Standing Committee on Assessment

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 22nd November 2024 at 10.00am in LFA/144 Harry Fairhurst Building and via Zoom online video conferencing.

Attendance and apologies for absence:

Present:	Prof. Steve King	Computer Science (Sciences), APVC-TLS (Chair)
	Dr Alet Roux	Mathematics (Sciences)
	Dr Sue Faulds	Health Sciences (Sciences)
	Dr Jasper Heinzen	History (Arts & Humanities)
	Dr Eytan Zweig	Language & Linguistic Science (Arts & Humanities)
	Prof. Jill Webb	AD-TLS Social Sciences
	Dr Mathilde Péron	Economics (Social Sciences)
	Dr Jeremy Airey	Education (Social Sciences)
	Fenella Johnson	York SU, Academic Officer
	Eddie Cowling	IPC
	Dr Christian Piller	Philosophy (Arts & Humanities)
	Assoc. Prof. Anna Sotiriadou	CITY College
In attendance :	Aimée Yeoman	SCA Secretary & Policy Officer
	Dr Zara Burford	York Online
	Richard Andrew	York SU, Advice & Support Manager
	Jenny Matson	Deputy Head of Student Administration (Student Lifecycle)
	Dr Adrian Lee	Policy Manager, Academic Quality & Development
	Jess Penn	Interim Head of Inclusive Education
	Daisy Bowen	Special Cases
	Claire Wilkinson	Disability Services Manager
	Diane Atkinson	Student Services Manager, School for Business & Society
	Dr Juliet James	YGRS
Apologies:	Isabel Jagoe	Head of Faculty Operations- Arts and Humanities
	Dr Patrick Gallimore	Law (Social Sciences)
	Prof. Matthias Ruth	Pro-Vice-Chancellor: Research

m24-25/33 Welcome and apologies for absence
Committee members and those in attendance were welcomed and apologies noted.

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SCA Chair noted that it was EC's last meeting for SCA, as he is leaving the University in December. He thanked EC for his valuable contributions to SCA.

m24-25/34 Declarations of Interest

SCA Chair thanked committee members for filling out the 'Declaration of Interests' form that was circulated after the October meeting. SCA Chair noted that the 'Declarations of Interest' item will be a new standing item on the SCA agenda, to allow for any conflicts to be actively managed.

m24-25/35 Minutes of previous meeting (SCA 24-25/13)

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Friday 25th October 2024 were confirmed as correct.

ACTION: SCA Secretary to update CW's title to Service manager

m23-24/36 Matters arising from the previous minutes

Members noted items listed on the Matters Arising log

CLOSED

- **m24-25/3 Matters arising from the previous minutes,** Patrick Gallimore to check CAW guidance was shared with Institutional EE.

Completed, no further comments.

- **m24-25/3 Matters arising from the previous minutes,** Review the academic integrity tutorial as a priority for SCA this year.

SCA 24-25/16 of this meeting.

- **m24-25/4 Chair's Report,** Jill Webb to arrange clearer communication of CAW Guidance document, send this to HoFOs and Student Service Managers also

Completed when CAW guidance was released.

- **m24-25/6 SCA Terms of reference and membership 24/25,** SCA Chair to find out who has responsibility for finalising external examiner fees.

Completed, document shared with SCA Chair detailing external examiner fee arrangements.

- **m24-25/6 SCA Terms of reference and membership 24/25,** SCA Secretary to add names of people 'in attendance' be added to the full SCA membership list (which includes term dates).

Completed.

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- **m24-25/7 Schedule & priorities 24/25,** SCA Chair & SCA Secretary to revise priorities list

SCA 24-25/16 of this meeting.

- **m24-25/22 Chair's Report,** SCA Secretary to circulate the link to the Declarations of Interest Google Form to committee members.

Completed, circulated on 31st October 2024.

- **m24-25/25 PGR Use of Turnitin,** Juliet James is to have a conversation with BRIC surrounding additional training for supervisors with Turnitin reports.

Completed, a discussion was held at PPPC, where the committee agreed with the proposal. JJ has gathered together a test group of people to test the training.

- **m24-25/25 PGR Use of Turnitin,** Juliet James to make it clearer within the flowchart diagram that Turnitin is available to examiners, clarifying that the onus is not solely on the supervisor to identify issues.

Completed.

- **m24-25/27 Any Other Business,** Eddie Cowling to share IPC's AI 'Statement of Use' with committee.

Completed, SCA Secretary circulated to SCA on EC's behalf.

