

Faculty of Humanities

Unconfirmed Notes of the Teaching & Learning Administrators' Network (TLAN) Meeting 12 May 2016

Present: Morag Guilfoyle & Sara Latham (SALC); Helen Davenport (Law); Janice Dodds & James Walker (SEED); Amanda Brereton & Amanda Bridgeman (SoSS); Chris McGlinchey, Alison Mewes & Madeleine Ryan (AMBS); Joanne Davidson (HR); Lisa McAleese (Chair).

1. Apologies

Noted: Apologies were received from: Lee Felvus, Fiona Fraser, Liz Nolan & Louise Stewart (SALC); Suzi Edwards & Kate Robinson (SEED), Abi Robinson (Law); Bernie O'Connor (SoSS); Jackie Kan (AMBS); Sian Nash (SSO); Nicola Lord, Emma Sanders & Rachel Walton (Faculty).

In attendance: Cath Dyson (Project Manager, Change Management & Process Improvement Team) for agenda item 4.

2. Previous Notes

Confirmed: The notes from the meeting on 17 December 2015 were confirmed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

Ref 6 (from 01/10/15 meeting) Issues with Exclusion of Students via the Resit Grid and via Program / Plan

Reported: The Faculty is awaiting confirmation that the use of the program action, of EXCL will also extend students' access to their IT accounts for 28 calendar days.

Action: Lisa McAleese to discuss this with Sian Nash.

Ref 6. Examinations

Reported: The paper, from Mike Mercer, recommending an extension of 2-3 days to the May / June examination period was taken to the January 2016 meeting of the Teaching and Learning Group (TLG), but wasn't considered; the paper has not yet been considered at a subsequent meeting (the secretary to TLG is clarifying whether or not the proposal still needs to be considered).

Action: Lisa McAleese to report back to TLAN.

Ref 8. Ethical Approval in Taught Programmes

Reported: The guidance, from the TLSO, on Ethical Approval in Taught Programmes is still outstanding.

Action: Lisa McAleese to establish if and when this will be issued.

4. Faculty Resit Examination Process

4a. To receive a presentation on the above project

Received: Cath Dyson gave an end of review presentation on the Faculty Resit Examination Process Project.

Reported: The Review process was commissioned by TLAN and commenced on 11 March 2015 and was finalised on 27 April 2016. The following PSS were part of the project group:

- David Hartley & Morag Guilfoyle (SALC)

- Katrina Clark & Janice Dodds (SEED)
- Helen Davenport & Nikola Keogh (Law)
- Gillian Clarke & Kelly Salimian (AMBS)
- Julie Tierney (With input from Wilfred Thornton-Start) (SoSS)
- Lisa McAleese (TLSS)

A number of workshops were held to identify issues, produce a high level and a detailed level flowchart of the ideal process. A number of issues were identified with the current 'as is' process:

- communication between Schools and delays in receipt of exam marks (e.g. not receiving or getting late info; delays in putting marks in Gradebook and those delays not communicated to others);
- academic buy-in (e.g. resit exam board seen as of 'lesser' importance than June Boards; academics on leave; availability of academics for marking; resit paper should be provided same time as first sit; availability of academics over the summer; academics challenging mitigating circumstances decisions; ensuring quorate exam boards);
- Campus Solutions (component resits; can't have multiple assessments of same type; no automatic process for feeding course work resits to host schools; increased capacity for human error as grades and year mark calculations are input manually; issues with Gradebook – lack of functionality, slow; recording of compensated pass marks in CS & recording in exam grids; how to record on resit exam board grid mitigating circumstances without overriding resit exam board notes (R1 / R2)
- timing of the resit period

A number of benefits were realised during the project:

- networking - including gaining knowledge on process as a whole; discussing common issues encountered across Schools; airing frustrations;
- identifying issues to take forward, including identifying common problems and facilitating lines of communication to Campus Solutions;
- sharing best practice and communications;
- gaining academic buy-in (a paper was approved at HPRC on 16/06/15 and circulated to Schools);
- documented agreed process with clear information ensuing consistency (where required and efficiency);
- guidance on the communication to be issued to students following the meeting of the examination board (still being finalised).

