

**EDUCATIONAL QUALITY COMMITTEE
MEETING 4 – 18 SEPTEMBER 2018 – UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

Name of Member	Mtg 1 13.02.18	Mtg 2 12.04.18	Mtg 3 14.06.18	Mtg 4 18.09.18
Professor David Bolton (Chair)	√	√	√	√
Malek Arab (SU VP Education 2017/18)	√	√	A	---
Professor Susan Blake	√	A	√	√
Dr Margaret Carran	A	√	√	√
Dr Irene Ctori	√	√	√	A
Alison Edridge	√	√ (minutes)	√	√
Dr David Flinton	√	A	√	√
Dr Cristina Gacek	√	√	√	A
Dr Anna Gaio	A	√	A	A
Mary Ann Kernan	√	A	A	√
Professor Rachael-Anne Knight	A	√	√	√
Dr Lauren Knott	A	A	√	√
Tuna Kunt (SU VP Education 2018/19)	---	---	---	√
Professor Pam Parker	√	√	√	√
Dr Simon Parker	√	√	√	√
Dr Martin Rich	√	√	√	√
Professor Stuart Sime	√	√	√	√
Katherine Reece Thomas	√	√	√	√

√ indicates attendance A indicates apologies have been provided

--- indicates a period when the member is on extended leave/when the person was not a member

In attendance:

Helen Fitch, Assistant Registrar (Quality), Student and Academic Services (Secretary)

Steve Stanbury, Director of Internal Audit

Professor Sanowar Khan, Deputy Dean representing SMCSE

Dominic Davis, Head of Admissions (for Item 13)

Dr Lucy Dawkins, Academic Development and Quality Officer (for Items 14 and 17)

Part 1 - Preliminary Items

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed Tuna Kunt (the new SU VP Education), Professor Sanowar Khan (Deputy Dean representing SMCSE), Dominic Davis (Head of Admissions) and Dr Lucy Dawkins (Academic Development and Quality Officer).

Apologies were received from Cristina Gacek, Irene Ctori and Anna Gaio.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 14 June 2018 were approved.

3. Terms of Reference and Membership 2018/19

The Committee noted the current Terms of Reference and Membership for the coming year. There had been no change for 2018/19 other than to record the name of the new SU VP Education.

The annual calendar of Committee business was received for information. The Assistant Registrar (Quality) advised that a Senate policy review schedule would be presented at the next meeting.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee noted that those actions and matters arising that had not yet been completed would be discussed as part of the main agenda or at a future meeting.

5. Chair's Business

a) *NSS 2018 Headlines*

The Chair reported that City's score of 82% for student satisfaction had been maintained, against a national decline of 1% and a London decline of 1.7%. Our results range from Music (95.45%) to Sociology (61.23%).

Notable institutional level improvements were observed in the following questions:

- Marking and assessment has been fair: +6.03%
- Staff value students' views and opinions about the course: + 4.13%
- The Students' Union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests: + 6.41%

The Committee welcomed the improvements in the Students' Union question outcome this year.

There had been concerns about the possible impact of the 2018 industrial action on the NSS outcomes; students in SHS and SASS had been most affected by the action. Following review of the NSS data, with the exception of two programmes, no evidence to show an obvious correlation had been found. The improved results in the 'marking and assessment has been fair' question provided further reassurance. The most successful marking and assessment scores will be analysed so that effective practice could be shared.

All programme data is currently being reviewed and support will be provided to programmes over the coming weeks to assist with their ongoing development.

b) *Office for Students (OfS)*

City has satisfied the conditions of OfS registration and has been added to the register of English higher education providers. The OfS did not impose any additional conditions of registration, however the OfS confirmation makes clear that the decision is not intended to have enduring status and the OfS can reach a different view at any time based on new information, changes in circumstances such as market conditions, or more in-depth analysis of information that was used to reach the original judgement. City's Student Protection Plan and approved Access & Participation Plan have now been published on our website¹. Associate Deans Education should ensure that they are familiar with the contents of these documents.

The OfS regulatory framework will be fully in force from 1 August 2019 and further information about ongoing monitoring arrangements will be published during 2018/19. OfS has indicated that further guidance on the expectations for student protection plans will be published to address a number of common weaknesses and we will need to review our plan once this guidance is available.

