Centre for Alternative Technology

Academic Council Meeting April 2022

Agenda

Item

1. **Welcome, Introduction and Apologies**

   In Attendance: Adrian Watson (AW) Alison Pooley (AP) Paul Booth (PB) Gillian Ang (GA) Jemma Pennington (JP) Jane Fisher (JF) Tim Coleridge (TC) Isobel Bruning (IB) Francesca Miles (FM) Freya Bruce (FB) Jemma Jasmin (JJ) Teresa Serrano (TS) Luana Parisi (LP) Sarah Dalrymple (SD)

   Apologies: Frances Hill (FH) Eileen Kinsman (EK)

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

   Minutes Approved from January 2022

   Action: JP to publish minutes on CAT website

3. **Matters Arising**

   3.1. From November 2021

   (6) Progression Data

   Action: JP to export data on when students withdraw (before 75 credits, before RDP etc) and retention rate after LOA **Completed**

   Data circulated (JP). High number of students withdrawing before enrolment (~33%), after which most withdrawal before 60 credits achieved. By course fewest withdrawing from MArch and the highest from SA, SABE and SBC, (AW) this needs future investigation. (JF) withdrawal rate in line with national average. (TC) Comments that PGDip/Cert to be viewed as achievement.

   Withdrawal data

Action: AW/TC to look at how many students withdraw early in course (3 months). JP to export data as above **Complete**

(7) Huge increase in EC's will impact progression rates. MArch disproportionately hit – more like 4-5 times the number of applications.

Action: AW to continue to Monitor MArch ECs **Ongoing**

Numbers of EC for MArch still high (AW) and needs continuing monitoring.

(8) Student Equality and Diversity Data comparison to LJMU/UEL.

Action: AW in contact with LJMU and UEL to see what we can/cannot compare. Not like for like, due to course differences and location. Information shared to CEO (now resigned) so EDI group will reform and be taken forwards. **Ongoing.**

(AW) Still ongoing (PB) to continue monitoring. We now have a student rep specifically for this in place.

TC GSE staff away day recently raised discussion on fees policy, framed on ethnicity and deprivation index. Support for less affluent backgrounds to access funding and grants/bursary.

T&C's already published so cannot change. Can look at Bursary allocation – new bursary available soon (total of 4 for next AY - Welsh Students, Mental Health, Academic Excellence)

Action: AW to continue to monitor this **Ongoing**

3.2. From January 2022

Action: How many students are dropping out after failing a module? (JP) to look at data **Completed** Data Presented at AC

Action: SD to look into which students these apply to (new or existing) and how they will impact CAT students/policy directly and keep use informed

(4.2) Assessment Review Approval Process - AW

Action: follow up email on timescale TC/AW/AP, internal discussion

4.1 missing from agenda, not complete, new regs need need to be completed by July (JF) to go into module guide

(5.1) **JF** CME was in November, looking ahead to QAA visit needs formal comment on CME issues of EE reports from Jason

Action: SD to speak with Jason (JF email information) completed

(5.2) Minutes of Programme Committee

Action: JP to circulate Programme Committee minutes to Academic Council group via email **Completed**

Action: GSE team to discuss within ALN meeting and TC to feedback **Completed**

(6.1) Inclusion Officer **JP**

Action: Report back after ALN discussions at next AC. **Ongoing**

(6.2)   EC Policy Update **JP**

Action: JP adjust wording and circulate for approval.

(6.3)   Student Protection Policy renewal **AW – Approved.**

   Action: Publish to website JP **Completed**

4.   **UEL Review Outcomes**

 4.1. LJMU

  (GA/TC) have new process in place for Assessment review

(TC) asked if LJMU could allow shorter lead in for September modules to accommodate for UEL revalidation. (SD) cannot see why notable to put in place changes for Sept 22 if modular level. JF mismatch as UEL module changes won't be ready until March, LJMU ones by April which is almost 11 months later than policy.

Action: SD to speak to Academic Registrar via email copied to JF and TC **COMPLETED**

SD module changes in process and will be complete shortly.

