

Faculty of Humanities

Unconfirmed Notes of the Teaching & Learning Administrators' Network (TLAN) Meeting 2 February 2017

Present: Lee Felvus & Morag Guilfoyle (SALC); Janice Dodds & Kate Robinson (SEED); Madeleine Ryan (AMBS) and Lisa McAleese (Chair).

1. Apologies

Noted: Apologies were received from: Sara Latham (SALC); Gail Divall (SEED); Abi Robinson (SoL); Amanda Brereton, Amanda Bridgeman & Bernadette O'Connor (SoSS); Jackie Kan, Emily Marner & Chris McGlinchey (AMBS); Joanne Davidson (HR); Gail Bradbury (MLP); Nicola Lord, Emma Sanders & Rachel Walton (Faculty).

2. Previous Notes

Confirmed: The notes from the meeting on 15 December 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

Ref. 4 Moderation

Katrina Clark is working on the Blackboard space document (which will be disseminated as soon as it is available) and will speak with the Geography Exams Officer to see if they would be willing to meet with exams officers from other Schools to discuss moderation.

Ref 5.1 Humanities Computer Cluster use for On-line Examinations

In reference to the fact that Jill Antonie can't timetable the on-line examinations which are scheduled to take place in the Humanities Computer Clusters, Richard Cockcroft has confirmed that all the Humanities teaching clusters are on the self-service room booking system so there shouldn't have been any difficulties. (<https://timetabling.manchester.ac.uk/WRB/Clusters1617/book.aspx>).

Discussed: The issue is that the Humanities computer clusters are not available in Syllabus+ (they are greyed out). As a work around, so that the computer cluster rooms appear in the students' exam timetable, Jill books a random room via Syllabus+ and informs the School's Learning Technologist that this has been done. The Learning Technologist books the Humanities computer cluster through self-service and informs Jill that it has been booked. Jill then cancels the room booked in Syllabus+. This is a laborious work-around and could potentially result in the computer cluster being booked out by another person via self-service and the examination then having to be re-scheduled. It was suggested that for the examination period the booking of the Humanities computer clusters is not available via the self-service and only be made available via Syllabus+.

Action: Lisa McAleese to follow this up with Richard Cockcroft.

5.2 Graduation Issues

Secretary's Note: Lisa McAleese collated the graduation issues reported at the 15/12/16 TLAN meeting along with those forwarded from the other faculties and sent them to Sarah Beer. Sarah is working through the issues with the graduation team and when she has some proposals for how the issues highlighted will be addressed she will prepare a response. Thereafter she thinks it would be good to keep this as an active item through the Student Administration Management Group (SAMG).

4. Issues with the Exam period and problems arising this January

Discussed: There was an increase in the number of complaints about the invigilators in week one; these issues appear to have been resolved subsequently.

Schools have received the DASS registered students' scripts very late.

Attendance sheets have been missed out of the envelopes.

There have been missing / late invigilator reports (one was for an examination with c.800+ students).

The scripts for students suspected of academic malpractice have been withheld. Whilst the students have been informed of the hearing date, the Schools haven't. Members would like to know the process for withholding scripts in these cases.

Action: Lisa McAleese to ask Rita Kenwright for the process.

In one examination there was an issue with a paper. The invigilator contacted the exams office who contacted the academic, but then told the academic that it wasn't their role to go and inform the invigilator. The academic reported this to the School PSS who sent staff to the three separate examination rooms to inform the invigilators, only to find the exams office had already done so. Members would like to see the published process for when there is an issue with an examination script.

Action: Lisa McAleese to ask Rita Kenwright for the process.

In one examination there was confusion about where to write the answer and the invigilator didn't ring up to check. Some students indicated the answer on the question book which wasn't returned with the scripts and can't now be located.

5. Worsening timing constraints with respect to formal examination periods

Received: A paper from the Director of Student Admissions and Administration providing information relating to ongoing timing constraints in the semester I examination period.

Discussed: The SALC Assessment Manager had investigated whether there had been a significant increase in the number of examinations being conducted, which revealed that over a five-year period the number had increased from 335 – 345 examinations.

The data was then further interrogated for the 13/14 period and it was found that 189 of the 300+ exams were for students registered with Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) who had examination adjustments in their support plans; this meant that separate rooms had to be found for these students so that their needs could be accommodated e.g. extra time, rest breaks, access to computers etc. Other members also reported that there are now a greater number of students registered with DASS who have support plans in place which mean that they had to be accommodated in separate examination rooms (sometimes 1 student in a room, depending on the nature of their needs).

Currently the assessment method has to be the same for DASS registered students as for those students not registered with DASS and in order to alleviate the pressure on rooms due to their differing needs it was discussed whether potentially an alternative assessment could be set for DASS registered students. It was acknowledged that this would require a University decision being taken, following advice about the relevant legislation.

