VALIDATION FORUM  
Thursday 17 February 2011

MINUTES

Present:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Ainley</td>
<td>Central School of Ballet (CSB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faye</td>
<td>Beesley</td>
<td>University of Kent – QA&amp;V (Secretary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine</td>
<td>Burrows</td>
<td>Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (DWCT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malcolm</td>
<td>Dixon</td>
<td>University of Kent - QA&amp;V (Chair)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Evans</td>
<td>University of Kent - QA&amp;V</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Griffiths</td>
<td>University of Kent – School of Anthropology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Janet</td>
<td>Haddock-Fraser</td>
<td>Deputy Dean of Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debbie</td>
<td>Reed</td>
<td>Division of Dentistry, Centre for Professional Practice UoK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Sorrell</td>
<td>Faculties Support Office</td>
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<td>Joanna</td>
<td>McPherson</td>
<td>The Circus Space</td>
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<td>Louise</td>
<td>Naylor</td>
<td>University of Kent - Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UELT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>Mulcahy</td>
<td>Faculty of General Dentist Practice (FGDP)</td>
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<td>Tim</td>
<td>Roberts</td>
<td>The Circus Space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>Shaw</td>
<td>ifs School of Finance</td>
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<td>Valerie</td>
<td>Ainscough</td>
<td>Chaucer College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>Anderson</td>
<td>School of Arts, UoK</td>
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<td>Eric Pierre Jacques</td>
<td>Assandri</td>
<td>Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD)</td>
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<td>Sue</td>
<td>Sedwell</td>
<td>ifs School of Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Nash</td>
<td>ifs School of Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nick</td>
<td>Dickson</td>
<td>London Contemporary Dance School (LCDS)</td>
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<td>Amanda</td>
<td>Britton</td>
<td>Rambert School of Ballet &amp; Contemporary Dance</td>
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<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>Rawson</td>
<td>Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD)</td>
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<td>Professor Karl</td>
<td>Leydecker</td>
<td>Dean of Humanities</td>
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Apologies:

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<tr>
<td>Jacque</td>
<td>Powell</td>
<td>Faculty of General Dentist Practice (FDGP)</td>
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<td>Dr Andrew</td>
<td>MacGregor</td>
<td>Faculties Support Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Hawkins</td>
<td>University of Creative Arts (UCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Ralph</td>
<td>Rambert School of Ballet &amp; Contemporary Dance</td>
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1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Malcolm Dixon welcomed everyone to the 7th Validation Forum and outlined the agenda.

2 Minutes of the meeting of the Validation Forum held on 10 February 2010

The Forum confirmed the minutes of the last meeting as an accurate record.

2.1 Matters arising

2.1 RE has liaised with C&DO about arranging for the validated institutions to be listed in the online prospectus. C&DO are happy to include the validated institutions logos and links to their websites and this should be implemented for September 2011.

8. QA&V reported that students studying at validated institutions do not have the correct status to entitle them to access online journals via the UoK, this service is restricted to University of Kent students only. Validated institutions would be required to purchase a license in order to provide students with such resources; a discount may be available for partner institutions.

3 Developments and updates from partner institutions since the last Forum

3.1 MD referred to the list of the University’s current validated partners and explained that the portfolio of institutions is expanding.

3.2 Updates from Partner Institutions

MD asked each validated institutions to provide a brief update on activities in the past year including sharing any good practice.

LCDS

LCDS have been looking at making their curriculum more inclusive for students with disability as approximately 25% of their students have learning disabilities. LCDS are making good use of the virtual learning environment in classes and are investing in I.T. This has had a positive impact on the learning experience.
**ifs**

Since gaining Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) in January 2010 **ifs** have validated a number of programmes including the BSc programme which was previously validated by the University of Manchester.

The **ifs** have recently undertaken a successful review of work-based learning (WBL) practices at level 5 and 6. The WBL form completed by students is designed to give participants the opportunity to reflect upon their academic learning and gain relevant experience in the workplace. The same template has been used by the **ifs** to process applications for the accreditation of prior learning. Applicants have to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the relevant modules in the workplace or in previous qualifications.

**DWCT**

DWCT are delivering post course support to all of their graduates which includes approximately 3,000 students at their training centre. The students can use this as a network to connect with each other and DWCT. This has been possible with funding from a small grant, which they call the Durrell Conservation Award. DWCT provide a website based network which allows students to interact via a forum, and offers advice and support.

**NSCD**

NSCD have purchased several flat screen TVs which they use for filming the students enabling them to look back and critique their performance.

NSCD have amended a number of assessment points in the first year of the BPA programme with the aim of providing students with more choice in the creative writing process. NSCD intend on implementing this next year in the 2nd and 3rd year of the BPA.

