UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE (UEC)

Minutes of meeting held on 10 October 2023

Present: Ruth Taylor **(Chair)**, Waheed Afzal, Euan Bain, Lyn Batchelor, Leigh Bjorkvoll, Jason Bohan, Stuart Durkin, Bill Harrison, Helen Knight, Rhiannon Ledwell, David McCausland, Heidi Merkens (vice Ken Jeffrey), Kirsty Kiezebrink, Rona Patey, Amudha Poobalan, Shona Potts, Susan Stokeld, Steve Tucker, Asha Venkatesh, Joshua Wright, with Simon Bains, Julie Bray, Scott Carle, Liam Dyker, Nick Edwards, Gillian Mackintosh, Rhona Moore, Sara Preston, Patricia Spence, Louisa Stratton and Isabella Fausti **(Clerk)** in attendance.

Apologies: John Barrow, Harminder Battu, Brian Henderson, Tracey Innes, Alison Jenkinson, Ken Jeffrey, Graeme Kirkpatrick, Stuart Piertney, Michelle Pinard, Anne-Michelle Slater and Sai Shraddha S. Viswanathan.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 AUGUST 2023
(copy filed as UEC/101023/001)

1.1   Members of the Committee approved the minute of the meeting held on 29 August 2023.

MATTERS ARISING
(copy filed as UEC/101023/002)

2.1   Members of the Committee noted the actions arising following the meeting of UEC held on 29 August 2023. All, except one, of the actions were recorded as completed.

2.2   It was noted that the circulation of Graduate Outcomes School-level data is still in progress.

RISK REGISTER
(copy filed as UEC/101023/003)

3.1   Members of the UEC discussed the Risk Register, specifically in relation to Education.

3.2   It was suggested that the risk related to the Marking and Assessment Boycott could be removed. A discussion took place and it was agreed that the impact score would initially get downgraded until all actions have been completed.

3.3   The UEC also discussed a new risk that had been added to the risk register related to the impact of RAAC on the student experience and the delivery of education, especially at the Foresterhill campus. It was noted that mitigations were already in place for this term, but would need to be reviewed for next term. The impact might affect other Schools in addition to SMMSN. It was noted that, in relation to the impact on the medical library, all books are now available.

EDUCATION POLICY AND REGULATIONS REVIEW SCHEDULE
(copy filed as UEC/101023/007)

4.1   Members of the UEC heard the updates in relation to the Education Policy and Regulations Review Schedule. It was noted that the timeline for the review of education policies over the next few years is intended to be flexible, to reflect the possible need to prioritise different areas as required. The Committee noted the extensive amount of work that will be required to complete this review.

4.2   It was suggested that this timeline should also capture the terminology change in policies, regulations, the website and other documentation, following the approval of the future academic year structure by Senate. The Chair highlighted the need to complete this work as quickly as possible, while recognising that it is a vast amount of work.

4.3   It was suggested that, when regulations for Medicine and Dentistry are mentioned, this could be changed to Regulated Healthcare Programmes and include the Physician Associates programme, which will be regulated as of next year.

4.4   Finally, it was also suggested to embed employability and work-based programmes as there will be policy implications from the project.

4.5   The Chair noted that this timeline is a live document which should be reviewed regularly.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PRACTICE

(i) UPDATE ON THE GUIDANCE FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS ON THE USE OF GEN-AI IN EDUCATION
(copy filed as UEC/101023/004)

5.1   Members of the UEC heard an update on the guidance for staff and students on the use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in education. It was recommended that this guidance be reviewed one month prior to the start of each term to ensure it is as up-to-date as possible, as it concerns a rapidly changing technology. Members of the UEC were asked to get in touch with the authors of the paper if they think something is missing from this guidance. The Chair asked that UEC includes a review of this guidance in the agenda of UEC meetings that coincide with the start of each term.   **Action: KK/Chair**

5.2   A member of the UEC asked if any training would be available. Some details of the upcoming training were shared, including an Education Panel that will take place in November. The importance of trying to reach a broader audience was highlighted, as it was noted that these sessions tend to be attended by the same people.

