**Faculty of Humanities**

**Notes of the Teaching & Learning Administrators’ Network (TLAN) Meeting 02/10/14**

**Present:** Morag Guilfoyle, Louise Stewart & Elizabeth Nolan (School of Arts, Languages & Cultures - SALC); Janice Dodds, Catriona Fraser & James Walker (School of Environment, Education & Development – SEED); Melanie Crank, Madeleine Ryan & Emily Marner (Manchester Business School – MBS); Amanda Brereton & Bernadette O’Connor (School of Social Sciences - SOSS), and Lisa McAleese (Faculty, Chair).

**In attendance:** Cath Dyson (Change Management & Process Improvement (CMPI) Team) for items 1-4.

**1 Apologies**

**Received:** Apologies were received from: Lee Felvus, Fiona Fraser & Sara Latham (SALC); Suzi Edwards (SEED); Abigail Robinson (School of Law); Jackie Kan & Lynne McCormack (MBS) & Gemma Grimshaw (Student System Office – SSO).

**2. Previous Notes (3 July 2014)**

**Confirmed:** The notes from the meeting on 3 April 2014 were confirmed as an accurate record.

**3. Matters Arising**

**Item 3 Ref 4 New Regulations - Students Failing Carried Credits**

The Head of Academic Policy has confirmed that the practice of allowing those students who have failed a carried unit to complete the year of study in which the carried unit was failed (to allow them to get credits for an exit award) is appropriate.

**Item 3 Ref 8.4 Student Publication Website**

Geoff Carter has confirmed that members of the University’s Student Communications and Marketing Team have produced several new guidance documents for students on social media. These will be launched to students in a ‘you are what you tweet campaign’.

**Item 5 UG Regulations – Part Year / Full Year in Attendance**

The Head of Academic Policy has confirmed that students shouldn’t be permitted to repeat only part of the year in attendance. The only option open to the Board of Examiners would be to allow the student to repeat the level (i.e. the year) – Regulation H 35-39. The student would need to undertake the full 120 credits not just the credits which were failed.

**Item 7 Samples of work sent to External Examiners**

Lisa McAleese was actioned to find out from Geoff Carter whether the University’s Marking & Assessment Group (and sub-groups) will be looking at / developing guidance on what moderation is and how it should be carried out will and guidance on the use of marks ending in the number 9. Geoff’s understanding is that both these issues will be considered by the University sub-groups. Geoff has stated that the Vice President Teaching, Learning & Students wants the work to be done thoroughly so he would expect any recommendations (dependent of course on their nature) to be implemented from September 2015. Geoff stated that the ‘marks ending in 9’ issue has already caused a bit of controversy in the context of being difficult to advise on in a blanket, institutional context.

**Item 9 Timetabling**

Lisa McAleese discussed the issue of the appointment of GTAs impeding the timetabling activity. Emma Rose has confirmed that the Humanities Teaching Assistant Policy has been approved and as part of the implementation plan she is working with Martin Banks (Faculty HR) to draft the associated recruitment schedule (recruitment of TAs is likely to be May) with the GTA Hub (on-line resource) being available from October 2014.

The above updates were circulated in an email on 05/08/14.

**4. Process Improvement Opportunities**

**Reported:** Cath Dyson has joined the Change Management and Process Improvement (CMPI) Teamon a two year secondment. The CMPITeam work with staff, across the University, to look at how processes can be made more effective, efficient and more ‘customer’ focussed. The CMPI Team help staff to process map existing processes to understand the service user needs, then work with those staff to review the process, looking for ways to reduce or remove things that get in the way of effective delivery.

**Noted:** One of the processes which the CMPI Team is working with staff on is ethical review for PGR students and staff.

**Action:** **Lisa McAleese** to contact April Lockyer to ensure the ethical approval process is looked at for undergraduate and postgraduate taught students too.