- **Action: Associate Deans Education to note the contents of the Student Protection Plan and Access and Participation Plan (ADEs, November 2018)**

c) *Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)*

Education and Student Committee had agreed that a central steering group will be formed to co-ordinate preparedness activities to ensure a smooth transition to the subject level TEF in 2019/20. The first meeting of the TEF Steering Group took place on 4 September, Chaired by Mary Ann Kernan. Deans have nominated appropriate representatives from their School and the SU were also invited. The terms of reference were agreed which include developing an engagement plan to ensure a consistent approach to

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- **City, University of London Student Protection Plan:** <https://www.city.ac.uk/about/city-information/legal/student-protection-plan>
- **Access and Participation Plan 2019/20:** https://www.city.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/433183/CityUniversityofLondon_Access_participation_plan.pdf

communications concerning City's response to subject-level TEF for students, academic and professional services staff.

The steering group will meet every 6 weeks and will take an action-focused approach. Initial focus will be on supporting Schools and specifically programme teams to review performance in subject-level TEF data (OfS pilot data) and in the collation of evidence to explain trends.

The group will provide regular updates to Education and Student Committee including recommendations on how City's approach to subject-level TEF may be incorporated into business as usual processes and where further developmental work may be required.

Colleagues were asked to report details of good practice to Mary Ann Kernan so that these may be collated to support our TEF submission. Once the template is published, the timescales will be tight. A pilot is expected in Spring and completed templates will need to be submitted by June 2019.

- **Action: Examples of good practice to be sent to Mary Ann Kernan to support the subject level TEF submission (All, ongoing)**

d) Progression Priorities Update

The implementation phase of the Student and Attendance Monitoring Policy is now in progress. The new data will become available over the coming weeks to enable us to conduct detailed analysis.

In October, Education and Student Committee will receive a paper on progression priorities and a summary update will be provided to Educational Quality Committee at the November meeting.

e) Programme Amendment Deadline

Further work to determine the appropriate deadlines has been undertaken including consultation with the SU and students. ET and Deans have subsequently agreed that the deadline for UG programme amendments will be 28 February 2019, and that module selection for programmes within the Personalised Timetables pilot for 2019/20 will take place after exams at the beginning of June 2019. Programmes to be included in the pilot will be determined in November 2018 and will, at a minimum, include Law and Music. The deadline for PG amendments is unchanged at 30 April.

Part 2 - City Developments, Priorities and Standing Reports

6. Education and Student Committee

The minutes of the first meeting of the new Education and Student Committee, held on 6 June 2018, were received and noted. The next meeting is due to take place on 3 October 2018.

7. Education and Student Strategy

The Committee received an update on the redevelopment of the Education and Student Strategy. The current update will incorporate the student experience factors narrative to clearly articulate City's strategic direction following the work undertaken with Schools during the previous year. The advent of the Office for Students has also driven the need to revisit the strategy to ensure that City has a clear plan to respond to internal and external challenges. The paper outlined the key points in detail together with the implementation plan for 2018/19 and the next steps.

8. Students' Union Standing Report

The SU VP Education presented the Students' Union report. Welcome Week has been a key focus and this year new students have attended a series of Thriving at City talks to highlight topics such as mental health and support. Colleagues reported that these sessions had been fully booked and successful.

NSS results had been positive with City now in the 2nd quartile and the SU's current campaigns are publicised on the website.

9. Student and Academic Services Standing Report

The Assistant Director reported that the Widening Participation and Outreach Team had been shortlisted for a Times Higher Award. There was also a request to Committee members to encourage Programme Directors to attend the current series of Annual Programme Evaluation workshops.

10. LEaD Standing Report

The Deputy Director of LEaD advised that details of upgraded teaching rooms had been disseminated in readiness for the new term.

11. Academic Year

A paper outlining a proposal for a review of the academic year was presented for consideration. Views are being sought from EQC on the issues that the review of the academic year structure should seek to address and these will inform the proposals to be made to Senate. The initial proposals are based on feedback received since the last review of the academic year and centre around operational drivers at present, but these will be viewed from a student experience perspective to inform the Senate recommendations.