The output of the process was:

- the development of a detailed process document
- guidance on the communication to be issued to students following the meeting of the examination board
- communications plan for 'piloting'
- recommended process governance

There are a number of outstanding issues which the Project was not able to resolve:

- Campus Solutions issues;
- timing of the resit period and impact on appeals / restarts, carried credit, malpractice and the impact on the student experience for these students;
- DASS issues including, delay of scripts, incorrect attendance list, attendance lists by name rather than ID number;
- need to identify common Discovery Reports which contain all the relevant information rather than using multiple reports.

A communication and the documentation will be issued to Schools at the beginning of June 2016. The process operators are to feedback through local channels on any issues and the process for discussion and review by TLAN in December 2016 / January 2017. The process will be updated accordingly. As owners of the process, reviews will be undertaken every other year by TLAN.

In order to realise the benefits the process should be embedded within the School operational activities / roles / performance reviews / induction processes etc.

Noted: It is recognised that the Student Lifecycle Project (SLP) work may supersede this work, and we had fed back to the SLP on this project.

An overview of the resources required for this project was given:

What is delivered by this activity?:

- Standard process with agreed high level and detailed flowchart and process handbook;
- Quick wins implemented;
- Communications plan developed.

Timing scale for future projects, with full commitment ideally 4-6 months. What is needed from Schools:

- At least one person who is responsible for developing the above, delivering actions as appropriate, and engaging with School Managers to implement the process;
- Total time for this project between 43-50 hours per person.

The full documentation for this project can be found on the Sharepoint site:

<https://xorg.manchester.ac.uk/sites/CMPI/CM0090>

4b Faculty of Humanities Resit Operational Procedure document

Reported: The document pulls together all the information relevant to the resit examination process to give an oversight of the timing of activities and the process. The documentation reflects, where appropriate, that there may be acceptable variance in practices within Schools and is intended to be an aide for members of staff new to the role and as a reminder for those staff who only undertake the activities on an annual basis.

Action: **TLAN members** to share the document with relevant members of PSS staff in their School and provide Lisa McAleese with any comments by 23 May 2016.

4c Outstanding Issues Identified during the Process

DASS Registered Students and Examinations

Reported: The group identified the following issues:

- late return of DASS scripts / missing DASS scripts;
- attendance lists incorrect;
- attendance lists by name rather than ID number (this is the same issue for the lists or non-DASS examinations).

Reported: Fiona Smyth is meeting with Elaine Shillcock about the automatic 5 day extension for DASS registered students.

Agreed: The above issues should also be raised at this meeting.

Action: Lisa McAleese to report the above issues to Fiona Smyth to discuss at the meeting with Elaine Shillcock.

Discoverer Report

Reported: The group agreed it would be beneficial for a bespoke Discoverer report to be created.

Action: TLAN member to discuss with the appropriate PSS staff in their School what the report should contain and feedback to Lisa McAleese by 23 May 2016.

Training for Examination Board Chairs and Secretaries

Reported: The group also identified the need for training for examination board chairs and secretaries; Lisa McAleese has discussed this with Emma Hilton Wood who, at the time, confirmed no training will be developed.

In light of this the Faculty has put together an Examination Board Guide for Chairs and Secretaries which collates information from a plethora of University and Faculty documentation which is of relevance for the Chairs and Secretaries in the conduct of the Examination Board (there is one for undergraduate and one for postgraduate taught level). This Guide will be issued with the other documentation from this project.

Secretary's Note: Based on the Faculty's Examination Board Guide for Chairs and Secretaries the TLSO are developing an on-line exam board toolkit with signposts staff to the relevant policies, regulations etc.

The TLSO are also in discussions with the Staff Learning Development Unit about training for academic advisers and training for exam board chairs and secretaries will also be factored into the wider training and development discussions.

