

*APPROVED*

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER**

**SENATE: ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE:  
TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENTS**

**13 MARCH 2024**

**Present:** Professor April McMahon (Chair), Professor Andrew Brass, Dr Francisco Eissa-Barroso, Professor Gabrielle Finn, Professor Danielle George, Professor Peter R Green, Professor Ellen Schafheutle, Professor David Schultz, Professor Fiona Smyth, Raluca-Elena Valcescu, and Dr Nicholas Weise.

**In Attendance for all items:** Craig Best (Director of Student and Academic Services), Patrick Hackett (Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, attending as an observer), Janine Holdway (Head of Teaching and Learning Delivery), Dr John Marsh (Senior Governance Manager), Dr Simon Merrywest (Director for the Student Experience), and Jane Holland (Governance Manager) (minutes).

**In Attendance for minute 6:** Sarah Williams (Teaching and Learning Manager).

**Apologies:** Raheel Ansari, Professor Adam Danquah, Professor Robert Ford, Katie Jackson, and Andrew Mawdsley.

**1 Declarations of Interest**

**Noted:** that there were no declarations of interest in relation to the agenda.

**2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**Agreed:** to approve the minutes of the 31 January 2024 meeting.

**3 Matters Arising**

**Noted:**

- a) the Matters Arising update;
- b) that a report relating to the plans to address academic malpractice figures, and other issues to be addressed, e.g. plagiarism, would be presented to the 8 May 2024 meeting;
- c) that the new TLS strategy groups had met and would shortly be in a position to provide terms of reference. The Student Recruitment and Intake Strategy Group, which reported to the Planning and Resources Committee, would provide regular updates.

**4 Forward Agenda: Schedule of Committee Business for 2023/24**

**Noted:** The Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Teaching, Learning and Students) Forward Agenda.

**5 Chair's Update**

**Noted:**

- a) that the recent OFSTED inspection, which was the first substantive inspection for

- apprenticeship programmes in the Business School, had resulted in a 'Good' outcome. The Chair thanked colleagues, who had contributed to the inspection, for their excellent work;
- b) the development of the Access and Participation Plan (APP) was on schedule. The following was noted:
- i. the target areas would be confirmed and communicated to colleagues;
  - ii. the Power BI tool was able to provide insights into ethnicity data. It was recognised that a similar dashboard around disability data, which was not currently available, would be welcomed;
  - iii. following the previous APP submission, the Office for Students (OfS) had advised that the targets required additional stretch. The current approach included the setting of stretch targets;
  - iv. concern was raised around a possible increase in gaps as a result of following a targeted approach. It was confirmed although many initiatives were available to support all students (e.g. flexible learning programme, global graduates, mentoring and coaching), a number of initiatives were primarily taken up by particular groups, e.g. widening participation students.

## 6 Assessment Framework Review

**Received:** the Assessment Framework review principles and briefing document, which included the detailed process and timeline for the review.

### **Noted:**

- a) that the review had undertaken a consultation process and an amended version had been presented to the Teaching and Learning Strategy Group (TLSG);
- b) that, following discussion, it was agreed that consideration would be given to modifying the framework mind map which, although a useful visualisation, could be simplified; **Action: Associate Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students, and Teaching and Learning Manager**
- c) it was suggested that the framework should consist of a reduced number of policies, with underlying procedures. The policies would be consolidated where feasible; **Action: Director of Student and Academic Services**
- d) a new policy for online assessment would need to be developed, although this could be incorporated into the Policy on Examinations;
- e) it was suggested that the use of charters could be considered to promote particular aspects and themes arising from the review;
- f) the timeline for the review was realistic. Future changes to courses would be considered as implementation of the majority of the framework would take place during 2025-26. The timeline would be included in the Committee's report to Senate; **Action: Governance Manager**
- g) it was suggested that policies could open with a statement of purpose and highlight the changes;
- h) to aid socialisation of substantial changes, the Teaching and Learning Conference could be used for communicating updates to policy, including communication through networks and workshops;
- i) the framework would need to be aligned with interdependencies, including the Canvas rollout; **Action: Director of Student and Academic Services**
- j) the assessment principles (relevant, inclusive and accessible, and trustworthy) would form the main structure of the framework;
- k) additional work would need to be undertaken by teams to implement the framework, and the impact of this would need to be assessed. Schools would be asked to confirm the impact of risk. The impact on teams could be a challenge and would need to be managed; **Action: Director of Student and Academic Services**
- l) the timing of presenting policies for review and approval would be considered to ensure the timing was appropriate for implementation. The Feedback Policy would be prioritised for

approval to enable its implementation for 2024-25, and could be further reviewed in the future;

- m) a summary of the principles would be provided for Senate, highlighting the key principles of 'relevant, inclusive and accessible, and trustworthy', and a second tier to include 'authentic and real world'. Illustrative examples would be provided. The summary would be circulated to the Committee members prior to presentation to Senate; **Action: Associate Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students, and Teaching and Learning Manager**
- n) it was suggested that the framework should be a discrete item on the Senate agenda.

