

QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDING GROUP
Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2013

Present: P Rouse (Chair) R Chater, B Dyer, J Edwards, J Freeman, A Main, C Merrett, K Randall, G Roushan, N Silvennoinen (Secretary), C Symonds

In attendance: K Randall

Apologies: K Fisher, M Simpson

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 28th May 2013

- 1.1 The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 1.2 The following were noted under matters arising:
 - 1.2.1 Minute 1.2.2: The action to update *6L – Assessment Board Decision-Making, including the Implementation of Assessment Regulations: Procedure* would be completed for September publication.
 - 1.2.2 Minute 1.2.2: The Chair reported that Legal Services had produced a first draft of the new staff reference policy which stated that an academic offence should only be disclosed in a student reference if directly relevant in the context of the particular request and that in such cases the student should be advised of the intention to disclose the offence and should be given an opportunity to reconsider their request for a reference in that instance.
 - 1.2.3 Minute 3.2: The Chair reported that Senate had approved the guidance recommended by the Quality Assurance Standing Group (QASG) on the parameters of Board discretion in relation to the changes to Section 12 of the standard assessment regulations, 'Provision for failed candidates'.
 - 1.2.4 Minute 3.2: The representative from the School of Design, Engineering and Computing confirmed that he had communicated the outcome regarding the School's request for a formal exception to the standard assessment regulations to those concerned.
 - 1.2.5 Minute 5.2: The Chair reported that the Business School's Deputy Dean (Education) had submitted a report on the academic offence of commissioning to Academic Standards Committee (ASC) for consideration at its next meeting on 29th July 2013.

2 Changes to QASG membership

- 2.1 The chair welcomed Robin Chater back to QASG as the Programme Administrator representative. She reported that John Gusman would replace Murray Simpson as the Students' Union representative. The Students' Union had put forward a request for one of its permanent members, Jane DeVe~~i~~key, to join QASG to ensure continuity of knowledge between sabbatical officers. The request was supported by members.

RECOMMENDATION TO ASC (also see separate paper): that QASG Terms of Reference be amended to include 2 members of the Students' Union.

3 Rounding of marks, including unit and credit-weighted aggregate marks

- 3.1 The background to the paper on rounding of marks was outlined and it was noted that the introduction of a new student record system would be an opportunity to standardise some of the current practices and processes relating to the rounding of sub-element, formal element and level-aggregate marks. This would help provide greater consistency and transparency for both staff and students.
- 3.2 Members discussed how unit and credit-weighted aggregate marks were currently recorded, calculated and interpreted and recommended that the following principles be maintained/ adopted:

- i. Marking (sub-elements and/or formal elements as specified for the unit): to carry out marking to a full number or, where not possible, to an accuracy of one decimal point.
- ii. Input of marks (sub-elements and/or formal elements as specified for the unit): to input all marks into the student record system systematically as whole numbers or, if this is not possible, to an accuracy of one decimal point.
- iii. Calculation of marks in the student record system (formal element and/or unit marks as specified for the unit): to carry out all calculations in the new student record system with real numbers.
- iv. Displaying marks on the Board report: to display all marks to an accuracy of two decimal points and apply this to sub-elements as appropriate.
- v. Automatic rounding up of borderline marks and Board discretion: in order to ensure transparency between the standard assessment regulations and Assessment Board outcomes to:
 - a. move from current practice whereby unit marks of 39.5%/49.5% are automatically rounded up to award a pass to awarding a pass on the basis of unit marks of 40.0%/50.0% or above.
 - b. move away from current practice whereby credit-weighted aggregate marks which fall 0.5% or less below a classification boundary are automatically rounded up to award a higher classification to determining classification on the basis of a credit weighted aggregate mark of 40% (UG only)/50%/60%/70% or above.
 - c. clarify a) and b) in the standard assessment regulations by bridging the current gap between classification bands, for example:

First Class	70% or more
Second Class, Upper Division	60% to less than 70%
Second Class, Lower Division	50% to less than 60%
Third Class	40% to less than 50%

- d. retain Assessment Board discretion for up to 1.0% below a classification boundary.

RECOMMENDATION TO ASC (also see separate paper): that the principles outlined above and detailed in a separate paper are endorsed to help inform implementation of the new student record system.

RECOMMENDATION TO ASC (also see separate paper): that *6D - Marking, Independent Marking and Moderation: Policy and Procedure* (Section 5 of the procedure) be amended to include reference to the principle in i) above from September 2013.

- 3.3 It was noted that, if approved, the proposed changes would affect unit classification for Higher National awards. Members suggested that EDQ clarify whether Higher National assessment regulations and Board practice can be aligned with other University awards.

ACTION: EDQ to liaise with DEC and EdExcel as appropriate and report back to QASG.

4 AOB

- 4.1 It was suggested that the use of categorical marking be included on a future agenda.

ACTION: EDQ to include the item on the agenda for discussion during the 2013-14 academic year.

- 4.2 This was Pamela Rouse's last meeting as Chair of QASG and members thanked her and wished her well.

5 Date of next meeting

- 5.1 The next meeting would be scheduled to take place in the autumn term, date to be confirmed.