Faculty of Humanities

Unconfirmed Notes of the Teaching & Learning Administrators' Network (TLAN) meeting 03/04/14

Present: Fiona Fraser & Elizabeth Nolan (School of Arts, Languages & Cultures - SALC); Janice Dodds (School of Environment, Education & Development – SEED); Abigail Robinson (School of Law); Melanie Crank & Madeleine Ryan (Manchester Business School - MBS), Amanda Brereton & Bernadette O'Connor (School of Social Sciences - SOSS), Gemma Grimshaw (Student System Office – SSO) and Lisa McAleese (Faculty, Chair).

1.   Apologies

Apologies were received from James Walker (SEED) and Sharon Wilding (MBS).

2.   Previous Notes (6 February 2014)

Confirmed: The notes from the meeting on 6 February 2014 were confirmed as an accurate record.

3.   Matters Arising

3.1 Ref 06/02/14/7 Policy on additional costs.

Reported: The policy on additional costs incurred by students on undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes states (Point 3.4): *'Any compulsory printing should be avoided but if necessary made explicit, e.g. printing of a dissertation. Other printing is at the discretion of the student.'*

It is not clear if this means that if the School makes it explicit that students are required to print a copy of the dissertation then the student incurs the cost or the School has to facilitate the printing and incur the cost.

Either way this appears to be at odds with the Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Masters' Dissertations (Aug 2010), as the student is required to bind a copy of the dissertation:
Point 2.2 states: *'Two identical paper copies must be submitted….'*
Point 2.3 states: *'Dissertations can be soft bound but students can produce hard bound versions for their own purposes if they prefer'.*
Point 5.1 states: *'The two approved binding options are listed below. - Soft-Binding or Standard hard-binding'.*

Pam Vallely was going to be taking a lead on reviewing the existing guidance on the presentation of PGT dissertations, as part of a pilot being run in MHS regarding online submission of dissertations.

Lisa McAleese asked Miriam Graham for clarity on where the review of the guidance was at; she has responded to say there have been further delays with Pam looking into reviewing the guidance and Emma Hilton-Wood was going to be discussing this with Louise Walmsley. Meanwhile, Miriam has produced a paper for the Teaching & Learning Group meeting (07/04/14) setting out some of the feedback and comments/queries that have been raised about the Additional Costs Policy so far. Miriam will also include the issues highlighted about differences/anomalies between the Additional Costs policy and the Presentation of PGT Dissertations guidance in terms of paying for paper copies / bound

copies of dissertations, etc. and querying whether paper/bound copies are still a requirement.

Discussed: The University of Manchester eLearning Strategy states that 'Over the course of the next five years, the University will move towards the submission and marking of all substantial written course material through the VLE '. The Faculty's Policy for online submission, plagiarism detection, marking and online feedback has a three-year timeline for moving towards full online assignment submission and feedback (i.e. by session 2015/2016). The Faculty's recommended method of marking online is by the use of the GradeMark tool in Turnitin (Tii). It is, however, appropriate for off-line marking to be undertaken, or other forms of online marking that does not use Tii, providing that the feedback is via Blackboard and ideally via Tii's feedback mechanism.

Agreed: It was agreed that the requirement for a hard / soft bound copy is no longer required. Historically this was a requirement as the dissertations were kept in the Library. It was agreed that if a School required a hard copy submission of the dissertation then another form of binding e.g. channel binding / spiral binding would be sufficient for the purposes of marking and that Schools should not require their students to conform with the requirement for a hard / soft bound copy (as stated in the Presentation of PGT Dissertations guidance). If a student wishes to hard / soft bind their dissertation then that is their choice.

Action: **TLAN members** to ensure that all staff and PGT students are informed (via the appropriate means) that where a hard copy of the PGT dissertation is required for marking purposes then channel binding / spiral binding is acceptable.

Lisa McAleese to inform Schools of the outcome of the discussions around

3.2 Ref 06/02/14/9.1 Mitigating Circumstances

Reported: At the last meeting it was suggested that the Counselling Service are reviewing / will be reviewing the number of times a student has to have been seen by them before they will issue a letter of support.