***Secretary’s Note:*** *In June 2014 April Lockyer confirmed that the University’s review on research ethics is currently ‘looking at what Schools do and will consider whether Schools are looking at UG research or not and whether they should’. Subsequent to this Dr Fiona Smyth, Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning and Students) is working with Professor Clive Agnew, Vice-President Teaching, Learning and Students on the matter of students on taught programmes undertaking independent research work.*

**Discussed:** Potential processes which would benefit from process mapping / improvement were discussed.

 **Resit / Referral Processes**

**Discussed:** The resit / referral process is not suited to cross-Faculty activity especially where students are on joint honours programmes, or when units are taken by students outside of the admitting School and, as such can be reactive and disjointed. Each School has their own dates for the examination boards when resits / referrals are determined and then results posted on Campus Solutions (which has been helped by the set Faculty post dates for results on Campus Solutions). The timing of the administration of resits / referrals is at an extremely busy period when other priority activities are taking place e.g. pre-induction fieldwork, planning welcome week activities etc.

**Reported:** The University’s Marking and Assessment Working Group is looking at the experience of students undertaking resits and the timing of these.

**Action: Cath Dyson** to speak to the Head of CMPI and make suggestions for how to take this forward.

 **Timetabling**

**Discussed:** The use of two different systems for timetabling / room booking is problematic and is a duplication of effort. It would be helpful if the timetabling process was looked at and linked with the mapping which was previously undertaken around course unit selection.

**Noted:** A University group (led by Catherine Tansey) previously looked at the course unit selection process. Each Faculty mapped their processes and a number of short-term (quick wins), medium-term and long-term possibilities were identified.

**Action:** **Cath Dyson** to speak to the Head of CMPI and make suggestions for how to take this forward.

**Reported:** The Head of School Administration in the School of Law is looking at the Schools’ issues with timetabling and course unit selection processes.

**Action:** **Cath Dyson** to seek permission from Alison Wilson to share the School of Law document.

 **Policy Implementation**

**Discussed:** It was agreed that, it would be extremely helpful if the CMPI Team routinely supported Schools in implementing any new University Policies. The CMPI should be brought in at the start of University level policy implementation to ensure current processes are understood and Schools are able to develop co-ordinated / consistent cross-school processes.

**Action:** **Cath Dyson** to discuss the involvement of the CMPI Team in policy development with the Head of CMPI.

 ***Secretary’s Note:*** *Cath Dyson has spoken to Mike Smith (Head of CMPI) and it has been agreed that a meeting will be held to which Louise Stewart (for timetabling), Morag Guilfoyle (for resit process) and Sarah Featherstone (for attendance monitoring) will be invited to explore what is required in each of these three areas.*

 *Lisa McAleese, Cath Dyson and Mike Smith will also be meeting to discuss how to take forward providing support for policy implementation. It is envisaged that Humanities would lead the way in this co-ordinated approach with support from CMPI.*

**5. Attendance Monitoring**

**Discussed:** The Attendance and Wellbeing of Students Regulation and the Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance are currently being implemented in Schools. SEED will be finalising their identified trigger points which indicate when non-attendance has become a concern or where a pattern of absence begins to raise concerns with regards to a student’s wellbeing.

SALC already had triggers in place; where a student misses three sessions without permission, normally 25% or more absences at certain points through the semester (i.e. 75% attendance).

In SoSS (UG) attendance at tutorials, seminars and workshops is compulsory and is recorded in Campus Solutions (CS). Attendance at lectures is not compulsory for courses where there are separate tutorials, and is therefore not formally recorded.

In MBS, on one of the 1st year courses, the School is trying to instil in the students that attendance is required at everything.

*Secretary’s Note: For Undergraduate students in MBS the trigger point to indicate that a student should be contacted with regard to attendance is 3 consecutive absences; with the exception of BMAN10780 which has two consecutive absences as the trigger point. When a student is identified by the trigger point, the Assessment and Student Support Centre in Undergraduate Services (ASSC) contact the student to request an explanation and to offer support as appropriate. If there is no response within a week and no improvement in attendance the students’ Academic Advisor will contact them to request a meeting. If the student fails to respond to this request within 5 working days the Programme Director will issue a formal warning. Should the student fail to comply with the formal warning letter the Director of Undergraduate Studies can then issue a formal letter of refusal.*

The process for both recording and monitoring attendance is labour intensive and requires lots of manual intervention. Reports can be run off in either CS or Discover (the data is 24hrs behind i.e. not live), however the draft roster report has to be run first to check that all attendance rosters in CS have been completed.