A key concern about the current format is the short timescale between the end of assessment and graduation; this poses difficulties for students and staff at present. Possible solutions could include changes to the January exam period or the Easter break timings. EQC discussed the pros and cons of the various draft proposals and agreed that a focus on reducing examinations in favour of more varied and authentic assessment strategies would be preferable for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

The Committee was asked to send comments and feedback to the Assistant Director to inform the Senate proposals.

- **Action: Comments on proposals for changes to the Academic Year to be forwarded to the Assistant Director (All, September 2018)**

Part 3 - Educational Quality

12. Annual Assurance Report to Senate and Council

The draft Assurance Report reflecting on the 2017/18 academic year was received for note and comment. It follows the format approved for the previous year's report as approved by Council and pending any revised requirements being published by OfS.

The Action Plan within the report provides updates to the 2017/2018 actions identifying those that have been completed and those still ongoing. An Action Plan for 2018/2019 is being developed based on the enhancement activities noted within this report and will be shared electronically with EQC in October for comments in preparation for Senate. It will also be shared with AGC and Corporate Governance Committee. EQC **endorsed** the report for recommendation to Senate.

The final report will be presented to Senate at its October meeting for review and to Council in its November meeting for approval. The Chair of Council will be asked to sign off the final report.

13. Senate Regulation and Policies

a) *Extensions and Late Participation*

Further to the paper and draft policy outline received by EQC in June, S&AS is working on further detailed proposals for the Extensions and Late Participation in Assessment policy and process. A paper detailing the operational aspects will be considered by the Operations Board in October, and an update will be provided to stakeholders and the November EQC.

The aim is to seek Senate approval in December to enable updated information to be published in Student Handbooks for 2019/20.

b) *Admissions Policy*

Dominic Davis, Head of Admissions presented the suite of Admissions Policy documents for consideration and recommendation to Senate:

- **a new Admissions Policy**

The new policy is a substantial re-write of the existing Admissions Policy, updating content to ensure compliance with UKVI, CMA and SPA requirements. It will serve both as a manual for staff carrying out the admissions process and as a resource for applicants. The policy has also been circulated to other stakeholders ahead of presentation to Senate in October. EQC reviewed the policy and

recommend approval to Senate subject to slight revision of the text relating to avoidance of plagiarism, and any other revisions deemed necessary through the consultation.

- **Under 18 Policy**

A small number of students enrolling at City are under 18 when they start. Written consent is required from their parents, and an individual must be assigned to those who are from outside the UK to act as their in loco parentis guardian. Following discussion, it was agreed that clarification would be sought on the DBS requirements for staff who may come into contact with those students on a one to one basis. It was agreed that the Head of Admissions would investigate further.

- **Action: Head of Admissions to seek clarification on DBS requirements (October 2018)**

- **Criminal Convictions Policy**

The policy has been designed to comply with UKVI requirements and best practice in the sector. The Committee was advised that there is no longer a requirement for all applicants to declare unspent criminal convictions on UCAS forms as there is no legal basis for collecting it. However, due to the nature of certain City programmes, it would still be necessary for applicants to declare unspent criminal convictions. Where this is the case the Criminal Convictions Policy will require that any such declarations will be reviewed by a Panel.

The Committee was concerned that the revised legal requirements will leave City exposed to risk in a number of areas. It was agreed that the Head of Admissions would discuss specific concerns with the relevant Committee members to consider the approach to professional courses as there is scope to ask additional questions on an application form if there is a strong rationale.

- **Action: Head of Admissions to liaise with Committee members regarding Professional programme requirements (October 2018)**
- **Action: further feedback to be provided to Head of Admissions to inform final versions for Senate (All, September 2018)**

14. Programme Developments

To Committee received the summary reports for:

a) Current Programmes – the Credit Framework Register

EQC received the Credit Framework Register which lists all programmes running in 2018/19. The register highlights programmes requiring students to achieve a greater number of credits than as prescribed by Senate's approved framework. In some cases the additional credit requirements are to satisfy PSRB requirements however in others the rationale is less clear. In order to ensure that students are not being required to achieve a greater volume of credit than is necessary for each award, Programme are being asked to review the rationale for the additional credit requirements via Periodic Review.

b) Programme Approvals

The Academic Development and Quality Officer from Student and Academic Services thanked EQC members for their participation in Panels and their engagement with the Programme Approval processes. The Committee considered a reflective report on programme approval activity during 2017/18 and attention was drawn to the areas of good practice observed. Commendations included the much improved quality of documentation which minimised delays to the approval process.