Lisa McAleese spoke to Sarah Littlejohn who has confirmed that the Counselling Service do not have a set number of times a student has to be seen here in order to be issued with a supporting letter. She stated that there are too many exceptions to any rule that they could apply. They have standardised their mitigating circumstances support letter – and now tend to send out a form that the counsellor completes. This was to address the issue of the very large numbers of requests that they received and to offer more consistency. Students request supporting letters for a wide range of reasons, if a student has not been seen at the Counselling Service before and they request a letter they can usually only provide a brief summary of the presenting difficulties and likely impact. If a student has been working with a counsellor for a number of sessions then they can provide stronger or more robust supporting information.

If a student requests a supporting letter and the Counselling Service feel unable to offer one, then the student can ask for a letter simply confirming that they attended the service on specific date/s, but no detail of the counsellor assessment is given.

The issue of supporting letters does present difficulties for the Counselling Service; they place a significant demand on them at very busy times of the year. The Counselling Service

see the necessity of students evidencing their request for mitigation but at times the student feels they have been "sent" to them with this sole purpose.

Noted: Lisa McAleese will be meeting with Sarah Littlejohn to discuss how the system works currently and if we can develop a shared understanding of any useful tweaks to it.

Action: **Lisa McAleese** to report above discussion back to TLAN members.

4.   **New Regulations – students failing carried credits**

Reported: The 2012 Undergraduate Degree Regulations do not permit those students who have failed credit for the Honours Degree to progress on the Ordinary Degree (as was practice in the previous regulations). Ordinary degrees are intended as exit awards only. In accordance with the 2012 Undergraduate Degree Regulations students who exit prior to completion of the programme on which they registered will receive an exit award if they have achieved the appropriate amount of credit in accordance with that award. Where a student has failed a carried unit they will not, at the point of failure of the carried unit, have gained enough credit for an exit award.

SoSS currently permit students in this situation to complete their 2nd year of studies (and permit resits as per the regulations for the 2nd year units) in order that the student can then exit at the end of the 2nd year with an exit ward (i.e. CertHE). Where a student is involved in group work during their 2nd year SoSS have removed the student from the group work requirement and set them a different assignment; this is because the student may have become disengaged with their studies, as they are working towards an exit award, which could affect the group work.

Agreed: It was agreed that the position that SoSS has taken seems reasonable.

Action: **Lisa McAleese** to confirm the University's position in relation to this issue.

5.   **The Use of Advisor Roles in Campus Solutions**

Received: A paper prepared by Professor Richard Reese entitled 'The use of advisor roles within Campus Solutions'.

Reported: As part of the My Students pilot (allowing Academic Advisors to see basic information on their advisees) Senate's decision, to rationalise the roles of Academic Advisors and Personal Adviser in Campus Solutions (CS), will need to be implemented.

Noted: SEED will be involved in the My Students pilot.

Reported: Members of the Business Improvement Team in the SSO will be undertaking the work to look at the existing codes in CS and to change these to those as recommended in Richard's paper. The SSO will work with Schools with regards to this realignment.

Noted: The CS role of 'advisor' will not be used for undergraduate students. Instead the 'advisor' role within CS will be retired and replaced with 'Academic Advisor' and 'Personal Advisor' with these roles being based on the definitions below:

Academic Advisor:
As defined in the Policy on Personalised Learning, the academic advisor's roles include the following:

a.   Providing information and guidance on academic choice
b.   Assisting students with the planning of short-term and long-term targets for development
c.   Proactively monitoring both academic performance and student engagement and advising on constructive strategies for improvement as necessary
d.   Helping students both to identify the skills being acquired and to recognise progress towards fulfilment of the Purposes of a Manchester Education
e.   Encouraging students to productively reflect on their academic development; for example, through the use of a personal portfolio or personal development plan
f.   Working with students to build personal academic relationships

Personal Advisor:
A personal advisor offers advice on academic matters, personal problems (if needed), and is the main link to the Faculty and the University. Students will likely meet their Personal Advisor at regular intervals (e.g., twice per semester) during each year of their programme. A personal advisor may provide advice on overall academic progress, careers, health issues, etc.

The CS roles of 'personal tutor' and 'academic tutor' will be retired. The following Advisor roles in CS have already been retired: PASS Leader; Student Coordinator; Mentor; Placement Manager; Staff Coordinator; Qualifying Exam Committee; Thesis Committee.

Reported: Schools in Humanities have already been using the term Academic Advisor, since the introduction of the Personalised Learning Policy.

Action: **Schools** to ensure that the student handbooks use the correct nomenclature.

