

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

**ACADEMIC POLICY AND REGULATIONS GROUP (APRG)**

**MINUTE OF MEETING**

**MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2024**

**Present:** Faye Hendry (Chair), Steve Tucker, Selma Carson, and Miles Rothoerl, with Liam Dyker and Kyra Lamont (Clerk) in attendance.

**Apologies:** Isla Callander, Mansi Utikar

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/001)*

1.1 The minutes of the meeting were approved.

**MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION LOG**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/002)*

2.1 The Chair advised the Group that all recent actions were marked as complete.

**APRG REMIT & COMPOSITION**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/003)*

3.1 The Group discussed the APRG Remit & Composition document for academic year 24-25.

3.2 The Vice-President for Education advised the Group that a second student representative has been confirmed: Mansi Utikar.

**QAA QUALITY CODE MAPPING**

4.1 Members of the Group were invited to discuss and approve (in principle) amendments made to the Quality Code in respect of:

**(i) SECTION 4: COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/004)*

4.1.1 The Group discussed the proposed changes to Section 4: Course Design and Development and noted the following:

- Page 4: amend to reflect that stand-alone courses only require approval by QAC
- Page 7: 'relection' should read 'reflection' and 'roactive' should read 'proactive'; additionally, it was noted that there are Schools which have more than one Students' Union elected School Convenor and the document should be amended to reflect this throughout the Quality Code and sub-section 5.
- Page 7: the timeframe applicable for the amendment of UG and PGT courses and programmes might benefit from review.
- Page 11 include information on the role of the Quality Enhancement Steering Group (QESG).

**ACTION: CLERK/ST**

**(ii) SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/005)*

**4.1.2** The Group discussed the proposed changes to Section 8: Monitoring and Evaluation and noted the following:

- Page 7 'dissolved' to be replaced by 'disseminated' [to students]
- Page 11 'leads to' replaced with 'assists with' to reflect that all sections inform the development of the School's action plan in response to the Internal Teaching Review (ITR)

**ACTION: CLERK**

**4.1.3** Clarity was sought regarding the use of the 'Acting on Feedback' MyAberdeen Organisation Page for storing SSLC minutes. It was noted that the site had been repurposed to include External Examiner Reports and it varied between Schools regarding storing of SSLC minutes.

**(iii) SECTION 9: PARTNERSHIPS**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/006)*

**4.1.3** The Group discussed the proposed changes to Section 9: Partnerships and noted the following:

- It was noted that a number of external documents require updating and it may be helpful to ascertain a timeline for completion where possible.
- Page 4: include information on the role of the TNE steering group
- Page 5: the use of quotations does not future-proof the document, therefore, it may be helpful to reconsider the wording in regards to TNE approval procedures.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**(iv) SECTION 10: RESEARCH DEGREES**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/007)*

**4.1.4** The Group discussed the proposed changes to Section 9: Partnerships and noted the following:

- Page 11 consider link to guidance for external examiners participating in Vivas (if available)
- Amend throughout to reflect change to Postgraduate Research College (PRC)
- Page 10 ensure that all degrees are captured and that this is appropriate reflection of their requirements re: thesis.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**5.1 CHANGES TO GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES**

*(Copy filed as APRG/181124/008)*

Members of the Group were invited to discuss and approve (in principle) changes to the monitoring of academic progress in relation to PGR students. The Group heard from the Dean for Postgraduate Research regarding the proposal to alter PGR regulation 27. The following points were noted:

- Alterations have been made to regulation 27 to reflect the proposed change in monitoring of academic progress with respect to PGR students: specifically, the proposal involves the removal of the formal 6-month review exercise (co-ordinated by the PGR College) in favour of an annual review process only. The proposal is in line with the sector at a large.
- The reasons for this were as follows; it was found to be quite an extensive administrative burden; students became concerned that they were being over assessed or were unclear as to its purpose; supervisors were waiting to raise concerns until the 6-month review stage, and there is not a 100% return associated with these reviews anyway.
- Furthermore, there exists sufficient academic support provided by PGRC to PGR students. This is further strengthened by the introduction of the Researcher Development Audit and supervisory training.

- The Postgraduate Research College aims to encourage students to think about their training and development needs at the beginning of PhD journey (with the aid of a highly focused induction) and to foster regular communication in an informal way.
- 5.2** Additionally, the Group were asked to consider the additional minor amendments to regulations 39, 25, 24, 21 and 6; as well as 31 which relates to the use of AI. It was further requested that regulation 18 was amended by the removal of 'normal' from the title 'normal periods of extensions' as it was felt to be misleading in terms of expectations.
- 5.3** The Group discussed the challenges associated with expediting any changes in regulations. Additionally, it was highlighted that the proposal may benefit from clearly articulating alternative check-in methods where appropriate.

**ACTION: CLERK/LD**

**6.1. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Group will be held on **29 January 2025** at **14:05** via **Microsoft Teams**.

Any member of the Committee wishing an item for routine approval or for information to be brought forward for discussion may ask at the meeting for that to be done. Any such item will be taken after item 1.

Declaration of interests: Any member and individual in attendance (including Officers) who has a clear interest in a matter on the agenda should declare that interest at the relevant meeting, whether or not that interest is already recorded in the Registry of Member's interests.