

**CENTRE FOR ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY CHARITY
LIMITED**

ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of 14 July 2016 held at 2pm at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

PRESENT: Adrian Ramsay (AR, CEO/Chair), John Carter (JC), Tim Coleridge (TC), Jane Fisher (LA, Lead Academic), Frances Hill (FH), Alun Thomas (AT, Head of School),

IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Everitt (Minutes)

APOLOGIES: UEL representative, Chris Woodfield (CW, student representative)

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

AR welcomed those present to the meeting, and accepted apologies.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

In regard to item 3, Alternative Providers' 2017/18 student cap, AT noted that CAT has a Student Number Allowance (SNA) of 50 which does not apply to postgraduate study but rather covers the maximum number of undergraduate students eligible for loans. Subject to this amendment, the minutes of the 14 April 2016 meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

- Quality management structure: AT had emailed students to introduce himself.
- Student study skills module: it was agreed that all courses would need a different study skills module, though it is not yet practicable to pursue this.
- Potential Learning Technologist: to be reconsidered once budgets permit.
- UEL Collaborative Review: email regarding the content of the review sent.
- Staff training requests/priorities: AT confirmed that a PG Cert was not necessary to become a Senior Fellow of the HEA, and that there exists another route involving the submission of a portfolio of work
- Draft Prevent policy: final policies had been agreed at a management meeting and circulated to the Accommodation and Venue Hire department.
- REBE: FH confirmed that five student reps had been appointed and that programme committee meetings would now go ahead.
- 2016/17 budgets: AT confirmed that no requests for budget carry over had been received.

- Intellectual property: AT reported that UEL does not have a suitable policy and that this remains an ongoing issue that needs consideration on a case-by-case basis.

4. Progress with REBE Closure

It was reported that progress is being made to underpin a smooth closure of the REBE course that maximises students' chances to complete their course, and that a new course featuring renewable energy as an important component is being developed ready to start in September 2017. Existing REBE students are all signed up to their modules for the coming year.

The meeting discussed the transition between REBE and SA courses; TC and FH to develop a flow chart to determine which modules can be APELd from REBE to SA.

Action: TC/FH

5. Consideration of New Course Plans

Following a wide-ranging discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- LA confirmed that Gate 1 and 2 progress forms have been completed and will be submitted by October in order to gain initial approval from UEL and Academic Council in advance of UEL 1st February and 2nd March validation deadlines.
Action: LA
- Draft documents will be compiled for Academic Council input/approval at the September 2016 meeting, and will incorporate student and employer input; LA plans to have the documents finalised by February 2017 for submission to UEL, which will initiate the start of a two-way process between CAT and UEL as the programmes are developed and refined.
Action: LA
- Decisions regarding the proposed degree titles are not yet complete, as this is being informed by GSE staff discussions and on-going market research.

LA then ran through employer feedback regarding the proposed MSc in sustainable energy, highlighting that in order to attract overseas students the course should replicate the SA blended delivery model, featuring both onsite and distance learning (DL), the latter by the provision of a 'CAT-in-a-Box' energy kit including data loggers and programming/monitoring equipment for which DL students would potentially be asked to contribute an additional £500. LA to clarify definitions of both options.

Action: LA

LA to get examples of REBE applications from overseas students to identify potential target markets.

Action: LA

LA highlighted certain points regarding proposed course content, aimed at retaining REBE's technical rigour but making it accessible to technically-competent students, including an evolution of the second half of the

introductory core SA module (EV7102) to be much more focused on energy, the inclusion of a more specific consultancy-based module, a broader introduction to environmental change and sustainability and a minor modification to the June SA module. TC to consult with UEL regarding the potential impact of the latter. **Action: TC**

AT confirmed that existing SA and REBE staff will be engaged on the new degree, and there may be a need to employ new teaching staff depending on initial student numbers.

LA then led a discussion regarding the proposed MSc Sustainable Futures (working title, needing further input), confirming that UEL is open to course modules being part of the SA structure pending the receipt of further detail on possible career outcomes. **Action: LA**

In regarding to potential course content, and having previously mooted that behaviour change could be a separate course, LA confirmed that it is now being incorporated into all courses, thereby avoiding the need to revalidate pre-existing SA modules. Both food and land use and materials and natural resources are considered key to the new course, with two modules mooted for the former, though LA and TC will liaise further regarding the balance of core and option modules. **Action: LA/TC**

LA confirmed that less progress had been made in regard to employer and potential student input and will work with Kit Jones (KJ) to ensure this takes place, thereby informing course development. **Action: LA/KJ**

Following a discussion regarding the need for the SAP scope to be made more specialist, it was agreed that LA and TC will ensure a distinction as the MSc Sustainable Futures course is developed. **Action: LA/TC**

LA to present a final draft of the proposed course content to the next meeting. **Action: LA**

The Council approved the outline for the two proposed programmes.

6. Development of Master of Architecture Course

JC presented the framework for the proposed MArch course and confirmed that, although there is now a clear timescale for development with both ARB and UEL, no content had been submitted to either institution pending the appointment and ensuing contribution of a new Programme Leader.

In the discussion, the following points were made:

- UEL has suggested working more closely in collaboration together e.g. bringing summer school students to CAT;
- given that sharing the student experience between CAT programmes forms a key part of the educational strategy, shared module weeks

between the courses will be continued in the 2016/17 academic year but will need to be reviewed if student numbers continue to increase;

- the logistics of shared module weeks and where there may need to be a separation need to be discussed; **Action: JC/TC**
- TC has been in contact with ProfDip students about crossing over to SA courses and reported strong interest, which is promising for the prospect of an MArch course; and
- It was agreed that there needs to be consultation regarding the title of the MArch course. **Action: JC**

7. CAT Procedure and Policies

In regard to the paper circulated in advance of the meeting, AT noted that it featured no material differences to UEL's comprehensive policies but simply distinguished the respective responsibilities of CAT and UEL and would ensure consistency across courses. Following a few minor amendments the paper was approved by the Council; AT to implement the changes and to upload to the CAT website. **Action: AT**

Commented [C1]: Done. Disciplinary needed further changes and is on agenda

8. QAA Annual Monitoring Review December 2016

The Council noted the timeline for the QAA Annual Monitoring Review and that an update will be brought to its September Council meeting. **Action: AT**

9. Minutes of Programme Committee Meetings

The minutes were noted by the Council.

10. Minutes of Ethics Committee

The minutes were noted by the Council.

11. Minor Amendments to Terms of Reference for Academic Council and Programme Committees

The proposed amendments were agreed by the Council.

12. Date of next meeting

15th September 2016

13. AOB

External Examiners: CAT had been given different explanations regarding interaction with external examiners; AT to seek clarification. **Action: AT**

Collaborative Assessment Boards: AT to clarify 2016/17 dates so that these can be added to PHs. **Action: AT**

Students with disabilities: although UEL has a contract with RANSTAD, CAT's current Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with them does not currently include

access to their health, wellbeing and financial services. The Council agreed that this should be considered during the negotiations for the 2017/18 MoC renewal, and requested that these be initiated in good time. **Action: AR**

There being no further business, the meeting closed.

ENDS