It was queried whether or not the reports in CS could be developed to make them useful for staff. It was thought that, even if this was possible, it probably wouldn’t be seen as a solution as running reports in CS slows down the system, and as such is discouraged. It was reported that some parts of the datawarehouse do contain ‘live’ data and it would be extremely useful if the reports which Schools run were ‘live’ rather than have a 24hr delay.

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to discuss the issue of live data in the datawarehouse and ‘live’ reports from Discoverer.

The reliance on teaching staff to update the attendance / non-attendance of students in CS is problematic in some areas; this was highlighted as an area of concern during the recent UNIAC audit in the School of Law.

*Secretary’s Note: For 2014/15 the MBS process for recording attendance for undergraduate students is: identify 1st year courses to ensure the attendance of all 1st year students is recorded weekly. Seminars leaders are to return signed registers to the ASSC. The PSS staff to record the registers in Campus Solutions; with the exception of BMAN10780 which will be recorded on a local spreadsheet by PSS staff. The Student Support Assistant (in ASSC) identifies courses for which the registers have not been returned and contacts the seminar leader with a prompt to return the information. In the weeks when a seminar is not running, the ASSC will record student activity on Blackboard. The attendance for all 2nd and final year students’ in 2014-15 will be recorded via registers taken in seminars and returned to the ASSC for logging on a local spreadsheet.*

**Reported:** The Head of Academic Policy (Chair of the University’s Attendance & Wellbeing Task and Finish Group) has discussed with Simon Eley (IT Services) how the data we already capture on students (i.e. accessing Blackboard, using the Alan Gilbert Learning Commons, course work submission etc.) could potentially be used to assist Schools where student non-attendance has become an issue. It is possible that a dashboard could be developed which would use such data from the data warehouse, this dashboard could potentially also send an email alert to Professional Support Staff when a student’s activity flat-lines i.e. all activity ceases.

**Noted:** It was noted that the Halls of Residence should also be involved in the wellbeing of students.

It was also noted that the welfare of students is paramount.

 Attendance Monitoring is one of the areas which would benefit from the involvement of the CMPI Team.

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to inform Cath Dyson (see Secretary’s Note under item 4).

**6. Student Experience Events in Schools**

**Discussed:** SEED has money to support student experience events in Schools and wished to know whether other Schools had monies available and how they administered the funds. Previously money was available but not all programme directors made use of it, the School are considering whether or not it would be fairer to allocate the monies per student and devolve the monies to the programme directors to decide what it should be spent on.

SALC have a course unit enhancement fund (£50 per head per student per 3yrs) for each division. The Heads of Divisions and Programme Directors are informed of the funds availability and they inform the staff within their division. The monies are used to support such activities as field trips to museums and galleries and social events.

 Money is also available to support welcome week activities, graduation activities, careers fairs, society events and ‘NSS’ events i.e. social events per subject area. It is left up to the subject area as to whether they use the monies available or not.

 There is also a separate fund available to support peer mentor activities.

 2014/15 has seen the introduction of a new fund (£10k) for PGT students.

 The School do not have a formal application process or forms for requesting support from the funds.

 SoSS (UG & PGT) also have student experience funds which the Programme Directors are aware of for use for activities such as student balls, printing credit etc.

 MBS (PGT) provide money for one of their programme to attend a team building weekend at Brathay.

**7. Peer Review of Teaching**

**Discussed:** SEED wished to find out how other Schools had implemented / organised the pool of Peer Reviewers in response to the new Faculty Peer Review of Teaching requirements.

SALC reported that they already had a pool of staff who had undertaken peer review and this was easily mapped to the new requirements. Kim Hunter (HR) is responsible for this activity in the School.