5. Discussion Item

Discussed: The current practice in Schools on how undergraduate students, who need to extend their registration without paying a fee, are recorded on Campus Solutions was discussed. For final year students in SALC who have mitigation which means that they cannot complete their studies by the end of the programme period the opportunity to complete the assessment is offered in the August resit period or sometimes extended to January of the following year and they record the status on Campus Solution of these students as Resit Without Attendance (RWA); other Schools also record students in this way.

Noted: There is a code of 'extension no fee', which better reflects the students status but this is only to be used for postgraduate students.

Discussed: The practice in Schools, where a student is permitted to repeat a year with no fee, is to email the Fees Office to inform them that the student has a fee waiver; Schools do not alter the status on the student system.

Discussed: The practice of waiving the fee for students with severe mitigating circumstances who are permitted to repeat the year was discussed. All, bar one School, waive the fee for these students; a decision was taken, by the Head of School, that given the number of students who are permitted to repeat the year because of severe mitigation it is not possible to waive the fee and these students are required to pay. Concern was expressed that this was inequitable treatment, however it was pointed out that the decision to waive the fee or not rested with the School.

Secretary's Note: The Undergraduate Degree Regulations state that 'Fees are payable when entire levels are repeated as a result of failure, without approved and verified mitigating circumstances'. The Guide to the Degree Regulations states that 'Undergraduate students permitted to repeat a year of study are charged full tuition fees at the rate applicable for the academic year concerned' and 'If there are proven mitigating

circumstances and the School feels that they are serious enough, they can decide that a student shouldn't be charged fees to repeat the period of study, but the final decision would be a School one'.

6. A.O.B

6.1 Original Document Checking for Tier 4 Students

Discussed: Whether it is the School admissions team or the teaching and learning team which undertake the checking of original documentation for Tier 4 students was discussed.

- SALC – teaching and learning reception points
- SEED – admissions
- Law - admissions
- SoSS – teaching and learning (but with admissions office)
- AMBS – admissions

Noted: Admissions teams have the relevant understanding / experience of what is required. Although student responsibility lies with teaching and learning teams, this particular activity is mainly undertaken by admissions teams. Teaching and Learning staff in AMBS have previously tried to assist the admissions staff with this task, but have now reverted back to this activity being undertaken solely by admissions staff.

6.2 Toolkits on the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Webpages

Reported: Some of the Faculty pages were migrated to the new webpage template but the following pages were not:

- Study Skills <http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/studyskills/>
- Handbook Toolkit
http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/tandl/resources/handbook_toolkit/
- Induction Toolkit <http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/tandl/resources/induction/>

The plan is for the remaining pages to be migrated over to the new template during August / September 2016. However, having interrogated the analytics for these pages, there is minimal unique pageview activity in comparison with other areas of the Teaching and Learning site, and in view of this the Teaching and Learning Support Services would like to remove these resources, rather than have to maintain information which staff are not utilising.

The Library has mapped the information on the Faculty's Study Skills pages against their My Learning Essentials on-line skills programme (<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services-and-support/students/support-for-your-studies/my-learning-essentials/>). Most of the information on the Faculty pages is (or will be) covered in the My Learning Essentials.

Noted: If the study skills information is removed, then student handbooks etc. will need to reference the My Learning Essentials skills programme.

Action: **TLAN members** to consult with the appropriate staff in their Schools to determine whether the Faculty's study skills resource and the induction and handbook toolkits can be decommissioned and inform Lisa McAleese by 23 May 2016.

7. Key Information Set (KIS) HEFCE Audit 15/16 & KIS data collection 2017 entry and audit action plan.

Received: The above documents were received for information.

Secretary's Note: Any queries should be addressed to Nicola Lord (nicola.lord@manchester.ac.uk Tel: 53441)

8. Faculty Annual Report of Appeals and Complaints Cases 14/15

Received: The above report was received for information.

Discussed: The second column 'total number of students in School' in Table 5 appears to be incorrect.

