H/02/27/02
CSPC: 02.06.16

**Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)
held on Thursday 2 June 2016 at 2.00p.m. in the Raeburn Room, Old College**

Present:

Professor Alan Murray (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSCE)
Dr Theresa McKinven	Head of PG Section (CHSS)
Ms Joy Candlish	Head of Academic Affairs (CSCE)
Dr Sheila Lodge	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Mr John Lowrey	Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CHSS)
Professor Allan Cumming	Dean of Students (CMVM)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Students (CSCE)
Ms Imogen Wilson	Vice President Academic Affairs, EUSA
Mr Ed Auckland	Academic Adviser, EUSA
Dr Neil Lent	Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Governance and Regulatory Team, Academic Services
Mr Barry Neilson	Director of Student Systems
Dr Soledad Garcia-Ferrari	ESALA, Edinburgh College of Art
Dr Ewen Macpherson	School of Engineering

In attendance:

Ms Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

Apologies for absence:

Mr Alan Brown	Associate Dean (Academic Progress), (CHSS)
Professor Helen Cameron	Director, Centre for Medical Education (CMVM)
Ms Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web
Professor John Stewart	Director, Biomedical Teaching Organisation
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback
Professor Lesley McAra	Assistant Principal, Community Relations

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 14 April 2016 were approved as an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising

Item 2 (Matters arising – CSPC 14/15 3 F – Mitigating the Impact of Industrial Action)
Dr Adam Bunni reported on electronic Committee business (by correspondence, 16-18 May 2016). A Mitigating the Impact of Industrial Action paper had been circulated. This paper invited the Committee to approve temporary concessions to allow Boards of Examiners to operate during the planned industrial action. The paper had been approved by the

Committee, and invoked its powers regarding significant disruption to assessment processes under Taught Assessment Regulations (2015/16) 67 and 68. The approach taken was intended to minimise the impact upon students without compromising academic standards.

Item 8 and 9 – Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2016/17 Leave of Absence

Mr Tom Ward reported on electronic Committee business conducted in relation to degree regulations (by correspondence, 16-18 May 2016). CSPC had been invited to endorse some clarifications to the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree Regulations for 2016/17 on 'leave of absence'. These changes were relatively minor, and did not affect the underlying definition of 'leave of absence' that CSPC had agreed during the regulations review.

The University's UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Compliance team had recently identified that requiring approval for leave of absence only of 60 calendar days or more (when accompanied with a statement that other forms of leave of absence did not need to be recorded in EUCLID) could have an unintended consequence of creating risk for the University's compliance with UKVI requirements. Academic Services had made some modest changes to the regulations, which it had discussed with the senior College administrators, Student Systems and the UKVI Compliance team.

The changes were:

- a reduction in the period requiring approval to 30 calendar days;

- clarification that there was no need for formal approval processes for types of leave of absence which are an organised aspect of the programme (e.g. Medical placements);

- to make it clear that Colleges and Schools must maintain records of all leaves of absence but not stipulating the form this record-keeping would take;

- an amendment to the level of approval from 'School' to 'College'. The reason for this change was that one College had indicated that it would like to keep approval at College level. Degree Regulation 2 (UG Degree Regulations) / Regulation 4 (PG Degree Regulations) already gave Colleges power to delegate permissions, so the other two Colleges would be allowed to delegate this power to Schools if they wished.

The amended undergraduate and postgraduate regulations for 2016/17 (UGDRPS 2016/17 regulation 26, PGDRPS 2016/17 regulation 29) would read as follows:

'Leave of absence is required for compulsory and optional activities related to the programme of study that are not undertaken on campus in Edinburgh. Students must have the formal approval of the College for any leave of absence to study away from Edinburgh that is 30 calendar days' duration or longer. Study location changes of less than 30 calendar days must be agreed with the Supervisor or Personal Tutor. Where the activity is a compulsory part of the programme of study and is organised by the School or College, permission may be given by the College for a cohort of students without individual applications being made. Colleges and Schools must maintain records of all leaves of absence. This regulation does not apply to students on a recognised distance learning programme.'