**Agreed:**

- i. to note the progress made in the review of the University Assessment Framework;
- ii. to recommend to Senate for approval, the Assessment Framework Principles, following minor amendments;
- iii. to note the proposal to implement the Assessment Principles and the Feedback Policy from September 2024, with full implementation of the framework from September 2025 and the intention to seek final approval for the final set of policies by Senate in October 2024, and that following approval, work would commence with Faculties to "socialise" the whole framework and hold workshops to prepare staff and students for the implementation of the new policy, procedures, and guidance in September 2025;
- iv. to note the proposed timeframe for the Committee to consider the Assessment Framework proposals and proposed engagement activity.

**7 Update to the Policy on Advising Taught Students**

**Received:** the proposed updates to the Policy on Advising Taught Students.

**Noted:**

- a) the updates to the Policy on Advising Taught Students had been proposed by the Senior Advisors Network and further changes had been made following consultation;
- b) during discussion, the following additional revisions were proposed:
  - a. at 4.4, 'all efforts' would be updated to 'all reasonable efforts';
  - b. further consideration would be given to the policy wording to ensure it was a good fit for all students requiring support;
  - c. careful thought would need to be given to the wording relating to the support for students with disabilities;
  - d. at 4.1, to amend the number of appointed advisors;
  - e. at 4.4, to prioritise the number of meetings, rather than time duration of meetings;
  - f. to update any inconsistencies between the policy and the guidance;

**Head of Teaching and Learning Delivery**

**Agreed:** that the further revisions would be reviewed by the Senior Advisors Network and presented to a future meeting of the Committee for approval.

**8 Update to the Procedure for Protecting the Interests of Students and PGRs in Exceptional Circumstances**

**Received:** the proposed update to the Procedure for Protecting the Interests of Students and PGRs in Exceptional Circumstances.

**Noted:**

- a) that a further review of the procedures would be undertaken in 12 months. Consideration was being given to including the policy and procedures in the University's General Regulations;
- b) during discussion, the following additional revisions were proposed:
  - a. at 3.1, to include heads of school (or nominee) will oversee...;
  - b. at 2.9, that FEBs included members of faculty to ensure representation on the

- university exam board;
- c. at 1.2, that the wording around industrial action would be revised;
- d. that the review date in the control box would be updated to 12 months.

**Head of Teaching and Learning Delivery**

**Agreed:** to approve the update to the Procedure for Protecting the Interests of Students and PGRs in Exceptional Circumstances, following minor amendment.

**9 Student Pregnancy, Maternity and New Parent Policy and Procedures**

**Received:** the Student Pregnancy, Maternity and New Parent Policy and Procedures.

**Noted:**

- a) that pending a new staff and student policy and procedures, due to delays it had been decided to produce a student policy and procedures;
- b) during discussion, a number of minor changes were suggested and it was agreed that further opportunity would be given for members to consider and provide feedback on the new policy and procedures.

**Agreed:** that the draft proposal would be updated, once further comments have been received, and circulated to Committee members for review prior to presenting to Senate for approval.

**10 Uniac Review of the Board-Senate Protocol for Academic Governance**

**Noted:**

- a) the Uniac audit would be a review of academic governance and part of the Audit and Risk Committee's 2023-24 Audit Plan. It would provide advice and recommendations on the academic governance mechanisms that were implemented at the start of 2022-23 to strengthen academic assurance and OfS compliance. The two academic quality and standards committees were a key element of this;
- b) a paper would be included on the 17 April Senate agenda which would provide further details and timescales for the review;
- c) the terms of reference for the review were currently being drafted by Uniac, and stakeholders identified. Senate and both of its committees were key stakeholders, and an opportunity would be provided for all members of Senate to contribute.

**11 Requests for Agenda Items by Members of the Committee**

**Noted:** No requests for agenda items had been received. Any such requests for future meetings should be made to the Governance Office at the earliest opportunity.