 In SoSS the Head of School Administration has been dealing with this activity.

**8. Faculty Course Unit Database**

**Reported:** The Course Unit Information portal in My Manchester is now live (for current students) and the new Marketing Courses functionality, via the ‘Course details’ tab of the relevant course marketing area is also live (for prospective students).

**Discussed:** The Faculty’s Course Unit database had not been updated for use during course unit selection this year. However links to it were still published and this caused confusion for some students who wished to take units which weren’t available (and an external examiner).

 SALC had spoken to Phil Bradbury about getting their units removed from the Faculty’s Course Unit database and were informed that they were waiting for a new webpage to be approved which would replace the database. SALC then manually removed their units from the Faculty’s Course Unit Database.

**Reported:** SEED got their web team to remove any links to the Faculty’s Course Unit Database.

**Discussed:** Whilst the University’s new Marketing Courses functionality is welcomed, it is not suitable for 2+2 or Erasmus students, as the information published is populated via the Campus Solutions ‘publishing Plans’ functionality and is determined by the Academic Advisement rules for each programme. It is hoped that the Faculty’s new website will address these issues.

**Action: Liz Nolan** to speak to Pam Ransome about 2+2 and Erasmus students accessing course unit information and report back.

 ***Secretary’s Note:*** *Sian Nash asked Pam Ransome to contact Lisa McAleese regarding course unit information publishing functionality, in regards to Erasmus Students. Pam has stated that:*

*‘We have delivered two standard functions to enable access to course unit information:*

*1) A Course unit information portlet within My Manchester, available to anyone who has a central username and password. For students on programmes with Academic Advisement (AA) rules, they will firstly see a breakdown of course units offered, by level of study (not including ‘wildcard’ data). Additionally to that, there is a search function that is available to everyone within My Manchester (students, administrators and academics), which allows the search for any published course unit across the institution, by either the owning School, or Subject Area. This went live at the end of January.*

*2) We have also recently delivered new functionality within the externally facing marketing Courses webpages, which, where Publishing Plans data is available, also lists course units by level, where again Academic Advisement rules are maintained, or where the specific association of a course unit to Academic Programs is maintained within the* *Course Unit Information publishing record itself (again not including ‘wildcard’ data from the AA rules). This was released mid-September.*

*Whilst for incoming Erasmus students, who haven’t yet got a central username and password, this in essence means that they can only access CUI via the programmes marketing areas, it does still make data available openly online.*

*As we were only delivering these two standard functions, Schools and Faculties do also have the ability to repurpose the published data within their own websites. Phil Bradbury has been working on this for Humanities for the past few months, and from my last contact with him a number of weeks ago, I believe that he was waiting for the approval from Faculty to get this functionality released. His functionality will allow for the portrayal of course unit lists by Subject/School, on the Humanities websites.*

*We have also had a manual export process in place since late April, which allows administrators to manually extract data for their own purposes, be it to create programme handbooks or course unit guides, which then can be made available via any means they wish. This functionality allowed some areas to make PDF documents available online, providing course unit information in that manner, prior to the release of the marketing Courses functionality.*

*Whilst I appreciate that there has been a perceived drop in functionality for Humanities, as regards the loss of course unit lists on School websites which were previously driven by the Humanities databases, this should be addressed by Phil’s development, upon the point which it is signed off for implementation.’*

**Noted:**  There is confusion as to the purpose of the Faculty’s new website.

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to find out more information about the new webpage and potentially invite Phil Bradbury to the next TLAN.

**Agreed:** In light of the above it was agreed that the Faculty’s Course Unit Database should be deactivated with immediate effect.

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to arrange with Guy Percival for the Faculty’s Course Unit Database to be deactivated.

 **Lisa McAleese** to ensure that other areas of the institution are aware that the course unit database is to be deactivated.

 **Schools** to ensure that all reference to the Faculty’s Course Unit Database, in both printed and on-line material, is removed.