The above revised text had now formally been approved by both CSPC and Senate, and was to be submitted to University Court for final approval of the University Resolution on 20 June 2016.

> **ACTION: Academic Services (Ailsa Taylor) – to ensure that revised 'leave of absence' text is submitted to University Court for approval of the final University Resolution at their 20 June 2016 meeting.**

3. Academic Year Dates (Verbal Update)

Mr Tom Ward gave a verbal update on the current review of the academic year, and invited CSPC members to feed in their views. The University was reviewing the structure of the academic year to see whether a different structure would better meet the needs of students and staff. A Task Group established by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee had developed a proposal for an alternative model for the academic year. A range of material had been developed to support the consultation process:

http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/projects/review-of-the-academic-year

http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/consultation_document.pdf

Following the consultation with students and staff during April/ May 2016 on the proposed alternative academic year structure, the Task Group were now reviewing the findings of the consultation. Students, Colleges, Schools, EUSA, and Trade Unions had now provided their feedback. The Task Group was due to submit its final report to Learning and Teaching Committee for consideration at its meeting on 21 September 2016. It would then be reported to the meeting of the University's Senate on 28 September 2016 and (if appropriate) to a relevant University Court meeting.

Dr Soledad Garcia-Ferrari outlined issues that Edinburgh College of Art had identified with the academic year date proposals; these had already been fed into the consultation process. The main specific issues identified included: the need for time for students to reflect, assimilate, synthesise and produce work in the period after teaching is completed; the logistics of access to printing, workshop and other limited resources which were presently staggered over a period of three weeks, and would be impossible if all hand-ins were due within one week; the way in which the proposal undermined the newly approved architecture degree structure (which would curtail the period in practice to January-end August, and would be untenable if students could not start until the end of February). The School would then need to apply for an 'opt-out' from the standard academic year, which would not be acceptable, as the School would still want their students to be able to take outside courses. In addition, general factors that had been raised included issues with the lack of a spring vacation for family-friendly policy purposes, the 'learn…test…forget' implications of immediate post-teaching assessment without reflection, and the feeling that the option to 'retain the status quo' should have been offered as an option.

4. Feedback and Assessment (Verbal Update)

Professor Alan Murray provided a verbal update on recent feedback and assessment discussions. Professor Susan Rhind was unable to attend CSPC, but had asked for some feedback from the Committee on some early ideas. The regulations in relation to feedback for 2016/17 had already been formally approved, but it was anticipated that changes for 2017/18 would be likely. Professor Rhind felt that the 15 working day "rule" was helpful in raising awareness and ensuring consistency, but was concerned that in some cases, it may actually be prohibiting detailed, creative, principled thought at course/lecturer level, and even potentially reducing the quality of some feedback on larger assignments. There were also a small number of opt-outs from the regulation, which had been requested for sound

pedagogical reasons, but created an additional administrative burden for Schools and Colleges. The proposal that was currently being considered involved a move away from the 15 day "rule", to a regulation where the timing was based more upon the sequencing between elements of feedback, in relation to the "usefulness" to the student.

Detailed discussion was held on:

- perceptions of students, and the difference between feedback and results;

- feedback across courses, feedback at programme level, feed-forward;

- planning for feedback as part of course and programme design;

- the need to focus more on quality, and impact, and appropriateness of feedback, rather than simply focusing on adhering to the 15 working day deadline;

- National Student Survey results;

- the potential implications of the new Teaching Excellence Framework in relation to feedback satisfaction;

- the requirement to find a solution that did not create more work (particularly in system terms) for the people who were monitoring it (e.g. if it created further variation), thus diverting attention away from student support.

5. **Assessment and Progression Tools Steering Group Recommendation (CSPC 15/16 6 A)**

Mr Barry Neilson presented this paper, which followed on from a paper that had been presented to CSPC in March 2016. CPSC approved the recommendations contained in the paper. These recommendations had also been endorsed by the Assessment and Progression Tools Steering Group. The agreed model for 2016/17 would:

- ensure that course marks were ratified prior to decisions being made regarding awards and progression;

- set two dates after the semester 2 examination diet for course marks to be ratified in the EUCLID system, to enable effective sharing of marks (one date for ratified honours course marks to be in EUCLID and a later date for ratified non-honours and postgraduate taught marks to be in EUCLID);

- provide scope to run both a 'closed' board, or two-stage Boards, for both awards and progression decisions;

- clarify that any award or progression decision that cannot be made at a 'closed' Board needed to be taken as Convener's action once all course results for a student have been ratified;

- split the deadlines between communication of awards and the communication of progression decisions.

