UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
ACADEMIC POLICY AND REGULATIONS GROUP

Minute of the Meeting held on 15 November 2023

Present: Gillian Mackintosh **(Chair)**, Isabel Crane, Faye Hendry, Rhiannon Ledwell (*from minute 4.1 onwards*), Steve Tucker, and Liam Dyker **(Acting Clerk)** in attendance.

Apologies: Selma Carson and Megan Smith.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(copy filed as APRG/151123/001)

1.1 The Group was content to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

ACTION LOG AND MATTERS ARISING

(copy filed as APRG/151123/002)

2.1 <u>Vacancies on the Group</u> *(minute 3.1 refers)*: The Group noted that there remains a vacancy for a School QA Representative and a Student member. It was noted that a student member had been sought for QAC, however, recruitment was still ongoing for APRG.

INSTITUTIONAL REGISTER OF STAFF ACTING AS EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

(copy filed as APRG/151123/003)

3.1 The Group heard a summary of the proposals contained within the paper. It was noted that the proposals arose from a previous meeting of the APRG, following a specific case in one of the Schools. Further discussions with the Lead School Administration Manager have taken place to discuss the feasibility of the proposals. The Group was asked to comment specifically in relation to the timing of these proposals and whether, in the context of wider resource challenges across the University, this was the right time for its implementation.

3.2 Generally, the Group was supportive of the proposals and noted that some of the information required to facilitate the implementation was already available in some Schools. It was noted that in some Schools, the information pertinent to External Examiner appointments is sought on an annual or rolling basis. It was highlighted that not all Schools will have easy access to the information.

3.3 In addressing workload concerns, it was highlighted that the proposals would be helpful when seeking to appoint a new External Examiner as information would be readily available, potentially saving time in the process. The Group agreed that the process would be useful, and that while there might be some effort required in the implementation of the process, it would provide future benefit.

3.4 It was agreed that discussions will take place with the Lead School Administration Manager ahead of QAC in December to discuss the workload implications and to agree an achievable timeline for the implementation of the register. It was suggested that communications to Schools would be important in highlighting that this process will be a benefit to their workloads.
Action: Clerk

3.5 It was suggested that an approach (via Microsoft Forms) could be circulated among Schools as a means of gathering the data required. This approach could be circulated alongside further guidance that would alleviate some of the workload burden on the Schools.

3.6 The Group was content to recommend the proposals to QAC for approval.

QAA QUALITY CODE MAPPING

(i) SECTION 4: COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT
(copy filed as APRG/151123/004)

4.1   The Group heard a summary of the changes to Section 4 (Course Design and Development) of the Quality Code Mapping. It was noted that changes have been made in consultation with colleagues in the Centre for Academic Development.

4.2   In discussion, the Group agreed some amendments to the quality code mapping, the main points of which were:
- *Principle 1:* Amendment of 'monthly curriculum approvals sessions' to 'regular curriculum approvals sessions'.

- *Principle 4:* Amendment of 'discusses Annual Programme Reviews' to 'provides responses to Annual Programme Reviews'. It was noted that this would be checked across all sections to ensure this is updated accordingly.

- *Principle 7:* Addition of the cyclical nature of the Education Policy Review Schedule, and that the schedule has been approved by QAC, UEC and APRG.

- *Principle 7:* Amendment of 'Enhancement Themes' to 'Thematic Quality Enhancement work'.

4.3   Discussion ensued regarding the curriculum approvals process, to which it was noted that the process was not clear for Schools or QAC members in the context of the revised approach to curriculum approvals. It was agreed that discussions will take place with the Dean for Quality Assurance and Enhancement and Director of Academic Services and Online Education to provide clarity regarding the process.

4.4   The Group was content to recommend the quality code mapping section to QAC for routine approval.

(ii) SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION
(copy filed as APRG/151123/005)

5.1   The Group heard a summary of the changes to Section 8 (Monitoring and Evaluation) of the Quality Code Mapping. It was noted that changes have been made in consultation with colleagues in the Experience, Engagement and Wellbeing team.

5.2   In discussion, the Group agreed some amendments to the quality code mapping, the main points of which were:
- *Principle 1:* Amendment to references to the Enhancement Themes to 'Thematic Quality Enhancement work'.

- *Principle 3:* Amendment to references of 'annual course and programme reviews, and External Examiner Reports' to 'annual monitoring'.

- *Principle 6:* Addition of acknowledgement of publishing of Annual Course Reviews (ACRs) to students.

5.3   Discussion ensued regarding the terminology associated with the Pedagogic Partnership Session in Internal Teaching Review and whether this was going to be reviewed. It was noted that this will be kept under review.

5.4   The Group considered the Ask sessions initiative, and sought clarity as to whether these initiatives were still in use. It was agreed that this would be clarified with the Experience, Engagement and Wellbeing team.   **Action: Clerk**

5.5   The Group noted that the next sections to be reviewed were (i) Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access; (ii) Enabling Student Achievement; and (iii) Student Engagement. The Group was content to recommend the quality code mapping section to QAC for routine approval.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.1   The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 7 February 2024 at 14:05 via Microsoft Teams.

6.2   It was suggested that the Education Policy Review Schedule should be a standing item on the agenda.