- **m24-25/27 Any Other Business,** SCA Chair to lead on creation of 'Statement of Use of AI for staff' to bring to the next SCA.

Completed, SCA 24-25/17 of this meeting

ONGOING

- **m24-25/25 PGR Use of Turnitin,** SCA Chair and Isabel Jagoe to read through PGR AIT tutorial.

- **m24-25/27 Any Other Business,** SCA Chair to speak to Petros Kefalas about ongoing work across City College looking into AI for marking.

- **m24-25/27 Any Other Business,** SCA Secretary to liaise with UTC GenAI Working Group to gather case studies.

SCA Secretary has made contact and is waiting to hear back.

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m24-25/37 Chair's Report

SCA **considered** the Chair's oral report. It was noted that:
There are currently a significant number of Learning and Teaching projects ongoing which have implications on SCA's remit of work.

SCA Chair noted that slides explaining this ongoing work had been put together for FLTG meetings. The Committee agreed that it would be useful for these slides to be shared with SCA.

ACTION: SCA Secretary to distribute to members

m24-25/38 Report from Students

York SU **noted** that:

YorkSU held their first Academic Leadership Team (ALT) meeting last week. FJ noted that she had received feedback from Natural Science and English that students were not receiving receipts of successful submission on the VLE. FJ noted that she had raised this with departmental staff and the issues had been resolved. It was suggested that the issue is raised with the VLE Team to ensure there is no systemic issue with the provision of submission receipts.

ACTION: FJ to raise this with the VLE Team

FJ noted that no assessment-related issues had been raised by students so far regarding the University-wide network outage earlier in the week, but that she would share any feedback that may come from the forthcoming ALT meeting.

The Committee discussed the new calculator policy and how some students were discontented with the requirement to provide their own calculator and the apparent sudden implementation of this policy.

It was noted that the assessment policy for AY 23-24 stated that the then policy on calculators would finish at the end of that AY and that a new one would be implemented for the start of the 24-25 AY.

ACTIONS: FJ to bring feedback from students on this to SCA

SCA Chair to speak to PG about history of this policy change

Secretary's Note: SCA m19-20/84 (May 2020) records the discussion and decision to implement a bring your own calculator policy with effect from 2024/25.

m24-25/39 Academic Misconduct from YorkSU Perspective (SCA 24-25/14)

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The Committee **noted** York SU's report:

YorkSU presented their report covering the YorkSU perspective of navigating students through the Academic Misconduct (AM) process, with focus on student experience and highlighting potential areas of improvement.

YorkSU noted the disproportionate number of international PG students being investigated for AM. YorkSU added that there is the sense that students go into their first assessment period without having sufficient knowledge of academic integrity rules and therefore the Academic Integrity Tutorial (AIT) needs updating to address this.

YorkSU also suggested that there needs to be opportunity for learning and improvement throughout the AM process so that students can understand their mistake(s) and be signposted to further support.

YorkSU noted that the clarity and consistency of communication to students being investigated for AM is variable.

YorkSU made the following recommendations:

- A more standardised approach of communication in the period between a suspicion being raised by a marker and the student being notified of an AM investigation. Currently, this period of time is distressing for students.
- A distinction to be made between support available from academic supervisors and YorkSU in relation to AM cases. YorkSU suggested that it could provide an information document about the SU advice service to be attached to all AM notification emails.
- A compassionate approach to be taken when a student hastily responds to an AM case notification email, which at present is being taken as their final written response to be considered by the panel. Instead, a confirmation email could be sent out to the student checking that this is their final written statement to provide the opportunity to submit a more substantive response.
- StAMP panels must make it clear what the specific AM concern is that they are investigating, as the Turnitin report alone as evidence is confusing.
- Clear communication to students regarding submitting evidence for exceptional circumstances and when they are required to send this in for consideration.
- A standardised structure for AM hearings and the agenda for these to be circulated in advance to relieve student anxiety.
- A review of the AM email templates to ensure communication is clear and tone is appropriate. YorkSU would welcome input into this.

The Committee discussed the need for further guidance on what markers should write in their initial suspicion of AM report and whether the student is able to see this report or not.

The Committee discussed the need to consider the root cause of AM, with reference to the need for guidance on Artificial Intelligence and a nuanced approach to English language difficulties. It was noted that there is ongoing work currently looking into this.

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The Committee discussed whether students want to know when suspicions of AM have been raised or would they rather simply be made aware that there will be a delay in receiving their results. YorkSU suggested that they would rather be made aware of a delay (without explanation as to why) so that they know to expect to receive their marks later.