Action: **Lisa McAleese** to discuss the above with Damien Tolan. *Secretary's Note: The information was taken from a Discoverer report, filtered to all taught students (UG/PGT) for the 14/15 academic year.*

Noted: A number of recommendations are contained in the report:

Appeals relating to conditions which could be classed as a Disability

Students with conditions which could be classed as a disability should always be referred to DASS for assessment. Schools should be aware that potentially long term conditions could amount to a disability. If students disclose such conditions to the School either on a one to one basis or via the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure, consideration should be given to referring the student to DASS for assessment. DASS are available to advise staff on the process for referral and what conditions might be considered a disability.

Discussed: Concern was expressed that the DASS is under-resourced, to be able to support, in a timely manner, the number of students who need to access / benefit from the service.

Retrospective Evidence

Continue to exercise caution with retrospective evidence. If the evidence provides a medical diagnosis of a condition which might have affected performance and there is also good reason for non-disclosure (for example the condition could not be known or shown before), then consideration should be given to providing a further attempt at affected assessments. This is especially important in cases where the evidence confirms that a condition might have prevented a student from engaging with the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure.

Noted: The report also contained a number of procedural notes:

Informal Stage

Remember there is scope for appeals to be resolved informally.

School decision to uphold Faculty level appeal

When Schools receive a Faculty level appeal for consideration and conclude that there are grounds to overturn a decision or implement an appropriate solution, Schools can respond back to the Faculty with a decision to uphold the appeal. The Faculty will then issue a Completion of Procedures letter outlining the decision of the School to the student.

Responding to Appeals

When a student submits a formal appeal to the Faculty, the School is given the opportunity to comment on the case and these comments are sent to the student. The student then has an opportunity to comment on the School's response before a final decision is made. Good practice has shown that responses which

address all of the points made in the appeal reduce the need for further enquiries / investigation and more timely decision making.

9. Briefing Note

Received: A briefing note for information and dissemination, as appropriate, containing information on:

- a new University focus group up to look at the challenges of supporting students with health and wellbeing issues and how this might inform a 'Fitness/ Support to Study Policy';
- information on the Faculty Student Welcome 2016 Group which will be meeting monthly to share ideas, approaches, practice and advice in the lead up to the 2016 Welcome Week and to consider changes for welcome week 2017;
- University Welcome (2016) Communications Group;
- information confirming that Schools can only recommend that a student takes a period of interruption, and not 'force' them to do so;
- reminder that the revised 'Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Dissertations for UG and PGT Provision' should be implemented for UG provision from September 2016 and that handbooks should be updated accordingly.

10. Date of Next Meeting

7 July 2016, 10.00-12.00, LG015 John Owens Building.

Summary Action List

Agenda Item	Action	By Whom
3	Discuss with Sian Nash whether the use of the program action of EXCL will also extend students' access to their IT accounts for 28 calendar days.	Lisa McAleese
3	Confirm with Emma Hilton Wood as to whether or not the proposal to extend by 2-3 days the May / June examination period will be considered by TLG.	Lisa McAleese
3	Speak to Emma Hilton Wood about if and when the Guidance on Ethical Approval in Taught Programmes will be issued.	Lisa McAleese
4b	Share the Faculty of Humanities Resit Operational Procedure document with relevant members of PSS staff in your School and send Lisa McAleese any comments by 23 May 2016.	TLAN members
4c	Report the issues re DASS registered students and examinations to Fiona Smyth to raise with Elaine Shillcock.	Lisa McAleese
4c	Discuss with the appropriate PSS staff in your School what the Discoverer report should contain and feedback to Lisa McAleese by 23 May 2016.	TLAN members
6.2	Consult with the appropriate staff in your Schools to determine whether the Faculty's study skills resource and the induction and handbook toolkits can be decommissioned and inform Lisa McAleese by 23 May 2016. Study Skills http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/studyskills/ Handbook Toolkit http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/tandl/resources/handbook_toolkit/ Induction Toolkit http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/tandl/resources/induction/	TLAN members
8	Clarify where the numbers the second column in Table 5 of the report on appeals and complaints were generated from and if they reflect the total number of students in a School.	Lisa McAleese