

Centre for Alternative Technology

Academic Council Meeting 31st May 2023

Agenda

Item

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Attendance: Adrian Watson (AW) Jemma Barratt (JB) Frances Hill (FH) Tim Coleridge (TC) Jane Fisher (JF) Rebecca Kent (RK) Carl Meddings (CM) Sarah Dalrymple (SD) Teresa Serrano (TS) Kieran Catton (KC) Jacob Calland (JC) Diana Gall (DG) Helen Hayes (HH) Zoe Bant (ZB)

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

No issues raised, signed off as accurate AW

3. Matters Arising:

3.3 From July 2022:

Action: Check on limit for students bringing credits back to study later (SD) get written statement from SD and circulate **AW**

(SD) no update on credits that can be bought back to LJMU, after a study break or withdrawal. SD to investigate this for next meeting.

(SD) Spoke to Jason, new pathway more formalised PT pathway which will replace this going forwards. (AW) check on numbers going forwards. **ACTION**

(JF) how many years can students leave before re-enrolling to do dissertation? (SD) will investigate. (JF) thinks it is 4 years but unsure. APEL query. (TC) with UEL it depends on revalidation so must return within timeframe before course changes. (AW) correct, making sure study so far is still valid.

Action: investigate training from LJMU on EDI (SD)

(SD) LJMU happy for CAT employees to join online sessions, and we can add specific online sessions specifically for CAT staff if requested. Could be extended to other collab partners. Sarah to provide a list of what can be provided online **ACT**

(SD) calendar for EDI training hasn't been set and nothing planned for summer. Will circulate new calendar in Aug/Sept for new term. **ACTION**

(SD) Has list of courses that have been offered before. Emailed collaborative provision to formalise sending calendar to CAT rather than SD being middle person. Mostly online and half day or few hours.

Action: check if HEA available through LJMU for academic and student support staff (SD) Speak to SD and circulate information **AW**

(SD) in principle yes, more details required, how it would be delivered still to be worked out. **ACT**

(AW) also available through UEL, some CAT Staff will be attending through UEL.

(SD) no updates yet, still finding who to ask. **ACTION**

Action: update enhancement dashboard (TC, JF, JB)

(JF) JF and TC did some updates a few months ago, tends to be after CME update and next one is in June. (TC) similar with UEL.

3.3 From October 2022:

Science Direct Usage (**AW**)

(TC) could we add a brief survey to better understand, why students are using Science direct with their CAT email rather than the LJMU/UEL.

(MM) it would be useful to broaden the survey to understand peoples search behaviour

(AW) survey needs sending out. Get updates from Science Direct with usage, it is increasing but needs to increase further. **ACTION**

Policies:

Programme Committees: Terms of Reference and Membership

(TC) It would be sensible to remove AW from the quorum. **AW done**

Academic Council: Terms of Reference and Membership



(TC) could the wording about our relationship with UEL and LJMU, can be recorded to be more supportive. **AW done.**

(PB) Add clause at the end of document covering our wider responsibilities. **AW done**

Centre for Alternative Technology: Short Courses and Continuing Professional Development

(AW) **ACTION** to action changes to document **AW done**

Matters Arising April 2023

Visits from LJMU to site (Jason/Laura/Kirsty) – changes being made to improve workflow between SSO and Kirsty. (JB) **LOA can't push back deadlines, will have to submit work or have EC (or NS) before LOA can start. Internal changes to admin processes to improve communication with LJMU**

(AW) visited UEL last week, met with some of the staff including Thomas. Still some ongoing issues but will work to resolve these ahead of next assessment board. (TS) apologies for not attending to meet AW.

Policies

CAT Extension and Extenuating Circumstances Policy – Minor Updates to clarify 24hr late only applying to first on time submission deadline for UEL. (JF) **clarify if it is per piece of work or module. (AW) per module. (JF) update wording to be clearer. ACTION update wording AW and publish JB**

Student Progression Rules – Updates to clarify minimum credits per year, consequence of postponing ARD module and study break rules. **ACTION publish JB**

Disciplinary Policy – revisions due. **ACTION publish JB**

Complaints Policy – revisions due. **ACTION publish JB**

4. University Partner Updates

LJMU

(SD) no specific updates from Uni. Email from JB about programme handbooks – should be June and then sent to Jason for sign off.

(SD) Had meeting with JC and DG about issues with Canvas (student numbers moving and downloading feedback) – chasing this up and will give more information when available.

ACTION

UEL

(TS) nothing further since several meetings have occurred between CAT and UEL recently.

5. Programme Leader Reports:

Minutes of Programme Committee Meetings

(TC) Reception desk moved onsite to bottom station, confusion for students – needs extra signage.