(ii) IMPLEMENTING THE AI DESIGN ASSISTANT IN MYABERDEEN
(copy filed as UEC/101023/005)

6.1   Members of the UEC heard an update on a new genAI tool, developed and launched by Anthology, the company behind the VLE Blackboard Learn (MyAberdeen), called AI Design Assistant. This tool has not been switched on yet on our institutional VLE, and consists of five separate and independent parts. The first generates keywords used for searching images that can be used on the course area from the image library Unsplash. The second generates an outline structure for Learning Modules in a course area. The third generates test questions and question banks. The fourth generates rubrics. And the fifth generates images.

6.2   The Committee heard that due diligence has been carried out in relation to copyright. Furthermore, our institutional data is not shared or used by the tool outwith our own environment. The recommendation from the authors of the paper is for the Committee to agree to switch on the first four options, with the caveat that staff are made aware that they should be using these as a starting point for new ideas. However, it was recommended that the fifth option not be switched on, at this moment, due to copyright and ethical concerns.

6.3   A discussion took place on the advantages and concerns related to this tool. The Committee heard that discussions on this tool are happening across the sector.

6.4   It was suggested that we should consider any risks associated with turning on these features, in relation to the quality of education and on the communication with students. Members of the Committee highlighted the importance of being transparent, putting training in place, and communicating clearly with staff and students.

6.5   The committee heard that this tool is not going to learn from our data, making it a safer option than using third-party tools that cannot guarantee the protection of data. In addition, in terms of workload, it may free up capacity to support students further.

6.6   It was suggested that a more in-depth discussion could take place at the Education Away Day or at an additional UEC meeting.

(iii) IMPLEMENTING TURNITIN DRAFT COACH TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS
(copy filed as UEC/101023/006)

7.1   Members of the UEC discussed the possible implementation of Turnitin Draft Coach to improve students' writing skills. This tool is an add-on to MS Word which teaches students how to write effectively as they are writing. The difference with Turnitin is that it doesn't store the students' work in its database. The recommendation to UEC is to agree that it be switched on, as it provides equity of access to this service for all students and protects them from engaging with contract cheating services, and there is no additional cost to the University.

7.2   A discussion was had on the advantages and disadvantages of implementing this tool. It was emphasised the importance of communicating to students that if they need extra support the SLS is still available. Communication and guidance would also need to be provided to Schools, and it was suggested that the Dean for Educational Innovation could meet with Schools where there may be concerns so that these can be addressed.   **Action: KK/SP/DoEs**

7.3   The Committee agreed to aim to have this feature in place for next term, once further conversations have taken place in Schools.

FUTURE ACADEMIC YEAR STRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
(copy filed as UEC/101023/008)

8.1   Members of the UEC heard an update on the Future Academic Year Structure Implementation Plan, which currently lists high-level actions, but further details will be provided at the next UEC meeting.   **Action: GM/LD**

8.2   As mentioned earlier in the meeting, a substantive amount of work will need to go on changing the terminology in policies and online documentation. Additionally, details on what will be involved in implementing the ITE Week will need to be considered.   **Action: JB**

ABERDEEN 2040

(i) ABERDEEN 2040 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

(copy filed as UEC/101023/009)

9.1   Members of the UEC noted the Aberdeen 2040 Implementation Plan, in particular the change that was made after the last meeting.

(ii) ABERDEEN 2040 GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

(copy filed as UEC/101023/010)

10.1   Members of the UEC heard an update on the Aberdeen 2040 Graduate Attributes and Skills, which will go to Senate for academic view in November and then again for approval in February.

10.2   It was noted that an extensive consultation had taken place and attention was drawn to specific areas of the paper. It was noted that the workload implications that the proposed changes will have for both academic and professional services colleagues had been considered. However, further consideration needs to be given to how to embed the Graduate Attributes and Skills in the delivery of education.