SD changes to uni regulations, failing students – what provision are provided for FMA and ESR? (University level). AW systems are quite complex so may not be assisting students in the way they are intended. SD looking to bring in changes before new intake

SD Introducing additional option for late work capped at 40% (faculty level) - SD main issue is administration, keeping track on who has this and how it impacts students

Action: How many students are dropping out after failing a module? JP to look at data

Action: SD to look into which students these apply to (new or existing) and how they will impact CAT students/policy directly and keep use informed

JF will requirement for evidence return to pre covid level from September? SD yes, will require evidence from then onwards for EC etc.

 4.2. UEL

(4.3) **(TC)** asked whether UEL could allow extensions/more flexibility over the 7 day EC rules for UEL students? LJMU students receive up to 3-week extensions at the module leader's discretion TS extending 7 days extension at UEL to 4-5 weeks. Unsure if EC third attempt in sept to be kept in future but that is currently in place. **(TC)** clarified that we could offer unified extension policy to match UEL to LJMU**. (AW)** EXT/EC applications increased dramatically, would be useful to be consistent across both unis. **(SD)** LJMU have 3 weeks as standard, evidence requirement currently slightly less strict but that is the only difference and unsure when that will change.

Action: AW to meet with TC and AR to discuss then feedback to TS **COMPLETED**

TS update on third attempt being allowed will be reviewed in September.

Assessment Review Approval Process – AW TS protocol sent to all partners, agreed that it would apply from Sept 22 due to being in middle of AY. AW assessments should go to the EE and link tutor before assessments are set. Just collaborative partners or all of UEL? TS is not attending January boards so unsure, believes it has been sent to the partners to ensure link tutors can review material.JP SSO send module guides/timetable to link tutors to keep this link in place and add TS/link admin to Team. TC coursework briefs/assessment information given to EE's after it has been set to students. New process asking for this to be sent to link tutor/EE before the module start. Issue as EE contracts don't overlap so no one to 'approve' assessment

*details before module starts. **AW** timing/practical issues with providing this due to how modules run. **AP** proposed timescale doesn't work currently as have already been released to students.**TC** greater level of scrutiny appropriate when assessment is being changed but concerns on how effective it will be passing it between EE's/Link Tutors/CAT Tutors – process could take weeks and wouldn't necessarily have positive impact on students. **TS** this year is exempt. EE may change and UEL aware of diverse nature of CAT, if encounter problems then report to refine requirements*

Action: follow up email on timescale TC/AW/AP, internal discussion

*__LP__ any issues with WME as deadline today? **AW** email from SSO as issues with visibility. Follow up email/discussion outside of this meeting.*

5. **QAA Review Outcomes**

   (AW) Review was very successful, Student experience and academic standard were monitored. Key findings of draft report that academic standards are reliable and meet UK requirements, and that Student experience meets regularity requirements. Thanks to Isobel Bruning for acting as student rep for the review. CAT seen as engaging well with students, however there is not a formal policy written up covering student engagement.

   (JF) comments that this could be included in the teaching and learning strategy.

   (IB) It would be beneficial to have the role of student rep to be formalised, and have a procedure for new incoming student reps.

   (TC) Comments about structure of Student Support, do our student handbook need to contain more information, spell out the roles of tutor/SSO. In order to manage expectations on both sides.

6. ***UEL review outcomes** (AW) Quality assurance and UEL review have now taken place, and were very successful (AW). Still some minor amendments, but collaborative review in place now for the next 5 years. SA, SEPDM, GB and MArch put forward for continuation. SABE and SAP to be discontinued, dues to smaller numbers of applicants and our ability to incorporate the contents into other degrees. Masters of Research provisionally approved (for a 2023 start). MArch much lighter review, but enhanced*

(JF) comments on budgetary requirements for the research degree, do we need a budget for each student, and what policy would be developed around the budget.

(AW) Considering transitional arrangements between the degrees.

(TC) Need to work out how to final awards will be calculated upon course transferring.

(AW) MArch changes to part time students, this will need to be delbt with on a case by case basis and changes will be minor

Action: Transitional arrangements to be finalised by next week (W/B 2/05/22)

7.   **Policy Updates**

8.1 (AW) Extension policy has been updated, to come in place in September 2022. The new policy acts to combine and make similar for both universities. There will be a change to the number 'automatic' of extensions that can be applied for per term (This will be given for 7 days, 5 working days). There will no longer be a 15 working day extension for either university, 'per terms' (sep-dec, jan-april, April-Aug). Student s can no longer apply for both ext and EC.