6.   Distinguished Achievement Awards

Reported: The University's Awards and Honours Group has agreed that the current Distinguished Achievement Award (DAA) for Postgraduate Student of the Year will be split into a Postgraduate Research Student of the Year and Postgraduate Taught Student of the Year. The inaugural round will take place in November 2014, for those students graduating in December 2014; the Award will be made at the December Graduation ceremony (8-12 December 2014). Each Faculty will have one award and the nomination has to be with the President's Office by close of play on 14 November 2014.

Agreed: The following timescale for the administration of the PGT DAA for 2014 was agreed:

Activity	By Whom	Date / Deadline
Issue call for nominations to Schools (via email)	Susan Rowe	w.c. 02/06/14 *
Issue reminder to Schools	Susan Rowe	w.c 06/10/14
Send completed nomination proforma(s) to Susan Rowe	School	by 17/10/14
Collate nominations and encrypt, complete spreadsheet with names of nominees and send to PGT sub-committee members	Susan Rowe	21/10/14
Return rankings and comments on Faculty spreadsheet	School	03/11/14
Collate rankings and prepare a tally count and return to Lisa McAleese	Susan Rowe	by 05/11/14
Lisa McAleese to determine if clear winner; if not discuss the nominations with the Associate Dean.	Lisa McAleese	by 13/11/14
Send Faculty's PGT DAA nomination to Deborah Black, (cc Catherine Smith)	Susan Rowe	by 5pm 14/11/14

* In order to ensure that PGT students are around to complete letters of support.

Secretary's Note: The criteria for the Award for Postgraduate Taught Student of the Year is: "The nominee should be an outstanding postgraduate student on a taught programme who has excelled in some significant manner for example in their academic achievement such as an independent piece of work or through an exceptional contribution to the life of the University. Alternatively he or she should have coupled excellent academic achievement with either major external activity (top level sport or music) or be inspirational through having overcome major difficulties".

7.   Marking and Assessment Working Group

Reported: The University's Marking and Assessment Working Group has been split into three subgroups:
Practice (chaired by Peter Lawler) looking at marking schemes, balance of formative and summative assessment, and the effectiveness of feedback mechanisms.
Decision Making (chaired by Caroline Bowsher, FLS) looking at moderation, standard setting, resits and alternative assessment.
Process (chaired by Emma Hilton Wood) looking at the assessment schedule and calendar and the relative roles of the Student System Office and the Student Services Centre in relation to assessment.
Will Carey is designing a student consultation and a communications strategy to run alongside the working group.

8.   A.O.B

8.1   Mark Review for Undergraduate Students

Reported: Undergraduate examination boards will be required to undertake Mark Review if a student is in the boundary zone of the average mark and does not satisfy the additional criteria.

Discussed: It was queried if the University / Faculty will be providing guidance on how to conduct Mark Review. Prior to the implementation of the 2012 Regulations the Faculty asked the central Teaching and Learning Support Office for guidance on this activity to ensure that there was equitable consideration and treatment of students; the Faculty was told that such guidance wouldn't be produced. The Faculty has also managed to get Mark Review guidance on the University's Teaching and Learning Group agenda; however this item has been twice postponed. The Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Students) is to discuss this issue with the Vice-President Teaching, Learning & Students.

In November 2012 PGT examination boards did conduct mark review. Due to the lack of guidance and uncertainties on how to conduct mark review some Schools determined additional sub-criteria, to those in the Regulations, which students had to satisfy; this is not mark review.

Reported: Mark review is based upon inspection of the student's work to determine whether there are any academic grounds for the award of a higher degree. This does not involve changing marks and External Examiners should support this process e.g. through advice on standards but they are not expected to act as a 'third examiner'. This holistic approach is to ensure that every consideration has been given to marginal candidates. Mark review will make a recommendation to the Examination Board, which will take the decision on degree classification.

SEED have been undertaking mark review for a number of years. Those students who qualify for mark review are identified and a small sub-group of the examination board looks at the work of those students and writes a brief report with a recommendation for the examination board; the report is sent to the external examiner for endorsement (the external examiner doesn't always agree with the recommendations). SEED changed their examination board dates in order to be able to undertake the task.

Agreed: In order to ensure equity of treatment of students guidance on the Faculty's required approach to conducting Mark Review is required, prior to the final examination board.

Action: **Lisa McAleese** to discuss the Faculty's approach / guidance with the Associate Dean.

