

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

EQUAC ANNUAL AND PERIODIC REVIEW AND PARTNERSHIPS

SUMMARY OF THE BUSINESS CONDUCTED VIA CIRCULATION IN AUGUST 2024

[Clerk's Note: This summary contains the feedback provided by QAC members in relation to the business conducted by circulation pertaining to (i) annual monitoring responses; (ii) Internal Teaching Review Annual Follow-Up Reports; and (iii) Partnerships Annual Reports. These items were delayed at a previous QAC meeting in 2023/24 and as such, in order to escalate approval prior to the start of the new academic year, an electronic circulation was arranged.]

ANNUAL MONITORING

(copies filed as QAC/010724/001 to 012)

- 1.1 In order to identify key themes across Schools, the summary for all Schools' annual monitoring responses is provided covering all submissions. In general, the Committee noted the positive, ongoing good practice taking place across Schools and programmes, as well as the challenges that are faced. In particular, the following is noted:
- Pass rates remain high across all Schools.
 - Many Schools mention the challenges of in-person examinations and the subsequent drop in student performance. The Committee highlighted the measures introduced by School to prepare students; e.g. formative assessments, tutorials etc.
 - Many Schools mention lack of engagement amongst students in terms of attendance monitoring and submission of assessments. Further, members of the Committee noted a lack of self-directed studying reported across Schools. In some Schools, it was noted that tutorials and information sessions are being introduced to remind students of the importance of proper skills and application.
 - In general, the Committee noted the low number of returns for Course Feedback Forms, which were widely reported. Where submission of Course Feedback was high, the Committee highlighted the positive emphasis of the feedback received.
 - Across Schools, there is clear evidence of in-depth comparative analysis across courses and programmes with appropriate plans being developed to mitigate issues.
 - In respect of assessment, the Committee highlighted some good examples of streamlined assessment approaches across many Schools, which will reduce *over* assessment. There is clear evidence across programmes of authentic and innovative assessments.
 - Many Schools were developing approaches to teaching using innovative software packages.
 - In relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), there was a good range of EDI-related activities and courses that have made good efforts regarding decolonising the curriculum.
 - It was reported that there was good alignment with external subject benchmarks.
 - Additionally, some concerns were raised across subject areas involving mathematics around the numeracy skills of incoming students.
 - In relation to the NCS response, it was highlighted that an incorrect version had been shared.
 - In relation to the Business response, it was suggested that wording be amended in relation to Real Estate courses to avoid misconstruing what was meant as relating to marketing activities.

INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEW: ANNUAL FOLLOW-UP REPORTS

(copy filed as QAC/010724/013 to 017)

- 2.1 The Committee considered and approved the annual follow-up reports for the Internal Teaching Reviews for: (i) Geosciences; (ii) Law; (iii) MMSN (Medical Sciences); (iv) Psychology; and (v) Social Science.
- 2.2 In particular, the following comments were provided:
 - 2.2.1 **Geosciences:** the Committee highlighted the many ongoing activities that appear to be making good progress over the previous year. The Committee commended the good examples of collaborative approaches, e.g. with the School of Biological Sciences.
 - 2.2.2 **Law:** the Committee highlighted some good examples of induction and orientation activities, including alignment of information provided across different courses and/or programmes. The Committee noted the new staff recruited and trained for specific roles.
 - 2.2.3 **MMSN (Medical Sciences):** the Committee noted that the ongoing streamlining of the BSc programme portfolio was making progress. Additionally, the Committee noted that the changes in terms of teaching and learning leadership as well as administrative roles were bedding in well. In particular, the evolving and developing use of the Science Teaching Hub was highlighted following a year of use of the facilities. The use of PGR students to support teaching and learning activities, e.g. demonstrators, was commended.
 - 2.2.4 **Psychology:** the Committee highlighted the strong focus on the bespoke PGR training offered. Additionally, the Committee noted the ongoing process of curriculum review, with the aim to make assessments more authentic. The initiatives underway to improve employability skill development across programmes was commended.
 - 2.2.5 **Social Science:** the Committee noted that action plans were developed to address assessment and feedback. Additionally, the Committee noted that the School was undergoing the TESTA (pilot) and COIL initiatives. The Committee highlighted the strengthening of links to employability skills, as well as the refinement and improvement of training of personal tutors within the School. The use of PGR students to deliver teaching was commended.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIVE PROVISION: ANNUAL REPORTING

(i) PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIVE PROVISION ANNUAL REPORT (TEMPLATE)

(copy filed as QAC/010724/020)

- 3.1 The Committee was content to approve the revisions to the Partnerships and Collaborative Provision Annual Report template, for introduction in 2024/25.

(ii) UNIVERSITY OF HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS (FOLLOW-UP)

- 4.1 The Committee noted the follow-up provided in respect of the University of the Highlands and Islands partnership report. Additionally, the Committee noted that the partnership will be terminated in due course following the completion of the last remaining student.

(iii) CHONGQING INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN STUDIES (CFIS)

(copy filed as QAC/010724/018)

- 5.1 The Committee considered and approved the annual report for Chongqing Institute of Foreign Studies (CFIS). In particular, members of the Committee noted that details pertaining to quality enhancement were still lacking. It was suggested that this could be addressed in the subsequent year's report, which will be due in October 2024.

(iv) SHANDONG NORMAL UNIVERSITY (SDNU)

(copy filed as QAC/010724/019)

- 6.1 The Committee considered and approved the annual report for Shandong Normal University (SDNU). Some members highlighted the inconsistencies in the enrolled number of students and degrees awarded. It was suggested that this could be addressed in the subsequent year's report, which will be due in October 2024.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 7.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 25 September 2024 at 2:05pm at Court Room, University Office and via Microsoft Teams.