

Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Council's Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee held Thursday 28 September 2010 in HEFCW Offices, Llanishen.

Present:

Members:

Prof Leni Oglesby, member of Council (Chair)
Katie Dalton, NUS Wales
Bethan Guilfoyle, member of Council
Jacqui Hare, Higher Education Wales (HEW) nominee
Prof Mari Lloyd-Williams, member of Council
David Mason, member of Council
Prof Clive Mulholland, on behalf of Julie Lydon, institutional representative
Prof Danny Saunders, institutional representative
Richard Spear, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, Dysgu Cymru
Prof Alan Speight, Reaching Wider Partnerships
Gavin Thomas, ColegauCymru

Observers:

Dr Julian Ellis, Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)
Ruth Hayton, on behalf of Andrew Clark, Welsh Assembly Government
Dr Helena Lim, on behalf of David Sadler, Higher Education Academy (HEA)
Dr Ioan Matthews, Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education
Lisa Newberry, HEW
Derfel Owen, QAA

Officers:

Dr Alison Allan
Dr David Blaney
Celia Hunt
Gemma Long (Clerk)
Dr Cliona O'Neill (Secretary)

Apologies: Andrew Clark, Michelle Creed, Rob Humphreys, Sarah Lewis, Julie Lydon, Dr Peter Noyes, Prof John Parkinson, David Sadler, Dennis Thomas.

- 1 THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE (SETQC/10/38)
 - 1.1 This paper invited Members to discuss issues impacting on the student experience to inform HEFCW's policy and further actions. Presentations were given by Katie Dalton (NUS Wales) and Derfel Owen (Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)).
 - 1.2 A summary of Members' advice is provided at **Annex A**.

- 1.3 Resolved: to
i) *Take account of Members' advice in future policy developments.*
- 2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (SETQC/10/39)
- 2.1 Members agreed the minutes as an accurate record of the previous meeting subject to an amendment to minute 3.4. It was clarified that part-time undergraduate students were not eligible for the National Bursary under the previous scheme, and this remained the case under the new National Bursary Framework Scheme.
- 2.2 *Resolved:*
i) *To amend the wording of item 3.4 so that it read '...the fee waiver was under review and that part-time students were not eligible for the NBF Scheme'.*
ii) *To accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 8 July 2010, subject to the amendment.*
- 3 MATTERS ARISING
- 3.1 The Chair reminded the Committee of its role in advising Council on its statutory responsibilities for quality assurance. Officers proposed convening a Quality Assessment and Enhancement Sub-Group (QAESG) of SETQC, rather than using ad-hoc subgroups. The QAESG would report to SETQC and would have a core function of addressing HEFCW's quality assessment responsibilities, for example, in considering the specific outcomes of Institutional Reviews or the National Student Survey (NSS), and a secondary role relating to quality enhancement. Membership would vary depending on the issues being discussed and external expertise would be introduced as appropriate. The group would report to SETQC. Members agreed that officers should convene this group and prepare appropriate terms of reference for consideration by the group and SETQC approval.
- 3.2 Item 3.6 – HEFCW had published its Circular on *Regional Strategies for the Planning and Delivery of Higher Education in Wales: Funding and Support* as W10/28HE in July 2010.
- 3.3 Item 5.7 – discussions were ongoing between colleges and HEIs on setting up Foundation Degrees courses, but the commitment to three years of funding raised questions about what would happen after the funding period, and the uncertainty was proving an obstacle to progress. HEFCW agreed it would provide clarification of the arrangements to Members.
- 3.4 Item 5.11.ii – the establishment of a best practice group to consider curriculum design would be discussed at a HEW Pro Vice-Chancellors' ESF meeting on 5 November.

- 3.5 Item 6.8.iii – further information would be brought as appropriate to a future meeting on matters relating to SSCs, in particular matters raised by the *Evaluation of the effectiveness of links between HEIs and Sector Skills Councils in Wales* (paper SETQC/10/29).
- 3.6 Item 7.6 iii – the QAA reported that the Standards Monitoring Scheme would be revised and presented to the QAA board, prior to its introduction by the end of October 2010.
- 3.7 9.7. i and ii - Council had agreed SETQC’s recommendations to allow Welsh institutions to include optional questions in the online National Student Survey, and to ask Welsh institutions to include employability information on the Unistats website.
- 3.8 10.4.ii – To address concerns that disability data was dominated by students with dyslexia, disability data excluding data on dyslexia would be brought to the December 2010 meeting of the Committee, to enable a discussion of its implications for widening access.
- 3.9 Resolved: *to*
- (i) *convene a Quality Assessment and Enhancement Sub-group (QAESG) of SETQC;*
 - (ii) *to provide clarification of the funding arrangements for foundation degrees to Members;*
 - (iii) *to bring disability data, excluding data on dyslexia, to the December 2010 meeting.*
- 4 WALES INITIATIVE FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (SETQC/10/40)
- 4.1 Members were provided with information on the cross-sector Wales Initiative for Student Engagement (WISE) which focused on valuing feedback, harnessing expertise and working in partnership with students, with the intention to reinforce, share and build on good practice identified in approaches to student engagement.
- 4.2 The Committee received the annual report of the HEFCW-funded ‘Have your Say’ project. Members approved the ‘Have your Say’ annual report as thorough and commendable.
- 4.3 It was agreed that the strategic discussion of item one would impact on WISE and the ‘Have your Say’ project, and that the strategic discussion had already identified activities which could be carried out under the WISE branding for the benefit of student engagement.
- 4.4 Resolved: *to*
- i) *Note and commend the ‘Have your Say’ annual report;*
 - ii) *Refer to item 1 Strategic Discussion which identified activities that could be carried out under the WISE branding.*