The report also outlined the dates for 2018/19 Panels which will take place on a monthly basis in response to feedback.

UPAC Panels had not identified any risks within the key quality processes requiring institutional consideration but did make some recommendations. EQC **approved** the three recommendations made in the report:

- for Schools to plan development activity in good time to enable consideration at the scheduled UPAC dates
- for Programme Teams to liaise with Student and Academic Services early in the development process to ensure the completeness of submissions to UPAC

- for teams to consider student engagement and consultation at each stage of the development and approval process.

ADEs requested that publication of the guidance documentation easily accessible by academic staff to facilitate their engagement with the process.

- **Action: Review Programme Approval documentation presentation to improve ease of use (S&AS - Academic Development and Quality Officer, September 2018)**

c) *Programme Amendments*

The Committee also received a summary of programme amendments. 1074 programme and/or module amendments were approved by Boards of Studies and processed by the S&AS and IT during 2018/19. The report reflected on amendments approved and the increased volume which was a result of the factors such as the assessment review, significantly increased periodic review activity and PSRB requirements.

Senate has approved revisions to the Programme Amendment policy and process for 2018/19; amendments can still be submitted on separate forms for each programme however deadlines have been revised to enable earlier processing to comply with CMA requirements.

EQC **approved** the proposed actions and recommendations which will

- support the revision of current best-practice guidelines on student consultation on proposed changes
- encourage academic colleagues to engage with School PARC processes and Quality colleagues, at the earliest possible opportunity, to minimise instances of miscommunication and missing information
- encourage School PARCs to liaise with Student and Academic Services, as necessary and when appropriate, around scale of change concerns/questions.

Thanks were extended to Lucy Dawkins and colleagues in Student and Academic Services supporting these processes.

15. **Module Evaluation Process Review**

Following dissemination of the Module Evaluation Process Review report, and Senate and ExCo's approval of a set of recommendations, a draft Module Evaluation Policy has been drafted. The draft policy has been prepared following discussions with ADE Forum and other stakeholders and seeks to clarify the primary purpose of the module evaluation process and the use of the data.

Whilst module evaluation for single lecturer modules is relatively straightforward, it becomes more complex for larger modules with multiple lecturers and a blend of lectures, seminars and delivery methods. The current method of surveying each lecturer involved in the delivery provides lecturer/module data at a granular level but does not indicate the overall health of the module. A broader oversight would be beneficial to support module and programme development, and also to inform the forthcoming subject level TEF.

In addition to the central University module evaluations, City Law School currently runs separate internal tutor evaluations at a local level. The Committee recommends that there is a clear separation between lecturer and module surveys as the current combined process does not adequately serve its purpose, i.e. there should be:

- a standardised question set
- a survey to collect feedback on staff performance, to inform development and support
- a survey to collect feedback on the module as a whole
- an action plan at module level where applicable

EQC expressed a preference for the lecturer survey(s) and the module survey to be combined on a single form. In discussion it was agreed that suggested that alternative questionnaire formats would be explored prior to the draft policy being circulated more widely. Further sector research will also be undertaken to ensure that the policy reflects best practice.

Further work will be then undertaken with stakeholders to refine the format where relevant. Work is being undertaken concurrently to prepare for potential migration to online surveys.

16. Annual Programme Evaluation (APEs)

Further to the standard quality reports considered by EQC and Senate for the 2016/17 APEs, the Committee received the thematic reports from 2016/17 APEs focussing on 'progression' and 'assessment', together with a summary of good practice identified by ADEs from each School.

The assessment thematic review paper noted that, following the Assessment Review of Undergraduate programmes, Schools had been asked to identify two programmes for further development with the support of a Learning Development Fellow. Work would commence in October and the selected programmes would be invited to identify up to 3 key areas for development.