The Committee discussed the sufficiency of guidance given to StAMP panels on how to conduct a hearing and of the value in producing a good practice guide for StAMP panel members and chairs.

The Committee also discussed the need for student guidance on how to compose an appropriate written statement, as currently access to this guidance depends on a student making contact with YorkSU. YorkSU would welcome involvement with this.

The Committee noted that the AIT is the baseline level of guidance on academic integrity for students intended to be supplemented by departmental/discipline specific advice.

The Committee noted that the disproportionate number of international students being investigated for AM was a sector wide issue. It was noted that this insight on international students was particularly useful for YorkOnline.

It was noted that IPC's international students being investigated receive a plain English notification of the delay of their results, which explains that they are being investigated for AM and that they will be kept updated. IPC also has a resource which explains what will happen in a meeting.

ACTIONS: EC to share resources with SCA Chair

AR to lead work on StAMP guidance with other members of the committee (including an SU rep)

JM to share the report with the Exams & Graduation team

m24-25/40 Assessment from an APP perspective (SCA 24-25/15)

The Committee **noted** the Access and Participation Plan (APP) presentation:

JW and JP provided an overview of the APP, noting that the new plan will launch in the AY 25-26, underpinned by student partnership.

An overview of University of York interventions to address gaps was presented, noting in particular wide gaps in outcomes with regards to ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

It was noted that three schools/departments are currently piloting interventions, working closely with the SU. This developmental intervention process is to be embedded into the annual review process.

m24-25/41 SCA Priorities for AY 24-25 (SCA 24-25/16)

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The Committee **noted** the SCA priorities for AY 24-25, including:

That the SSP project should be under point 2.2 in this paper.

A request from the Chair for volunteers for projects that they would like to work on:

<u>Condonation</u>: To explore whether the University should introduce condonation of failed credit, in line with sector, which could potentially could lead to grade inflation
<u>Volunteers</u>: MP, AR, JM

<u>Academic Integrity Tutorial:</u> To consider the sanctions for not doing it, how partnership students engage with this, appropriate content including artificial intelligence,repetition of the AIT from UG to PGT, PGT to PGR, and IPC to mainstream study.
<u>Volunteers</u>: EZ, DA, AS, JH, RA/YorkSU, Victoria Jack (SocSCI)

<u>FREPEAT</u>: To review the effectiveness/ impact of repeat study and to consider broadening scope, including consideration ofAPP/EDI implications.
<u>Volunteers</u>: JA, JM, DB, AR, DA, a rep from Inclusive Education

<u>Policy on acceptable assistance in assessment:</u> To consider enhancing the guidance on Artificial Intelligence.
<u>Volunteers</u>: EZ, EC, SK, PG

ACTION: EC to speak to PG about this work

<u>Exceptional circumstances policy:</u>
<u>Volunteers</u>: DB, SF, JH, JA, a rep from StudentHub, a rep from Student Advice & Support

<u>Policy work:</u> To review Sections 4 and 5 of the Assessment Policy re. exchange & visiting students, extra time, marks release guidance, work based learning.
<u>Volunteers & Area of interest</u>: EZ or LLS colleague and Global Opportunities (exchange/visiting students), CW, JA (release of marks)

<u>Progression at Risk:</u> To consider possible provisions to enable progression at risk in defined circumstances.
<u>Volunteers</u>: MP, SF, DB, JM

ACTION: SCA secretary to ask members not present what they want to get involved with

m24-25/42 Statement of use of AI in marking and feedback (SCA 24-25/17)

The Committee **considered** a draft Statement of use by staff of AI in marking and feedback:

SCA Chair noted that based on the IPC AI Statement of Use which was shared with the committee prior to this meeting, he envisages this statement also going on VLE sites.

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The Committee discussed that the proposal does not suggest that AI is used in the awarding of marks, instead could be used in situations where academic judgement is not needed, i.e. machine marking of short answer questions.

The Committee discussed how the statement needs to make clear that SCA's remit is only for the use of AI in assessment, marking and feedback and not AI with regards to pedagogy, which the UTC working group is leading on.

The Committee suggested that the statement should include examples of what markers could or could not do without formal approval and that clear boundaries should be set.

The Committee suggested that the wording 'currently' and 'at present' should be removed from the statement, to make a definite statement to staff/students that academics will continue to decide the marks, i.e. removing any implied future change in policy.