NSCD have found the benefits of verbal feedback in a studio. The School can now offer one-to-one sessions to students resulting in students taking more ownership for their learning.

**FDGP**

FDGP’s collaboration with Kent enables participants to reflect on their skills and competencies. FDGP previously offered “pick and mix” modules, however they found that the students only picked the modules they liked instead of the modules they required. The team are hoping to recruit a new cohort of students to the MSc in the near future.
**Rambert School of Ballet & Contemporary Dance**

Rambert are looking into updating their IT equipment and their website.

Rambert are now running the new MA in Advance Dance Performance and have seven students enrolled the programme. The performance group will be touring this year and they feel the programme is going well.

Rambert are strengthening their ties with Rambert Dance Company, providing students with an opportunity to perform with the company. Rambert are putting on a Research Week in May where they invite visiting professionals, undertake reflective sessions and their staff visit other schools and study other teaching practices. Furthermore the School will be starting a Student Support Network shortly.

**Circus Space**

Circus Space have had their video camera adapted to connect to PCs in order to make download easier, they now find that the video camera is used every day and helps students to track their performance and critique their work.

Circus Space have established termly briefing session with each year group in order to close the feedback loop and respond to those issues raised in the previous term. The staff consider the feedback and highlight both the positive and negative comments. Staff consider it useful to meet with each year groups and discuss various comments from the feedback, in some instance this provides Circus Space with an opportunity to inform students that their comments are not always shared by their peers. As a result of putting this system in place comments from students have become more constructive which can be addressed by teaching staff. Circus Space have observed that students now take ownership over the feedback process and any potential problems can be tackled before they get serious.

**Central School of Ballet**

CSB are in their 7th year of undergraduate provision. They are now developing a new MA in Choreography in line with feedback from the Dance profession for the need for context for mid-career dancers and choreographers to undertake research. CSB are currently preparing for Periodic Programme Review scheduled for this academic year.

CSB have expanded their Library collection which now includes new DVDs to aid research. Two new TV screens have been purchased and displayed in the studio, this allows students to watch performances.

CSB have developed their systems for providing individual feedback and one-to-one coaching. CSB are focussing on post-injury prevention and recovery, the Injury Prevention and Recovery Tutor is able identify potential hazards and helps students to recover from injury in order that they can return to class as soon as possible.
CSB have student feedback and student representative meetings. They have formed a new focus group to discuss particular topics. CSB have appointed a Student Liaison Governor to ensure that the student voice is represented.

4. **QAA Collaborative Provision Audit (CPA) – Dr Louise Naylor (Head of the Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching)**

Dr Louise Naylor reported that the University of Kent had a productive outcome of Audit. A letter was received from the QAA on 25 November 2010 stating the key findings and a full draft report was received in January 2011. All the Audit visits to the partner institutions went very well. Dr Louise Naylor thanked the partner institutions.

QAA gave Kent a **Confidence** rating for the current and likely future management of:

- the academic standards of its awards;
- The quality of learning opportunities available to students.

In addition the audit found that Kent took due account of the elements of the Academic Infrastructure in its management of standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students in collaborative provision.

The University’s procedures for managing collaborative provision, the HE in FE & Validation Forums, the Partnership Development Officers & School Liaison Officers, the Associate College & Validation Handbooks and the Quality Assurance and Validation Office’s electronic newsletter were all highlighted by the QAA as examples of Kent’s good practice in this area.

QAA made two advisable and six desirable recommendations to Kent; not all are relevant to the validated institutions. Kent is to ensure that:

**Advisable:**

- conjoint programme approval panels have a Kent Chair;
- external examiner reports are completed in sufficient detail.

**Desirable:**

- specific requirements are applied to the management of the teaching and assessment of non-English programmes offered;
- possible conflicts of interest for external examiners are identified and considered during their appointment and tenure;
- greater consistency is achieved in the implementation of its requirements regarding Staff/Student Liaison Committees at partner institutions;
- the mechanism which oversees the feedback from students reported by partner institutions is reviewed;
- it considers how its strategic aim of fostering and supporting research-led teaching might apply in partner institutions;
• it reviews the process for the termination of partnership arrangements to ensure that students’ interests are protected;
• it shares external examiner reports with students;
• it adopts a more systematic approach for the checking of the accuracy and completeness of the information which partner institutions publish on their web sites.

Dr Naylor explained that the final report would be published on the QAA website on the 22 April and the University would provide a written statement to accompany this. The University will formulate an action plan in response to the recommendations; this will be discussed at Learning and Teaching Board and Graduate School Board in June 2011.