The thematic review of progression priorities had informed the subsequent work on initiatives such as the Student Engagement and Monitoring policy and processes.

The full good practice summary report will be disseminated at Learning and Teaching Committees for discussion and sharing of good practice within and across Schools. Additionally any good practice items which can be disseminated and utilised more broadly will be considered by the City Learning & Teaching Committee.

The Committee commended the recent workshops in preparation for the 2017/18 APEs, led by Georgia Moustaka in Student and Academic Services. The Undergraduate theme for the 2017/18 APEs is 'Internationalisation' in the Curriculum. Colleagues have requested earlier notification of the theme for the 2018/19 academic year and it was proposed that potential topics will be taken to the next ADE meeting for discussion. The proposals will be considered for approval at the next EQC

**Action: Proposed topics for the 2018/19 APEs to be taken to the next ADE Forum
(ADE Forum members, October 2018)**

Periodic Review

A report on the themes arising from 2017/18 review activity was received for consideration. The report covers the majority of reviews undertaken during 2017/18, with the remainder due to come to the next meeting. Attention was drawn to the high volume of good practice noted in the report, including areas of commendation relating to industry engagement and assessment practice.

The report highlighted areas of risk, for instance Senior Team engagement with the periodic review process does not always meet with expectations. Other areas of risk include insufficient communications to students about changes to their programmes and insufficient engagement of some visiting lecturers with quality management and assurance. EQC **approved** the recommendations in the report to manage these risks which would:

- streamline programme administration and publication, in consultation with stakeholders
- improve staff engagement with periodic review events and clearly articulate University expectations for staff to Deans and Senior Management structures to cascade to staff
- develop a University framework and guidance/best-practice document for programmes where a high percentage of delivery is via Visiting Lecturers to support consistency

- **Action: Risk management recommendations to be progressed (QUAD Department, Student and Academic Services, 2018/19)**

17. External Examiners

EQC received the qualitative thematic overview, of the External Examiners' Annual Reports for 2016/17. Overall the External Examiners were satisfied that academic standards and programmes are comparable with equivalent programmes within the UK sector and have confidence in City's ability to delivery and assess learning outcomes at the appropriate levels. The Committee **approved** the recommendations in the report, which include programmes engaging with their External Examiner at an early stage when programme amendments are being proposed.

It is also recommended that the tailored support for Schools available as the next stage of the Assessment Review could be used to help address issues identified by External Examiners on assessment and feedback where further guidance is needed beyond the forthcoming Assessment Toolkit.

A summary of appointments/reappointments for 2018/19 was received and the outstanding appointments were noted. Colleagues were thanked for their continued support with the appointment process and asked to remind those programmes where confirmed appointments were not yet in place.

18. Internal Audit – schedule and reports

The Director of Internal Audit provided an update on the planned areas for audit are highlighted during 2018/19. The topics which will fall within the remit of EQC will be UKVI Compliance, Admissions, Student Records, Prevent, Student Appeals, complains and discipline, Examinations and Assessment Regulations, Student Voice, Progression and Student Satisfaction.

19. Graduate School Committee

The minutes of the meeting in July 2018 were received and noted.

20. Lecture Capture

The Chair of Learning Environment Committee and Deputy Director LEaD provided an overview on activities to support lecture capture which include improving reliability of current resources, provision of updated training for staff, creation of a new booking form, enhanced information in rooms and proactive spot checks on audio and video equipment. Sector practice is being undertaken to review 'Opt Out' policies; students would like lecture capture to be rolled out across all lectures however this would require a revised policy and the resolution of a number of infrastructure and technology issues.

Now that the new Education and Student Committee is operational, it will be responsible for determining the strategic direction of future activity. In the meantime LEaD will also be liaising with the Student Communications Officer to release information of lecture capture to students.

Action: recommendations to be provided to Education and Student Committee (LEaD February, 2018)

Action: updates to be disseminated to students (LEaD, September 2018)

21. Next Meeting

8 November 2018

Secretary: Helen Fitch

Email: Helen.Fitch.1@city.ac.uk

Telephone:

020 7040 8793

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