The working group sought endorsement of the second stage identified in the accompanying paper for an amendment to the Exceptional Circumstances policy - around confidentiality. This said that if an EC claim suggested a student was at risk it could be referred, but otherwise, all claims would remain confidential, unless there was an appeal, in which case, the Chair of the Board of Studies would view the claim(s).
- The Chair of Board of Examiners, or nominated alternate to the Chair of Board of Examiners would advise the EC Officer regarding EC application outcome when requested.
- There was a short timeframe over the summer for Departments to become familiar with, and able to implement, the new policy in time for student arrivals in the 2023-24 academic year.
- Departments should be allowed time to consider guidance on appropriate levels and expectations around workload.
- A schedule would be produced to assist the EC Officer with assessing EC applications.

ACTION: Chair of SCA to consider how PSS staff would be supported to implement/operate the new process.

ACTION: Chair of SCA to bring further wording around confidentiality to the July SCA meeting.

m22-23/71 M&S Progression and Award Rules

M&S Progression and Award Rules were endorsed for UTC subject to further thought about how to accommodate the proposal without allowing elective resits. The following points were noted:

- An amendment to the original rule, proposal B would be considered. This stated that resit mark policy was out of line for the sector, since some institutions allow the benefit of the resit mark, however currently if a student failed an assessment they could resit for credit only.

The proposal was that students would be eligible for a mark (capped at pass mark). It was noted that:

- this may lead to appeals
- there may be resource implications for any elective resits
- An amendment to proposal I would be considered. This regarded the progression mark for the integrated masters. The Chairs of Board of Studies had been consulted and 15 responses had been received. The proposal was that progress from stage 2-3 required a credit weighted average of 55, and that progress from stage 3-4 required an overall average. It was noted that:
 - This was a pragmatic proposal, and that M&S would review the impact of all award rules.
 - There were no objections to the endorsement of this proposal for UTC.
- An amendment to the proposal around Exit Awards would be considered. This would review the way in which exit awards were specified for PG, and specialist PG programmes, so that modules would be specified for the exit awards - making provision clear for progression and awards - and for students coming onto programmes. It was noted that:
 - A PhD which has a PG Cert embedded in it was being considered and would consider this amendment in its construction.
 - This would be very useful when setting up programmes.
 - There were no objections to the endorsement of this proposal for UTC.

- An amendment to the proposal around Capstone modules would be considered with regard to if it was required to apply the same principles of compensation and reassessment to them, or treat them in the same way as other modules. It was noted that:
 - UG marks are provisional until the final panel meeting in June.
 - Marks would be modified before going back to students, where required.
 - Where a scrutiny panel declined to intervene with marks - they would be referred to the external examiner, whose comment would be reviewed by subsequent panels.
 - The feedback policy should be adjusted so it is “timely” rather than a 20 day feedback policy.
 - The rules should state where responsibility in Departments lies for decision making around compensation and reassessment for capstone modules.
 - There were no objections to the endorsement of this proposal for UTC.

ACTION: SCA secretary to draft report for UTC consideration.

m22-23/72 External Examiners PG report

External Examiners PG report was considered. It was noted that:

- Point 11 regarding distinctions was to be reviewed regarding if there was the appropriate level of description between merit and distinction marks on Capstone projects - and should the descriptions be reviewed in line with this external examiner comment.
- It may be possible to reduce the length of the capstone project.
- Point 15 regarding summary reports - there was inconsistent practice around External Examiners meeting students. It is current policy that External Examiners are invited to campus once per year and they may elect to visit at a time of year when they can meet students. It was agreed that there was split preference between examiners preferring online/ in person meetings, and that the current policy allowed the needs of both groups to be met.
- Examiners access to module content was discussed - regarding getting rid of zeros at assessment so that data is not skewed by non-submissions. It was reported that there was no solution at present to this issue.

ACTION: SCA Secretary to ensure the report is considered by UTC.

ACTION: Daniel Baker to clarify expectations of External Examiners with regard to attendance on campus.

CATEGORY II

Note: approval of Category II business will be assumed unless a member indicates that they wish to bring forward an item to Category I business.

1. Date of the next meeting

To note the date of the next meeting as Friday 7 July at 2pm via Zoom online video conferencing, and in person in HG/17.

RESERVED BUSINESS

m22-23/73 Generative artificial intelligence SCA update for Research Committee

m22-23/74 Individual Examination Arrangements

To note that individual examination arrangements for students have been approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

m22-23/75 Appointment of External Examiners

To note the appointment (or extension to appointment) of external examiners (UG and PGT), approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

m22-23/76 Results Lists

To note notification of recommendations for the award of degrees approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.