The Campus Master Plan significantly reduces the availability of rooms for examinations. It was reported that Sackville Street is being used less as a venue. It was reported that for this examination period the exams team only found out that the Students' Union (SU) was out of commission at a very late date. SALC have previously held their music examinations in the SU however this round of exams had to be undertaken in five separate rooms which then involved 10 invigilators and 5 academics (previously 2 invigilators and 1 academic) which therefore meant an increase in costs to run these examinations.

All Schools had supported the request for staff to be trained and act as invigilators.

Given that we have restricted capacity on campus (as there are lots of buildings out of commission and the needs of DASS students appears to be putting a strain on the number of available rooms) it was queried whether or not the University was investigating using external venues to hold the examinations (as is the practice in other institutions); this is something that the President had mentioned at one of her meetings with one of the Schools. Given our links, the Royal Northern College of Music was suggested as a potential venue.

There was also PSS support for extending the exam period to a week earlier in semester 1.

Some External Examiners have stated that there should be more examinations.

The PSS felt that there would be resistance from academic staff to move away / reduce examinations as the method of assessment.

The paper is also being considered at the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee (HTLC) meeting on 15 February 2017.

Action: Lisa McAleese to feed the above discussion into the HTLC discussion.

6. e-submission of dissertations

Discussed: The Faculty's Policy for 'online submission, plagiarism detection, marking and on-line feedback' stipulates that summative assignments are submitted on-line via Blackboard, feedback is delivered on-line via Blackboard and that marking can either be on or off-line (the recommended method is on-line using the Grademark tool in Turnitin).

For a variety of reasons, some discipline areas still also require a hard copy of dissertations to be submitted. Where this is the case, in order to be compliant with the no additional fees policy, Schools issue print credit to their students. This can be problematic as not all undergraduate students are required / choose to do a dissertation and students issued with print credits at the beginning of the semester tend to have used them by the dissertation submission deadline. SALC piloted a scheme last year whereby the PSS download all the files and send them to County print for printing; this was more cost effective than issuing print credits (c. £1,000-1,500). The pilot will be extended across all areas this academic year.

In SEED the academic staff view the dissertations on-line; if they want a printed copy they bear the cost.

There is concern that the opportunity to use the physical dissertation hand in as a celebration has been lost with on-line submission.

7. A.O.B

7.1 Welcome Week 2017

Discussed: The first meeting of the University's Student Welcome 2017 Management Group (SW17) was held mid-January 2017 to start the preparations for Welcome Week 2017.

School Welcome Week Leads have been asked:

- whether or not they are interested in holding a Unismart presentation, or if they have already booked one.
- to indicate whether or not they would like to use the Whitworth Hall for School events and if so to provide an indication of what events they would like to run and the preferred date/time.

Action: Lisa McAleese to facilitate the Faculty's SW17 Group (first meeting February/mid-March 2017).

7.2 Student Administration Network (SAN)

Reported: As part of an initiative to re-invigorate dialogue and engagement with PSS colleagues working in student administration the Directorate for the Student Experience (DSE) are launching a Student Administration Network (SAN). The SAN will not only provide a forum for discussion around common themes and issues but will also supplement and inform the work of the SAMG and its sub-groups.

The inaugural meeting of the SAN will be on Thursday 16 March 2017, 1.30pm to 4.30pm in the Alan Turing Building, and will focus on the student record and specifically an exploration of the issues associated with student registration and the management of interruptions.

The target audience for the SAN is School and Faculty-based teaching and learning managers and nominated members of their respective teams (as well as colleagues responsible for graduate education, colleagues in the Student Admissions and Administration Division, the TLSO and in the International Programmes Office and members of SAMG and its sub-groups). As guidance, the DSE anticipate a School sending 1-4 colleagues depending on the size of the School and that these colleagues would feedback to appropriate colleagues.

Given the potentially broad areas that the SAN may cover (registration to graduation) advance notice of the broad agenda for each session will be given so that managers are able to nominate those colleagues for whom the session would be most appropriate.

HOSAs have received this communication and will approach the relevant PSS staff in their School.

7.3 Students' Union Boycott of the NSS

Discussed: As a result of the University's submission to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) the University of Manchester Students' Union (UoMSU) have launched a campaign to boycott the completion by students of the National Student Survey (NSS), which is one of the metrics being used in the TEF.

Alongside the campaign against the NSS, UoMSU have released their own survey, the Manchester Student Survey containing identical questions to those in the NSS with three additional ones. The UoMSU state that their issuing of their survey will still allow accurate comparisons to be made with previous years.