**9. School Administrator Access in Campus Solutions**

**Reported:** When SALC was established it had been agreed that (because of the scale of the School) rather than restricting this access to one or two administrators or adopting a centralised approach all the administrative team should have extended School Administrator access in Campus Solutions (which allows ‘correct history’ functionality).

The SSO have informed the School that it is not now appropriate for all administrators to have this access and that the agreement had only been for whilst the School was getting established.

 Given the size and scale of the School it is imperative that the administrators retain this access so that administrators have ‘correct history’ access / functionality.

 The SSO is keen to restrict this senior access to the correct history functionality as the ‘correct history’ functionality is not auditable.

 SEED have also had similar conversations with Wayne Eden about appropriate access rights.

 Whilst Schools appreciate that the issues around extended School Administrator rights is related to the security / integrity of the records in Campus Solutions it has to be appreciated that due to the size and administrative structures within Schools such access needs to be granted.

**Discussed:** The BAS access request form does not specifically identify the extended school administrator role; each area of required access has to be ticked. It would be helpful to have a list of each role with what access this does and does not permit.

Some Schools term activate students to allow them to select their course units and if they don’t satisfy the progression requirements have to roll the records back. It would be helpful (to ensure the integrity of the records correct history) if there was the functionality to term activate students for course unit selection only and not for progression to the next year.

A Tier 4 student was excluded and on appeal has been readmitted; the correct history of the record was not maintained.

SoSS only exclude students after any appeal has been completed otherwise the student does not have access to email etc.

It would be useful for there to be clear guidance surrounding exam decisions e.g. exclusion and if a student submits an appeal what should happen to the student’s record at what stage(for both Tier 4 students and non-Tier 4 students).

**Action: Morag Guilfoyle** to forward the issues that SALC has in relation to correct history access to Lisa McAleese.

 **Melanie Crank** to raise the issue of administrator access in Campus Solutions at the Student Records sub-group of the Student Administration Management Group.

 **Lisa McAleese** to raise the issue of guidance around exam decisions e.g. exclusion and if a student submits an appeal what should happen to the student’s record at what stage(for both Tier 4 students and non-Tier 4 students).

**10. Student Induction Framework**

**Received:** Enabling Student Success - The Manchester Induction Framework.

**Reported:** Lisa McAleese and Philippa Wilson are representing the Faculty on the University’sStudent Induction sub-group of the Teaching and Learning managers’ Group. Members of this group have been asked to consult on how the Institutional Framework is being used to support student induction in Schools and how as a Faculty we can help support the process.

**Discussed:** All Schools were consulted during the development of The Manchester Induction Framework.

**Noted:** SALC’s School Project Manager and Student Experience Lead had undertaken a mapping exercise against the School’s activities and the Manchester Induction Framework. The analysis revealed that the School sticks remarkably close to the Framework and has facilitated reflection on the School’s induction processes and highlighted areas for improvement next year.

SALC have a rolling series of library tours for their students which are booked via the eventbright system; the pilot was facilitated by Paul Tate (University of Manchester Library). One downside is that each tour is restricted to a capacity of 40 students.

 SALC induct their returning students in the May of the previous year e.g. course unit selection meetings.

 2+2 students in SALC have special sessions on English language, essay writing, referencing reports etc. which is organised by John Morley from the Language Centre.

 SALC used the Interns to help support the students during course unit selection.

Philippa Wilson will be undertaking a focus group with SoSS students to discuss induction and to identify if there is anything missing.

 MBS (UG) hold a late arrival hour for students who arrive in Manchester after Welcome Week. In the pre-arrival email which is sent to new students they are asked to inform the School if they will be arriving in Manchester late. A spreadsheet of the late arrivals is kept and they are then given a one hour induction by two members of the PSS staff.

 SoSS post information on their website for late arrivals and then have a face to face meeting with them. Information on academic malpractice is embedded within the Blackboard site so students can access this at any point.

 The Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI), based in SALC, would like to give students a copy of the Turnitin originality report for their first formative assessment to show how potential plagiarism is detected and if their assessment is plagiarised. SEED got permission a few years ago, from the Vice President Teaching, Learning & Students, to undertake such an activity.