(TC) science direct discussion

(TC) quiet spaces onsite, in context that current cohort are adjusting to sharing bedrooms again after covid as single occupancy was the norm for last years intake. Spaces where students can go for quiet study requested. (AW) noise onsite in café area, 50th celebration includes a display on wall which has been asked that boards are sound dampening to help with this. (FH) quiet spaces set up before breakfast period for yoga or quiet reflection. Look to make this available throughout the day. (JB) garden room may be useful for this as only used for staff lunches? **ACTION more signs and information on board HH**

(TC) travel to site, shuttle bus on Sunday afternoons as no taxis. (AW) raised with site manager but will chase up again. Difficult as taxi firms locally have been reducing in numbers. **ACTION chase up AW**

(TC) student information hub – gradually populating this with study skills (AW) aiming to launce for September 23. **ACTION publish before September JB**

(TC) students making slow progress due to EC or study break find it hard to re engage as peers have developed study skills and they feel very behind. Hoping the info hub will help with this but needs staff discussion.

(TC) agreed with MSc reps to have meeting at end of academic year regarding communications with students and how to improve this next year. (AW) MSc reps have been doing a grand job of meeting students and collating feedback, thanks to them.

(TC) library space – might look messy currently but due to Anna Poston busy cataloguing the books and organising. Work in progress and should progress before next academic year. Hoping to have full system with all equipment on it to make it easier to loan to students. (AW) extend thanks to students who have helped with this.

(CM) programme committee delayed to after next teaching week so nothing to report on yet. SSLC has a rolling record of issues which works really well, revisit things until dealt with and add new items to bottom of record. Seems to be working well rather than committee papers with notes that get forgotten. (TC) questioned structure of SSLC compared to PC, pre covid SSLC was generally onsite with a group of students and then PC was PLs and reps so some reservations on how we do this going forwards. (AW) this is something we should review for next meeting. **ACTION review AW**

Programme Leader Comments

(JF) moved onto module level CME which brings in line with LJMU staff. No access yet to new programme level, contacted helpdesk they are working on it. Collaborative Partners don't have this access yet.

(JF) need two new EE's – think has found them, getting forms to them in June.

(JF) still waiting to hear from LJMU about periodic review. Said spring time so hopefully soon. Meeting should be arranged soon. (SD) should be able to send schedule as believes it is drafted. (JF) emailed Helen Summers and they are getting to it soon. Be good to see self evaluation document for this year.

(JF) ChatGPT – how are universities dealing with this? (SD) quite patchy dependant on staff knowledge of it. Some AI checkers give mix responses so not reliable. (AW) Teresa – anything from UEL? (TS) one exam unit used AI as part of briefing, good response from EEs on this. No action taken yet but informal conversations happening with course leaders on how to

integrate it and use properly in work. (TC) reflecting that UEL partner conference next month includes some training on AI in relation to academia and assessment.

(CM) pre-planning meeting before end of academic year. Can already see some minor module tweaks which may be needed due to change of PL or how the recent changes in revalidation have gone this year. ARB are suggesting big changes to how courses are accredited which may have big impacts on how courses are structured and run. Part 2 courses are the most precious part within ARB changes but their changes may impact our courses due to focus on competencies rather than criteria. May be a couple of years before changes happen so will likely have to hold off any changes until ARB clarify their changes. (AW) thanks for coordinating our response. (CM) did UEL submit a response? (TS) University didn't submit a response, instead sent individual responses due to diversity of opinions within staff.

Academic Misconduct Hearings

None this quarter.

6. Any Other Business

OIA 2022 Draft Annual Statement for Centre for Alternative Technology Charity Limited (AW) just had draft, final statement should be prepared today. No formal complaints raised with OIA in this period. Shows complaints procedures are working and complaints being managed between stages 1-3.

HE Freedom of Speech Bill - May 2023 (AW) just gone through in England, will follow shortly in Wales. Our current policies cover most of this but may need updating to include issues with NDA's and complaints.

UEL Global Network Event clashes with Assessment Board – raised with UEL (JB)

Preboard tracker sent to CAT, please return by Friday (TS) (AW) This information has previously been sent to registry already, do we need to copy you into these going forward. (TS) if this is relevant and TS needs to be involved. (AW) will follow up separately.

Graduate Symposium (17th June) and Graduation (15th July) before next meeting. (TW) (AW) we will be holding two graduation ceremonies on same day due to large numbers of students.

LJMU enrolment information quite late, payment terms quite late last year (ZB) (AW) discussed with Jason during their visit to make sure they get the information earlier.



7. Date of Next Meeting

19th July 2023