A table within the paper provided an example of how the key dates had been applied to the 2015/16 academic year for illustrative purposes. It was clarified that although the deadline for ratified marks for honours courses to be in EUCLID had fallen on a Friday (Friday 3 June 2016, two weeks after the end of the exam diet), this did not mean that marks needed to be released to students on a Friday. In practice, the date of publication of these results rested with the Schools, so they could, for example, choose to publish up to 12 noon on that Friday, and then wait until the following Monday to release other marks).

Discussion was held on the firmly endorsed recommendation arising from the November 2015 CSPC meeting, whereby ratified semester 1 course marks were to be published after semester 1 Boards of Examiner meetings (rather than being ratified by a Board at the end of semester 2). This recommendation had been particularly firmly supported by the Committee, but it had not been clear who would ensure that Schools adhered to this procedure. In some areas there were sound pedagogical reasons for approved opt-outs (by College), but it was understood that this was not the situation in all cases, and felt that more could be done to encourage Schools to comply. It was agreed that Colleges would strongly encourage Schools to adopt this model wherever possible, through the relevant Learning and Teaching committees. It was agreed that Mr Barry Neilson, Mr Tom Ward and Professor Alan Murray would co-ordinate efforts and provide some text on this, which Colleges could then circulate to Schools.

> **ACTION: Mr Barry Neilson, Mr Tom Ward and Professor Alan Murray to draft text for circulation to Colleges on the requirement for ratified semester 1 course marks to be published after semester 1 Board of Examiners meetings (unless an opt-out had been approved by College for sound pedagogical reasons).**

6. Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy (CSPC 15/16 6 B)

Mr Tom Ward presented this paper, which asked for some initial comments on proposed changes to this policy, prior to wider consultation and drafting over the summer, then re-circulation to CSPC. The original policy was created as part of the Programme and Course Management (PCIM) Project and approved by the Committee in April 2015. The initial proposals aimed to ensure that the University was compliant with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance, whilst minimising the constraints on innovation. The Committee were broadly supportive of the proposed changes outlined in the paper, recognising that there were lots of points of detail to return to following the wider consultation. Any further comments that CSPC members had over the summer 2016 were to be directed to Tom Ward (tom.ward@ed.ac.uk)

7. Courses with no Enrolments (CSPC 15/16 6 C)

Mr Tom Ward presented this paper.

CSPC approved the proposal outlined in the paper, which suggested a movement towards deleting courses which had had no student enrolments over the last four year period. The Committee was also supportive of deleting these courses in a systematic way (e.g. Student Systems deleting them as complete batches). However, the Committee suggested that it would be more appropriate to begin by giving the Schools the information about the courses that were about to be deleted, strongly encouraging them to delete these courses themselves - then move to systematically deleting them within Student Systems a year later, if they still existed. It was also suggested that it would make sense to tie in this process with the annual course roll-forward process if possible.

It was noted that the Programme and Course Design, Approval and Closure Policy did assign responsibility for closing courses to Boards of Studies, and that the Terms of Reference for Boards of Studies also referred to this responsibility. However, the Committee took the view that CSPC, as the overall owner of policy in this area, could agree to allow Student Systems to close courses, as long as there were strong communications to signal to Schools that this was about to occur.

Mr Tom Ward agreed to check whether, formally speaking, Student Systems could delete courses, since course closure was technically the responsibility of Boards of Studies. It was agreed that CSPC would be content, in due course, for Student Systems to action course closure on the Committee's behalf, subject to confirmation from Mr Ward that the Programme and Course Design, Approval and Closure Policy and Terms of Reference for Boards of Studies were not an obstacle to this.