Last week, the National Union of Students (NUS) website indicated that 23 institution's students' unions had committed to actively supporting the boycott. The University and College Union (UCU) are giving their full support to the NUS's campaign; it is not known what the potential impact of this will be.

Reported: The President and the Vice President Teaching, Learning & Students had met to discuss the boycott and the Faculty was awaiting information before issuing any guidance to staff; it is likely that the message will be 'carry on as normal'. In the meantime if students approach PSS staff it was discussed that it would be best to inform the student that it is up to them to decide whether or not to boycott the national survey and if they requested more information on the use of the NSS to state that the survey results allow us to improve areas where this is needed, do more of what students value and allow perspective students to make decisions about coming to Manchester.

Reported: The current absence of an Institutional steer on the situation has proved problematic for one area; a student representative asked to do a lecture shout-out (in a final year compulsory lecture) and promoted the NSS boycott. This lecture was immediately followed by a scheduled meeting of those

students with the teaching and learning director who was promoting completion of the NSS, which raised a lot of questions.

Secretary's Note: A communication from the Vice President Teaching, Learning & Students was circulated to Heads of School on 03/02/17. The key message is for academic staff, who have contact with final year students, to take the opportunity to speak with them about the importance of completing this year's survey.

8. Aide-mémoire for the implementation of the agreed outputs from the Faculty's Teaching and Learning away day, held on 30 June 2016.

Noted: The following activities are to be implemented by the start of the 2017/18 academic year at the latest:

Moderation Procedure:

- Internal Moderators identified early in the academic year to ensure that the moderation process begins with a review of the assessment task(s).
- The internal Examiner & internal moderator working in partnership to 'moderate' the marking of taught units.
- The internal moderator providing a further check to ensure marking is appropriate and in line with the agreed School / discipline 'norms' referring to an agreed sample of assessed work (20% of the cohort, no more than 50 items of assessed work).
- Completion of an Internal Examiner's and Internal Moderator's form (either using the Faculty's template or a School template).
- Examination Boards reviewing performance across course units (historically and across that academic year).
- Schools to discuss and agree the [expected mark range](#), at either discipline or School level (as detailed in the Faculty's Assessment Procedure and Practice document).
- The amount of assessment tasks, for students on taught programmes, must be compliant with the [Faculty's Maximum Summative Assessment Load](#) (as detailed in the Faculty's Assessment Procedure and Practice document).
- Consideration of the introduction of the Faculty's [Reduced Scale Step Marking](#).
- Schools to have adopted the spirit of the University's Guidance and principles on [grade descriptors](#) and have developed / refined and implemented discipline grade descriptors.
- Implementation of the Faculty's minimum [PGT Contact Hours Framework](#).

9. Faculty of Science & Engineering (FSE) MSc Dissertation Online Submission Checklist and associated instructions for Blackboard

Received: The FSE MSc Dissertation on-line submission checklist and associated instructions were received (sharing of practice).

Secretary's Note: FSE developed the online checklist (accessible via Blackboard) which students have to complete in order to confirm that the presentation of their dissertation adheres to the University's Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Dissertations for UG and PGT Provision.

10. Notes of Central Committees

Received: The notes of the Teaching and Learning Management Group (TLMG) meeting of 16 January 2016.

Secretary's Note: TLMG Notes can be found on the Teaching and Learning Support Office's [website](#).

10. Briefing Note

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

- Appointment of Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Students)
- Faculty Teaching Quality Task and Finish Group
- Faculty Academic Advising Task and Finish Group
- Faculty Placement Task and Finish Group (*Secretary's Note: should state School membership tbc*)
- Sustainability Challenge 2017

11. Date of Next Meeting

23 March 2017, 10.00-12.00, Ken Kitchen Committee Room (John Owens Building).

Summary of Actions

Agendum	Action	Who
3 ref 4	Provide Lisa McAleese with a copy of the Blackboard space document for academics, for circulation to TLAN.	Katrina Clark
3 ref 4	Let Lisa McAleese know if the Geography Exams Officer would be willing to meet with other School's officers re moderation.	Katrina Clark
3 ref 5.1	Discuss with Richard Cockcroft whether the self-service for the Humanities computer cluster can be switched from self-service to Syllabus + for the 2 week examination period.	Lisa McAleese
4	Ask Rita Kenwright for the process when a script is withheld due to suspected academic malpractice, for circulation to TLAN.	Lisa McAleese
4	Ask Rita Kenwright for the published process for when there is an issue with an examination script, for circulation to TLAN.	Lisa McAleese
5	Feed the discussion worsening timing constraints with respect to formal examination periods into the 15/02/17 HTLC discussion.	Lisa McAleese
7.1	Facilitate the Faculty's SW17 Group (first meeting February/mid-March 2017).	Lisa McAleese