**Noted:** The University’s Guidance states that students cannot routinely submit their own work to Turnitin. However an academic member of staff can submit students’ work in order to demonstrate to students how work can be checked for originality (pg. 51 Assessment Framework).

 As long as it is a member of staff who is generating the originality report (and not the student) then HCRI can undertake this development activity.

 It was noted that different countries have different definitions, for example on collusion, which can lead to students falling foul of our regulations.

**Agreed:** It would be beneficial if the University developed an on-line academic malpractice unit which all students had to undertake.

**Noted:** A recommendation from a university working group which looked at academic malpractice was that an on-line course be developed which could be adapted for discipline specific use.

***Secretary’s Note:*** *The recommendation in the University’s Report on the Review of Arrangements for University Appeals, Complaints and Student Discipline Cases (June 2013) was ‘Building on existing examples and the guidance presently available, develop an online good academic practice course, to be tailored for disciplines and implemented institution wide as part of the MLE programme for September 2012-13. This will improve consistency of approach by enabling students across all disciplines to access Turnitin on one occasion as a formative learning opportunity.’*

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to investigate whether or not this recommendation is being taken forward.

**Reported:** It was noted that some students (SoSS and MBS PGT) don’t engage with the School activities during welcome week.

**Discussed:** Schools have been undertaking welcome week and induction activities for a long time and do not need Faculty support. Some of the preparation for welcome week can be resource intensive; Schools have utilised the Employability Interns (although this was time-consuming showing them what needed to be done) as well as Peer Mentors and Pass Leaders. SoSS pay a temp to put together the information packs which are distributed by the Peer Mentors. Whilst it was too late for the Interns to help with the preparation for Welcome Week this year, their insights and suggestions, from a students’ perspective, have been valuable and can be incorporated into subsequent welcome weeks / documentation.

**Agreed:** It would be helpful for the Faculty to collate the good practice / different activities within Schools and circulate this.

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to contact Schools for their welcome week and induction activities / practice.

**Noted:** Schools have been asked by both Anne Milligan (Careers) and Sarah Helsby (Faculty) for reports on the effectiveness of the Student Experience Interns.The request from Sarah Helsby is because the Dean’s Advisory Group has been tasked with deciding whether or not to agree to fund the scheme to operate again, and the report from Anne will not be available in time.

 ***Secretary’s Note:*** *Philippa Wilson has reported that SoSS is in-line with the Framework for new students however they aren’t consistent in terms of welcoming back second and third year undergraduate students (some programmes have welcome back meetings but others don’t). This is something that the School is hoping to address before next year, but it is going to be difficult simply in terms of logistics e.g. for a programme the size of BA Econ.*

**11. Dormant Student Records**

**Reported:** Lisa McAleese has been asked to oversee the Faculty exercise of the removal of dormant student records in Campus Solutions, to ensure that they are reduced to as near zero as possible.

**Discussed:** Schools receive these reports each month and work through the dormant records, however there is no way to indicate on the report that some of the records are dormant for a specific reason, a feedback mechanism is required. MBSWW managed to get a number of their dormant records removed from the list as they weren’t HESA reportable. SoSS (PGT) has also had programmes removed from the list, following a meeting with Wayne Eden.

**Noted:** The University Language Centre has met with Sian Nash to discuss their dormant records (2291 at 04/08/14).

The SSO can see whether or not the data reports have been run.

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to speak to Helen Derbyshire to ensure that action is being taken for the dormant records for Informatics.

 **Lisa McAleese** to report to the SSO that it would be helpful for there to be a feedback mechanism on the reports.

**12. Additional Members**

**Reported:** It would be beneficial for the Faculty’s Teaching and Learning Officers to be reinstated as members of this Network.

**Agreed:** The group agreed to reinstate the Faculty’s Teaching and Learning Officers.

**Reported:** A request has been received from Laura Watson and Gail Bradbury, who administer the Manchester Leadership Programme (MLP), to join TLAN. MLP was previously affiliated with the Faculty of Humanities (and Gail was previously a member) but now comes under the remit of University College.