8.2   **Course Unit Information Publishing Unit (CUIP)**

Reported: An email was circulated on 01/04/14 by Pam Ransome providing an update on the progress of further CUIP developments (reproduced below):

1)   Manual export process to enable administrators to extract data – this is currently undergoing bug fixing, following initial functional testing by myself. All going well, we should have the facility implemented by mid-April, but at the very latest, late April. A bulletin message will be going out later today;

2)   Publishing via the corporate marketing web-pages – we are still working on some fixes to the publishing process itself, which is currently having an impact on the test web-pages. Therefore, until these changes are made, we cannot progress with final development and implementation of them. These changes to the publishing process also mean that we have had to configure a testing area to allow us to fully test updates, without affecting the 'live' published data available within the portal. This has taken some time to complete, thus the delay with the marketing site development;

3)   Phase 2 developments – as mentioned in our last Working Group meeting, I will be looking to bring together the group once more to review the developments so far, once the above facilities have been implemented. This meeting will be to discuss the plans for phase 2, identifying whether they are still required, if so in what format, and looking at any priorities for further development.

Discussed: As there will be a delay in publishing information via the corporate marketing pages (as outlined in point 2 above) it was discussed whether or not Schools were, as a back-up, going to publish information to the Faculty's Course Unit database to allow new PGT students access to the course unit information, prior to their registration.

Action: **Gemma Grimshaw** to confirm the timescale of the delay with Pam Ransome and report back to TLAN members.

Secretary's Note: Guy Percival has confirmed that the Faculty's Course Unit Database will still be available, but will not be supported if it fails.

8.3   **Communication Strategy for Teaching & Learning Support Services**

Reported: The Teaching and Learning and eLearning areas of the Faculty have recently come together to form the Teaching & Learning Support Services (TLSS), under the management and leadership of Emma Rose.

As the new TLSS team we have been looking at communication with our stakeholders and have developed a Communication Strategy for the TLSS Team.

As part of the strategy we are trying to limit the number of emails we send to our stakeholders:

- When we receive an email from you, unless you have asked for an acknowledgement we won't send one e.g. when you have sent us information we have requested we won't reply with a thank you email (we are not being rude!).
- We are trying to ensure that those we copy into an email actually need to know what is being sent. Those included in the cc field do not generally need to undertake any of the actions specified in the email and are not directly required to respond.

As part of the strategy we are trying to ensure that those emails we do send are clearer:

- We'll try to ensure the subject line is short but descriptive to help you prioritise your reading.
- We'll be using a number of suffixes so you can see at a glance what is expected and prioritise accordingly:
[action] – with a date when the email requires the recipient to respond or take action by
[info] when the email is just for information purposes
[info & action] when the email is for information purposes but we wish the recipient to cascade the information within their teams.
[EOM] – end of message - when the content of the subject line is the message e.g. TLAN meeting today at 10am moved from Room G14 to Room G8 Devonshire House[EOM]
[urgent] when the message is urgent.
[NRN] – no response needed

- We'll ensure that if the email is being sent for action that it is clear what you are being asked to do and by when.
- If sending attachments we'll try to give each one an appropriate name so that you can work out what it is without opening it.

We've developed a communication Matrix outlining the type of communication and identifying the primary, secondary and optional tools to be used to deliver the communication.

Agreed: It would be useful for an organogram to be circulated to members of TLAN.

Action: **Lisa McAleese** to circulate the TLSS organogram.

8.4   **Student Publication Website**

Reported: Both current and former students are posting their essays online e.g. to Student Pulse an international student journal that provides undergraduate and graduate students around the world an accessible platform for the dissemination of academic work. The essay is submitted with the student's full name, ID number and course unit information.

The University's Intellectual Property (IP) Policy states that students own their own IP (this includes copyright) unless the University has contracted with an outside body (e.g. an industrial sponsor) where the outside body has a claim on the IP and the student is required to assign the IP to the University.

Discussed: It was discussed whether or not this was an issue and if there was anything we needed to do / could do. It was felt that there was nothing that the Faculty could / should do. Where other students were the using the work posted to external sites as part of their submission (without correct citation and referencing) that this would be picked up during the marking process and the academic malpractice procedure would deal with it.

Action: **Lisa McAleese** to look at the social media guidance for students and see whether or not information about posting essays containing personal information to external sites is covered / can be covered.

