

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
ACADEMIC POLICY AND REGULATIONS GROUP (APRG)

Minute of the Meeting held on 21 August 2023

Present: Gillian Mackintosh (**Chair**), Isabel Crane, Faye Hendry, Steve Tucker, Liam Dyker, Rhiannon Ledwell, with Megan Smith (**Clerk**) in attendance.

MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(copy filed as APRG/210823/001)

- 1.1 A member of the Group noted Section 3.4 of the previous minute required actioning to include a section for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion issues, including a question on decolonising the curriculum, within the External Examiner Report form. Additional action was also required for Section 4.3, to follow up with Lead School Administration Managers to discuss collating data by Schools regarding External Examiner appointments External Examiner appointments of Aberdeen staff to be used when nominating External Examiners.

Action: LD

- 1.2 The Group approved the minutes of the previous meeting on 8 March 2023.

MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 The Group noted there were no actions arising from the previous meeting.

Policy and Procedures on Student Absence

(copy filed as APRG/210823/003)

- 3.1 The Group heard a summary of the paper and considered the amendments made to the policy. The Student Absence Policy and associated policies and procedures required adaptations due to Old Aberdeen Medical Practice no longer offering letters to students for absences, including classes, exams, and other assessments.
- 3.2 The Group noted concerns voiced by SSEC specifically relating to Section 1.5 'Fit to Sit.' Members of the Group agreed Section 1.5 was felt to indicate the implementation of a formal 'Fit to Sit' policy and required rephrasing. It was also raised that the wording should be softened to reflect a more supportive approach.
- 3.3 It was raised by a member of the Group that the inclusion of a 'Good Cause' list may lead to inconsistencies between Schools due to differing interpretations. It was highlighted it may be more beneficial to create a list of what is not considered 'Good Cause'.
- 3.4 There was discussion regarding Section 2.4.3 and the potential difficulties for Schools to fully support students, alongside workload concerns for Student Support. It was noted that Student Support would share information and evidence provided by students however, in certain circumstances where the disclosed information is very sensitive this may not be passed on. Student Support would however confirm appropriate evidence had been provided. This approach is already implemented and has been working well.
- 3.5 It was noted that Student Support had been involved in drafting the paper and confirmed they could accommodate the additional workload.

- 3.6 A member of the Group raised an amendment required to Section 2.6 for the inclusion of Regents as a source of support.

Action: JB and IF

Quality Code Section 6: External Expertise

(copy filed as APRG/210823/002)

- 4.1 The Group heard a summary of the paper and updates made to the code. It was noted minor amendments had been made to Sections 2 and 5 highlighting the work of the Task and Finish Group.

- 4.2 Members of the Group noted while it was clear to stakeholders the expertise of External Examiners in Section 4, it did not sufficiently explain to students what they do in their role.

Action: LD and MS

- 4.3 The Group discussed External Examiner reports being made available to students on the website and ensuring this was adequately communicated. It was noted it would be beneficial for Section 6 or 4 to include an explanation of what an External Examiner Report was.

Action: LD and MS

- 4.4 Members of the Group agreed Section 3 should be amended to include mention of a list of External Examiners across the institution to avoid reciprocal arrangements.

Action: LD

- 4.5 It was agreed by the Group the next Section of the Quality Code to be considered would be in relation the Student Absence and Monitoring.

Action: MS

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 5.1 The next meeting of the Group will be held on Wednesday 13 September at 2:05pm via Microsoft Teams.