**Agreed:** The group agreed to Laura and Gail becoming members of TLAN; Chatham House rules must be observed.

**Reported:** A request has been received from Joanne Davidson, HERA Role Analyst (in HR) to sit in on our TLAN meetings. She is looking to move from HR to the area of teaching and learning and wants to get a better understanding of the issues affecting this area of activity; she is also looking for any shadowing opportunities. She is also going to approach the Director of Teaching and Learning Support to see if there are any opportunities for her at the central level.

**Agreed:** Joanne can be included as an invited member; Chatham House rules must be observed.

**Action: Lisa McAleese** to inform the above parties, and update the distribution list.

**13. External Examiner Access to Blackboard**

**Noted:** This agenda item wasn’t discussed and will be carried forward to the next meeting.

**14. A.O.B**

**14.1 External Examiner Appointments**

**Reported:** Changes are being made to the way in which External Examiner appointments and extensions will be processed. This is as a result of Home Office requirements that have led the University to categorise External Examiners as casual members of staff. This new categorisation means that External Examiners must now meet UK Immigration Legislation requirements, and in order to demonstrate this, the Teaching & Learning Support Office (TLSO) and HR have been required to update systems, processes and documentation accordingly.As a result the processing of new nominations and extensions to existing terms of office has been postponed until the new systems are in place.

**Noted:** Nominated External Examiners are not keen to undertake any duties until they have received their letter of appointment from the University.

**Action:** **Lisa McAleese** to get an update from the TLSO on when the new nominations will be processed.

***Secretary’s Note:*** *The TLSO sent the following email (on 06/10/14) to Schools about the revised External Examiner nomination / appointment process.*

*‘This email provides an update on revisions to the External Examiner nomination and appointment processes, and confirms that nominations for new External Examiner posts are now being processed. The following changes are being implemented:*

*1. External Examiners for taught provision at UK institutions must now be engaged as casual members of staff before they can commence work. All new appointments are being processed to reflect this, and existing External Examiners will be moved to the new system (current EEs can continue to work but will not be reimbursed until they are registered as casual staff).*

*2. The old University database has been replaced with a customised version of the institutional Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. This change means that the ‘read only’ version of the External Examiner database will no longer be available. Schools and Faculties will be able to access External Examiner information from the new External Examiners area in SharePoint.*

*3. As LiveLink has now been decommissioned, all supporting documentation (e.g. reports and forms) has been moved to SharePoint. We are in the process of setting up the External Examiners area in SharePoint and will make it available to Schools/Faculties as soon as possible.*

*4. Systems, processes and documentation are being revised to reflect the above changes. The Guidance on External Examiner Procedures will be updated to reflect these changes. One of the changes relates to the usual period of appointment length for External Examiners. Up to now, this has been for “either three or four years” but Chapter B7 of the QAA’s UK Quality Code for Higher Education states: “The duration of an external examiner's appointment will normally be for four years, with an exceptional extension of one year to ensure continuity.” For all new nomination requests sent to TLSO since June, therefore, these are now being processed and are being set up for a period of four years, even if the School has stated three years on the nomination form. If there are any issues with this in relation to specific cases, please let us know.*

*Work is not yet complete on some of the activities above, but we are now in a position to process External Examiner nominations again. A revised form has been introduced for this purpose and is available at (http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=7325). Schools should use the new form for all new nominations, although we will also accept submissions on the old form that have been completed and signed off before today’s date. We will be contacting current External Examiners shortly to advise them on what they need to do to move to casual staff status. Examiners whose period of appointment have been extended will have their terms and conditions moved over to the new system as part of the extension process.’’*

*The main changes are that:*

*1. As casual members of staff, new Examiners are now required to provide proof of right to work in the European Economic Area (EEA) before they can be appointed or start work. It is therefore essential that the nomination process is completed by Schools in all cases. The University is acting illegally if it permits a person who has been identified as a new External Examiner to begin work in the EEA before they have been formally appointed. In addition, it will not be possible to process payment of their fees or expenses until their status has been confirmed.*