5. Amplification of Section 2 of the QAA Code of Practice (Collaborative Provision and Flexible and Distributed Learning)

Malcolm Dixon reported that the Quality Assurance Agency had produced an amplified version of Section 2 of Code of Practice concerning collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning in October 2010. The University will be considering the revised version and QA&V will make a response to the Learning and Teaching Board and Graduate School Board in June 2011.

Malcolm Dixon talked through a recent presentation given by Wendy Stubbs, Assistant Director - QAA, entitled Amplification of Section 2 of the Code of Practice. He gave an overview of precepts A8, A9, A10, A12, A14 and A19.

Further information is available from: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp

The new code also has recognised that more HEIs are working with non-academic providers, for example, employers. This results in modules or elements of programmes being developed in response to employers’ requirements. QAA have asked that the involvement of employers in assessment of students is considered and carefully managed, as appropriate.

6. Consideration of the following issues for discussion and ongoing improvement.

6.1 Updates to Kent’s Code of Practice

• RE confirmed that the University’s Collaborative Policies and Procedures are now available on the QA&V website http://www.kent.ac.uk/ualt/quality/collaboration/Policies/index.html, and updates to all policies & procedures can be found in the QA Newsletter, please email qa@kent.ac.uk if would like to be added to the Newsletter group.

• At the time of Periodic Review the University will reassess the due diligence checks carried out for the collaborative programme(s) to safeguard against any potential risks. Such checks will include an assessment that the partner
institution remains of sound financial standing. Following the Periodic Review the partners will review the existing Memorandum of agreement to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, with a view to renewing the agreement for a further period of collaboration. A review of the PPR process is currently underway at Kent. Validated institutions will be kept up-to-date on any changes. Next year Rambert, NSCD, Nescot, ifs and GSK will under periodic programme review.

- Annex R of Kent’s Code of Practice has been revised recently. Applications for Accreditation of Prior Experiential and Certificated Learning (APECL) made by students studying for a University award at a Partner College or Validated Institution will have their application assessed and a decision made by the relevant Programme Leader/Admissions Tutor for the programme in question. Decisions will then be verified by the APECL Board at Kent.

- Professor Leydecker gave a brief outline of the work which has been carried out by the Working Group on Classification Methodology. The Working Group have considered the application of consistent stage weighting across the University; a single categorical marking scheme; revising arrangements for the conduct of meetings of Boards of Examiners to accommodate (i) Module Boards (ii) Progression and Award Boards and that the threshold parameters for the achievement of a higher classification under the preponderance method should be made consistent for each class of award.

- No decisive action has been taken yet, QA&V will keep partners updated on how changes may affect collaborative programme(s) of study.

6.2 Annual Monitoring Report Process

RE has received feedback from the Schools at Kent that it would be helpful to bring the Annual Monitoring Report deadline in line with the Kent deadlines. RE suggested the deadline of 30 November so that the Institutions reports can be considered with the programme reports at Kent. It was agreed that the validated institutions could meet this deadline.

6.3 Appeals and Complaints Procedures

RE reminded colleagues that the University had produced an information sheet for dissemination to students regarding academic appeals and academic and non-academic complaints. This is available from:

http://www.kent.ac.uk/ult/quality/collaboration/validation/students/Appeals%20Information%20for%20Taught%20Programmes%20at%20Vis.pdf
6.4 Student handbooks for validated programmes

RE thanked the validated institutions for submitting their material on time. It would be helpful if institutions could communicate in advance the deadline for printing their handbooks in order that the QA&V Office can check them in advance and avoid delay. If institutions require a handbook template this is now available from QA&V.

6.5 Validation Handbook

As a result of Audit the QAA recognised the Validation Handbook as good practice. Please email qa@kent.ac.uk if there are any useful documents that would be helpful to include in future additions of the Handbook.

6.6 Congregation dates and cut-off dates for receipt of results

The Congregation deadline for receipt of pass lists is 14 October 2011. The ceremony will be held on 18 November 2011.

6.7 Transcript Production

At the last Validation Forum the validated institutions agreed that the long term solution for transcript production would be for validated institutions to enter module marks via the web.

It was agreed that this remained the best way forward. The University would provide training to staff at the validated institutions that would be responsible for entering module marks via the web enabling Kent to produce the transcripts.

7. Running Effective Boards of Examiners

Malcolm Dixon advised the membership on Kent’s regulations and practices concerning the running of Boards of Examiners. If members of the Forum would like to request a copy of the presentation please email qa@kent.ac.uk

8. Any Other Business

None to report.

9. Date of Next Meeting

15th March 2012 – Darwin Conference Suite