10.3   This paper was generally well-received by members of the UEC and it was noted that this would have a positive impact on students. A discussion was had on the possible workload implications for personal tutors and it was agreed that Deans for Employability and Entrepreneurship; and Student Support and Experience would meet to discuss and make amendments to the personal tutor website as appropriate.

10.4   In relation to further feedback, the following was noted: (i) confirmation that the proposal would be suitable for the partnership with AFG College; (ii) concerns regarding the use of existing PDPs / bespoke VLE / skills passport in MMSN and it was agreed that the Dean for Employability and Entrepreneurship and Director of the Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences would meet to discuss; (iii) confirmation from the Vice-President for Education (AUSA) that the proposal is an improvement on the Enhanced Transcript and will help students in developing their CVs; and (iv) a query as to whether there is a difference between UG and PGT skills which the Dean for Employability and Entrepreneurship will follow up.   **Action: JB**

10.5   Members were encouraged to send any further comments to the author of the paper and it was noted that the paper would come back again for approval.

NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS)

(i) NSS 2023 EXTENDED REPORT

(copy filed as UEC/101023/011)

11.1 Members of the UEC discussed the extended report on the NSS results 2023. It was noted that this report has additional information compared to what was included in the report that was previously presented. The Committee noted that there were a number of very positive results, but also some less positive ones, especially for assessment and feedback.

11.2 It was noted that this information has been circulated with Schools and is being used to develop School Education Action Plans that will be reviewed at SSEC in November.

Action: DoEs

(ii) NSS INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLAN – ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

(copy filed as UEC/101023/012)

12.1 Members of the UEC discussed the NSS Institutional Action Plan, with a particular focus on assessment and feedback. It was noted that improvements to this area will have a significant impact on league tables and on the student experience. It was agreed that timeliness of feedback would need particular focus. The Committee also heard a brief update on the TESTA pilot.

12.2 A discussion took place on the support needed in Schools and on whether Schools could review the volume of assessment. It was noted by the Chair that Schools are able to review their approaches to assessment and make appropriate changes. Dates have previously been circulated so that Schools can make the changes in time.

COPYRIGHT LITERACY STRATEGY AND COPYRIGHT POLICY

(copy filed as UEC/101023/013)

13.1 Members of the UEC noted updates to the Copyright Literacy Strategy and Copyright Policy, and thanked all those who had been involved in this work. The Committee was asked to identify appropriate representatives from academic and professional services for the Copyright Literacy Steering Group who will oversee the delivery of the strategy. However, it was noted that some Terms of Reference for the Steering Group would be circulated before nominating appropriate representatives.

Action: SB

MINUTES FROM THE EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMMITTEE (EEC)

(copy filed as UEC/101023/014a)

14.1 The UEC noted the updated report from the Employability and Entrepreneurship Committee.

MINUTES FROM THE STUDENT SUPPORT AND EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE (SSEC)

(copy filed as UEC/101023/014a)

15.1 The UEC noted the updated report from the Student Support and Experience Committee.

UPDATED COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

(copy filed as UEC/101023/015)

16.1 Members of the UEC noted the updates to the composition and membership of the Committee.

ANNUAL MONITORING AMENDMENTS IN RELATION TO DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM AND EDI

(copy filed as UEC/101023/016)

17.1 Members of the UEC noted the annual monitoring amendments in relation to Decolonising the Curriculum and EDI.

SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL (SFC) GUIDANCE FOR QUALITY

(copy filed as UEC/101023/017)

18.1 Members of the UEC noted the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) guidance for quality.

UPDATES TO THE OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR THE TERTIARY ENHANCEMENT TOPIC

(copy filed as UEC/101023/018)

19.1 Members of the UEC noted the updates to the operational guidance to tertiary enhancement topic.

READING LIST SERVICE REPORT

(copy filed as UEC/101023/019)

20.1 Members of the UEC noted the Reading List Service Report.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

21.1 The next meeting of the UEC will be held on Tuesday 16 January 2023 at 13:05 pm. It will take place in person (location TBC) but a link to Microsoft Teams will be provided for those who might need to attend online.