*2. External Examiners will be auto-enrolled into a government pension scheme if they earn over £833 in any single month in the 2014/15 tax year. This will not affect most of our Examiners, but the Pensions team will be able to advise on any queries.*

*3. External Examiners will be asked to confirm that they will not use any material to which they have been granted access as part of their role for any purpose other than to carry out their duties as External Examiner, and to destroy or return any copies after use.*

*Further updates will be issued as work in this area continues’.*

*The revised ‘Offer of Engagement Letter’ sent to External Examiners following approval of their nomination details the steps they must take to confirm that they have the right to work in the European Economic Area – basically they have to provide a colour scan of their passport cover and the page which carries their photograph and personal details. The University’s preference is that they should come to Manchester and bring their passport or other eligible evidence so that it can be scanned while they are here and their identity confirmed in person before they start work. If they are unable to provide this confirmation before they start work they must arrange for their home institution (or other employer) to do this on their behalf, and they should return a statement from them that confirms their right to work in the EAA, and copies of relevant supporting evidence, at the same time that they return the other documentation requested.’*

**Date of Next Meeting: 20 November 2014 (NB. this may be moved to 27 November 2014).**

**Summary Action List**

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| **Agenda Item** | **Action** | **By Whom** |
| 4 | Contact April Lockyer to ensure the ethical approval process is looked at for undergraduate and postgraduate taught students too. | Lisa McAleese |
| 4 | Speak to the Head of CMPI and make suggestions for how to take process reviews for resit / referral process; timetabling; policy implementation. | Cath Dyson |
| 4 | Seek permission to circulate Alison Wilson’s paper on the School of Law’s issues with timetabling and course unit selection processes. | Cath Dyson |
| 5 | Discuss the issue of live data in the datawarehouse and ‘live’ reports from Discoverer. | Lisa McAleese |
| 5 | Inform Cath Dyson that Attendance Monitoring is one of the areas which would benefit from the involvement of the CMPI Team. | Lisa McAleese |
| 8 | Speak to Pam Ransome about 2+2 and Erasmus students accessing course unit information and report back. | Liz Nolan |
| 8 | Find out more information about the new Faculty webpage and potentially invite Phil Bradbury to the next TLAN. | Lisa McAleese |
| 8 | Arrange with Guy Percival for the Faculty’s Course Unit Database to be deactivated. | Lisa McAleese |
| 8 | Ensure that other areas of the institution are aware that the Faculty’s course unit database is to be deactivated. | Lisa McAleese |
| 8 | Ensure that all reference to the Faculty’s Course Unit Database, in both printed and on-line material, is removed. | Schools |
| 9 | Forward the issues that SALC has in relation to correct history access to Lisa McAleese. | Morag Guilfoyle |
| 9 | Raise the issue of administrator access in Campus Solutions at the Student Records sub-group of the Student Administration Management Group. | Melanie Crank |
| 9 | Raise the issue of guidance around exam decisions e.g. exclusion and if a student submits an appeal what should happen to the student’s record at what stage (for both Tier 4 students and non-Tier 4 students). | Lisa McAleese |
| 10 | Investigate whether or not the recommendation from the review of Appeals, Complaints and Discipline to develop an on-line good academic practice course is being taken forward.  | Lisa McAleese |
| 10 | Contact Schools for their welcome week and induction activities / practice and identify good practice for circulation to Schools. | Lisa McAleese |
| 11 | Speak to Helen Derbyshire to ensure that action is being taken for the dormant records for Informatics. | Lisa McAleese |
| 11 | Report to the SSO that it would be helpful for there to be a feedback mechanism on the dormant records reports.  | Lisa McAleese |
| 12 | Inform those staff who have requested TLAN membership and update distribution list. | Lisa McAleese |
| 14.1 | Get an update from the TLSO on when the new External Examiner nominations will be processed. | Lisa McAleese |