8. **Credit for Study Abroad** – **Task Group Report (CSPC 15/16 6 D)**

Dr Adam Bunni presented this item. The following was agreed:

- CSPC agreed in principle to look at any non-standard credit agreements as a one-off (possibly by Convener's Action if required) in the short-term. This was not expected to be necessary longer-term ,as the intention was that processes would be in place for approval of non-standard agreements via the College/International office standard procedures;

- Professor Graeme Reid was to speak to the International Office and Colleges about processes for approval of credit agreements, and the need to ensure academic input;

- work to develop the Exchange Coordinator role was to continue in 2016/17, with a view to having a role description in place for 2017/18; Professor Reid to lead on this work with various Task Group members (including Professor Reid, and College Senior Administrative staff, with the addition of the new EUSA VPAA, as he was understood to have a particular interest in this area).

> **ACTION: Professor Graeme Reid to contact International Office and Colleges about processes for approval of credit agreements, and continue to lead on work to develop the Exchange Co-ordinator role with members of the Task Group (and including the new EUSA VPAA).**

9. **Proposed review of regulations for 2017/18 regarding resit entitlement and failure to make academic progress (CSPC 15/16 6 E)**

Dr Adam Bunni presented this item. A short-life task group to clarify regulatory issues surrounding the University's approach to resit entitlement and exclusion for failure to make satisfactory academic progress was to be established. Significant issues of interpretation had been raised, but these could not be resolved in time for publication of the 2016/17 regulations. The expectation would be that any changes that were required would be implemented for the 2017/18 academic session.

10. **College of Humanities and Social Science: Academic Year Dates Opt-Out** – **BSc Hons Social Work (CSPC 15/16 6 F)**

This paper was approved by the Committee.

11. College of Humanities and Social Science: Proposed MSc in Activist Learning and Teaching (Verbal Update)

A paper outlining proposals for a new MSc in Activist Learning and Teaching, was at an early draft stage, before submission to College for formal approval. If CSPC approval was required at all (it was unclear at the moment whether or not the proposals were fully compliant with the Curriculum Framework) then the Committee gave their consent for Professor Alan Murray to take this forward by Convener's Action over the summer.

12. Student Appeal Committee and Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee Membership – Academic Year 2016/17 (CSPC 15/16 6 H)

The membership of the Student Appeal Committee and Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee for academic year 2016/17 was approved, subject to the following amendments:

Student Appeal Committee Membership 2016/17
Dr Richard Holt, Economics, was not to be a member.

13. Student Appeal Regulations (CSPC 15/16 6 I)

The Student Appeal Regulations had been revised to incorporate elements of the Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes (Regulation 23 under 'Student Responsibilities' had been added). The new regulations would be live from 19 September 2016.

> **ACTION: Stuart Fitzpatrick in Academic Services to replace Student Appeal Regulations with new version as of 19 September 2016.**

14. Academic Misconduct Procedures (CSPC 15/16 6 J)

The draft Academic Misconduct Procedures were approved, subject to some minor edits to content and correction of typographical errors. The new Procedures were to be in place for 2016/17.

15. Senate Committee Planning – approach for next session (CSPC 15/16 5 K)

The Committee noted the plans outlined in the paper for 2016/17.

16. Proposal for a Board of Examiners Handbook (CSPC 15/16 5 L)

This paper proposed the development of a Board of Examiners Handbook, which would incorporate a number of existing policies, remits and principles. The Committee endorsed this proposal.

17. Update on Collaboration with Zhejiang University (CSPC 15/16 5 M)

Mr Tom Ward presented this item. The Committee noted the update on the Zhejiang University initiative.

18. Concessions Sub-Committee Meeting - Thursday 9 June 2016 at 10.00a.m.

This meeting had been scheduled for Thursday 9 June 2016 at 10.00am. All CSPC representatives who were expected to be present had already agreed to attend directly.

19. Any Other Business

Dr Soledad Garcia-Ferrari, Ms Joy Candlish and Ms Imogen Wilson were leaving the Committee and were sincerely thanked for their contributions during their terms of office.

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer, 9 June 2016