8.5   **Late Submission Policy**

Discussed: It was queried whether or not there had been changes made to the Faculty's Late Submission Scheme as following the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) meeting (19/02/14) the Professional Support Staff in the School of Law have been asked to allow a 30 minute leeway on late submissions and to identify if any students who had submitted up to 30 minutes late in the first semester had been penalised.

Reported: It was agreed at the Faculty's TLC meeting (19/02/14) that where a student has demonstrated that they have achieved the intended learning outcomes (ILOs), as indicated by the initial award of a pass mark prior to the application of the late penalty, that requiring the student to undertake a reassessment:
- could be viewed as a double penalty;
- involves additional work for the student, when they have actually demonstrated that they have met the ILOs, which could impact on their workload;
- involves more work for the academic staff in having to mark another piece of work;
- involves more work for the Professional Support Staff in administering the referral.

As the student has demonstrated that they have achieved the ILOs (as demonstrated by the initial awarding of the pass mark, prior to the application of the Penalty) it was agreed that the student should NOT be required to resubmit the assignment, rather the assignment submitted is treated as a resubmission and the Regulations applied accordingly.

This would mean that in accordance with the Regulations, the mark which is recorded would be the lowest compensatable fail mark: 30% UG (recorded as 30R); 40% PGT (recorded as 40R). The Regulations state however that 'if a student passes a course unit by resit, then they should not end up with a lower mark than they obtained at the first sit' and this Regulation would then apply.

The approval and future implementation of the above was discussed at the TLC meeting (02/04/14). The Penalty Scheme for Late Submission states that the clock starts ticking as soon as the submission deadline has passed and the penalty should be applied at that point; there is no period of grace for coursework deadlines, i.e. for a 3:00pm deadline a piece of work handed in at 3.05pm would be treated as late.

It was reported that SEED actually had unofficial leeway as to what was classed as late and hence incurred a penalty e.g. up to an hour after the published deadline didn't incur a penalty; this isn't published to students. The reason for such leeway was submitting assignments on line can take time to upload which could result in a late submission (even if submitted in advance of the deadline). Cath Dyson was going to check on this.
It was agreed that a subgroup of TLC will be set up to further discuss the late submission scheme for changes to be implemented for September 2014.

Noted: The student point of view should be taken into account during the discussions about any proposed changes to the Late Submission Penalty Scheme.

Discussed: The practice of the application of the penalty where both a hard copy submission and electronic submission are required and one is submitted late was discussed. Having experienced this issue Law issued a warning memo to their students stating that both

copies had to be in by the specified deadline (a three day submission window); this seems to have rectified the problem.

Noted: The phased introduction of electronic submission can be confusing to students. This is especially so where for some units they have electronic and hard copy submission and on other units they have hard copy submission only.

The information provided to students should be explicit with regards to the submission requirements and the penalties for late submission.

Discussed: Where electronic submission is required and there is a period of downtime how submissions were facilitated and if students were penalised was discussed. SALC has a generic email address to which submissions can be made if there are problems with the system.

Given that assignments are now to be submitted on line it was suggested that perhaps more examinations should be considered rather than 100% assignments.

Summary Action List

Agenda Item	Action	By Whom
3.1	Ensure that all staff and PGT students are informed (via the appropriate means) that where a hard copy of the PGT dissertation is required for marking purposes then channel binding / spiral binding is acceptable.	TLAN members
3.1	Inform Schools of the outcome of the discussions re the differences /anomalies between the Additional Costs policy and the Presentation of PGT Dissertations guidance in terms of paying for paper copies / bound copies of dissertations, etc. and whether paper/bound copies are still a requirement.	Lisa McAleese
3.2	Inform TLAN members of the outcome of the discussions with Sarah Littlejohn.	Lisa McAleese
4	Confirm the University's position in relation to exit awards.	Lisa McAleese
5	Ensure that the student handbooks use the correct nomenclature in terms of Academic Advisor & Personal Advisor.	Schools
8.1	Discuss with the Associate Dean the Faculty's approach / guidance re Mark Review.	Lisa McAleese
8.2	Confirm the timescale of the delay in publishing course unit information on the corporate web pages with Pam Ransome and report back to TLAN members.	Gemma Grimshaw
8.3	Circulate TLSS organogram.	Lisa McAleese
8.4	Look at the social media guidance for students and see whether or not information about posting essays containing personal information to external sites is covered / can be covered.	Lisa McAleese

Date of Next Meeting: 15 May 2014, 10am – 12noon, Room G34 Humanities Bridgeford Street.