The Committee discussed the use of the phrase 'AI may be used in the generation of feedback', with the Committee agreeing that this creates disparity between what is acceptable use of AI for students and staff. The Committee suggested the phrase 'AI may be used to support the production or enhancement of feedback' would be more appropriate.

The Committee noted that it needs to be made clear in the statement that even though AI may be used, this does not have a detrimental impact on the quality of teaching or the rigour of the assessment process.

The Committee also noted that it is important to offer guidance on what constitutes AI and decide on a uniform term of either 'AI' or 'GenAI', as different tools may be used.

The Committee discussed that the scope of this statement of use needs to be explained more clearly, i.e. whether it is just for summative assessment or also formative and whether it is for UoY taught programmes only or is intended to cover partnership providers as well.

The Committee discussed the potential risk for the University in publishing such a statement, suggesting that this may lead to devaluation (in students' eyes) of the feedback that students receive. However, also that with the right messaging, taking such a transparent approach could be welcomed by students. SCA Chair suggested that if AI is used in marking a piece of work, this will be made clear to students.

The Committee discussed that it should be left to the discretion of individual departments to issue the statement, depending on whether they use AI in marking or not. The Committee also discussed that there could be more than one template statement, each covering a different extent that AI is/may be used.

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The Committee suggested that the Complaints team is consulted with regards to potential implications of using this statement.

The Committee agreed that FAQs should go out alongside this statement to support students to understand it.

> **ACTION: SCA Chair to redraft the statement & to share with the UTC AI working group**

m24-25/43 Assessment & Feedback Project Update (SCA 24-25/18)

The Committee **noted:**

An overview of the progress of the A&F project presented by AL with a proposal of the structure for presenting assessment documentation, alongside the guiding principles of revising, reviewing and creating policy moving forward.
The Committee noted that an A&F project workshop was held on the 5th November that brought together stakeholders to look at existing policies, priorities for change, gaps based on sector research and University/departmental approaches/discretion.

The Committee noted research into sector best practice suggests policies are best situated with accompanying procedures, guidance and resources and therefore, the A&F project is looking to create a landing page with themed areas within which to group documentation.

The Committee provided feedback on the proposed presentation and structure, highlighting that this would also be circulated to UTC shortly, with more substantial proposals being put to UTC in February/March.

The Committee discussed the need for policy to be flexible for different departments and their respective departmental discretionary rules. It was suggested that the A&F project needs to consider the presentation of the policy so that departments can cross-reference their departmental policy with institutional level policy. SCA Chair noted that the intention is to move away from allowing departmental discretion, to provide a 'single source of truth', consistent policy and supplementary guidance inclusive of the needs of different disciplines and provision.

The Committee also discussed how policies are written from a staff point of view and whether these are student-user friendly. The Committee discussed how it is important that PSS staff, markers etc. know how to understand and explain policies to students. It was noted that user experience testing will take place, including students and that it was important to have a definitive policy, but which could be supplemented by interpretative guidance for particular stakeholders. The Committee suggested consultation with the reasonable adjustments working group and the Abrahart working group would be appropriate.

The Committee also noted that it is important to ensure apprenticeship students are represented within policy, eg. with End Point Assessments (EPAs).

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CATEGORY II

m24-25/44 Pilot proposal for oral exams (non-PGR) (SCA 24-25/19)

m24-25/45 Grade conversion tables study abroad (SCA 24-25/20)

3 new: University of Porto, Trinity College Dublin and University of Salamanca

6 revived: University of Aveiro, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, National Chengchi University, University of Cologne, Université de Genève, University "G. D'Annunzio" Of Chieti-Pescara; University for Foreigners of Siena; Roma Tre University

7 deleted: Université Catholique de Louvain, University of British Columbia at Okanagan and Vancouver, Czech Technical University, Leibnitz University Hannover, Modena and Reggio Emilia, University of Milan, Drexel University

2 renamed institutions: University of Western Ontario changed to Western University and Tokyo Institute of Technology changed to Institute of Science Tokyo

m23-24/46 Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting was **noted** as Friday 31st January 2025 at 10:00am via Zoom online video conferencing, and in person in tbc.

RESERVED BUSINESS

m24-25/46 Individual Examination Arrangements
It was **noted** that individual examination arrangements for students have been approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

m24-25/47 Appointment of External Examiners
It was **noted** that various new appointments (or extension to appointments) of external examiners (UG and PGT) have been approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

m24-25/48 Results Lists
Notification was **received** of recommendations for the award of degrees approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.