(TC) comments on the ambiguity of wordings, does the policy extended to both pieces of coursework if a module has multiple components. (AW) Confirms this is the intension.

(JF) questions whether we need to apply for variance from the LJMU policy.

(SD) Comments that it is usually for 15 days to be applied at LJMU, 7 days more usual. Comments that the number of extension requests per term may not meet LJMU regulations

(AW) Automatic extension clarified as not needing ML Approval

(JP) All deadlines will now fall on a Monday,

(AW) When students are applying for EC, these are more serious circumstances, this is to avoid univariable ext approval

(TC) How are we addressing dyslexia 25% extra time for extension and regular deadline for these students, with RA

(JF) Will update terminology for extension policy document, to be sent to AW

8.2 EC Policy Change

(AW) In more extreme cases we are seeing 3 consecutive EC applications for the same module

(JP) 2 EC applications to currently be the maximum number of consecutive ECs, to be discussed with (TS/SD), a maximum of two boards after the submission point, after which it would be a retake.

8. **University Partner Updates**

8.1. LJMU

(SD) There will be changes to the PROD/MODCAP system. Which will affect the deadline for programmes changes, but this is in hand and Graham is making the changes for JF before the procedure changes

8.2. UEL

(TS) Upcoming UEL visit to CAT, waiting for dates for prosed meeting to discuss collaboration review with all stakeholders.

Action : (AW) to suggest dates

9. **Programme Leader Reports:**

9.1. Programme Quality and Enhancement Reports

(AP) Programme committee meeting delayed to include new CL (KM). This is APs last academic council meeting; we are expecting Karl Madding's to take over from Monday

Action: AW to update Karl and inform of next meetings dates

(TC) UEL Cam report. Action plan from the CAM report has been added to the enhancement document, which is available to students, and editable by staff and Students reps. The new dashboard should lead to more active discussion and participation between tutors and SR. Programme committees discussed formalised role for SR, discussion for how to mediate the burden of feedback from students, and whether SR can request meetings with key academic team for less formal discussions

(JJ) comments on formalisation of role as student rep, reiterates TC point for a need for support to deal with student feedback and support.

(AW) SRs should not be used as an extra form of student support, Action: to organise meeting with SR to discuss what could be put in place and what is being asked currently be fellow students.

(AP) due to the method of delivery for MArch, it may be that support needs to be managed in a slightly different way, Action: SSO EAP to be sent out again to students to ensure they know where to find this.

(TC) Recruitment of new staff, interviewing for 2 new posts, 1 for each UEL and LJMU with specific experience of their working systems

Action; JP to circulate minutes from Programme committee

(JF) Reiterates notes from PC meeting, latest CME has been sent out to student reps

9.2.   Minutes of Programme Committee Meetings

Action – JP to share

9.3.   Academic Misconduct Hearings

10.   **Any Other Business**

8.1 Acoustics in Brooke Trust room and AV Setup (TC)

(TC) ongoing issue in Brooke trust now, as this is being used for regular SEPDM teaching. AV and IT solutions have been exhausted. Changes to infrastructure needed to improve this. This is being discussed currently separately. Particularly important for our DL students for who this is an issue for recorded lectures.

(AW) Action discuss at SMT

(PB) To consider these issues, seems likely that allocation of budget to his will not be a problem.

8.2 Honouring David Lea's contribution to CAT/GSE (TC)

(AP) David Lea hosted the inaugural meeting for the MArch Course along with designing the WISE building with Pat Boers. A memorial for him was held at CAT on Sunday. AP will circulate the memorial service, Thanks to Freya Tom and Laura for their support for the memorial service.

Request for Patrick Canney to write the Clean slate article, and to investigate a prize or fellowship in his name

8.3 Number of NS/resubs on modules (JF)

(JF) Currently not possible to compare NS rates across previous AY, **Action** JF to look at for the end of year meeting, how to compare and discuss this data

AOB

(FB) Concerning high numbers of EC applications, seen as a good things due to the students feeling comfortable and able to manage stress. (AW) Hopeful to maintain students ability to manage stress

(AW) Spoke with HefCW regarding loans, update for students at the end of the week.

11. **Date of Next Meeting**

Next meeting due in July, action: AW and JP to circulate possible dates