- 5 NSS RESULTS (SETQC/10/41)
- 5.1 The Committee was provided with the non-disclosable results of the National Student Survey (NSS) 2010 and was invited to identify whether there were any actions resulting from these which required specific action by HEFCW. Members agreed that the role of the Committee was to monitor results and provide support.
- 5.2 The Committee commended the good results in Wales, in particular those for Aberystwyth University. The HE sector in Wales had achieved the objective in the HEFCW Corporate Strategy to have a three year rolling average score for 'overall satisfaction' equal to or better than that for the UK as a whole for the period 2007/08 to 2009/10.
- 5.3 Members agreed that it was important that HEIs learned from good practice activities related to the NSS, both between institutions and, in some cases, within institutions. The Higher Education Academy reported that there were quality enhancement events around the UK to support institutions in working with their NSS results, and that subject centres were working with academics to identify development opportunities.
- 5.4 Satisfaction levels remained lower for assessment and feedback than other areas at both Further Education Colleges and HEIs. Given the continuation of this trend, the Committee recommended that the matter be further considered by the QAESG.
- 5.5 The paper identified some subject areas of lower satisfaction and Members agreed that institutions would need to take a proactive approach to address these. They agreed that it would be appropriate to discuss subject-level results at the QAESG, which may recommend further action.
- 5.6 It was suggested that the collated results of the last three years would be valuable and could be used to identify trends in results at institutional and subject levels. HEFCW agreed to provide the data of the last three years and present it to the quality sub-group for consideration.
- 5.7 Members noted that the Committee would discuss the HEFCE-UUK-GuildHE consultation on public information for institutions in England and Northern Ireland at a future meeting, following its consideration by QAESG. The consultation identifies a 'key information set', to be produced by institutions, which it may be desirable to adopt for Wales.
- 5.8 Resolved: *to*
- i) Commend the high NSS results in Wales;*
 - ii) Note that the corporate objective for the three year outcome for Wales to be equal to or better than that for the UK as a whole had been achieved for the period 2008-2010;*
 - iii) Ask the QAESG to consider the results for assessment and feedback and identify actions that HEFCW should take;*

- iv) *Ask the QAESG to discuss subject-level results for the NSS where appropriate and recommend actions that HEFCW should take;*
- v) *Ask officers to collate results of the last three years for presentation at the quality sub-group to allow trends in results to be identified; and*
- vi) *Note that SETQC would discuss the outcomes of the HEFCE-UUK-GuildHE consultation on public information at a future meeting.*

6 ESTYN UPDATE (SETQC/10/42)

- 6.1 This item provided an update on Estyn activities and developments in inspection arrangements relevant to higher education, including teacher education, youth workers' professional training, initial teacher training and changes to the Estyn inspection framework.
- 6.2 Members noted that the report on the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) programme would be considered as part of the ongoing WAG review of continuing professional development.
- 6.3 Members discussed the outcomes of the Estyn survey of professional qualification training for youth workers in Wales and while commending the positive outcomes, noted the number of shortcomings identified. They noted that institutions had received additional funding to support Welsh medium provision in the subject. It was appropriate that Coleg Ffederal should consider the outcomes relating to the Welsh language.
- 6.4 Members noted that the new Estyn Common Inspection Framework (CIF) included a greater focus on the learner voice. The inspection of the new Centres for initial teacher training (ITT) under the new CIF would begin in 2011/12. Members agreed to monitor inspection outcomes and the practical challenges these might present.
- 6.5 Members were provided with an update on funding for the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP). The Welsh Assembly Government would consider funding HEIs for GTP provision directly, although inspection of GTP would be included in the inspection of Centres for other ITT provision. The Committee would be kept informed of developments.
- 6.6 Members noted that Estyn would hold a joint event with HEFCW in early 2011 on the outcomes of the 2009 ITT thematic inspections, and best practice.
- 6.7 The Committee recommended that issues arising from this paper should be discussed by the QAESG.
- 6.8 Resolved to:
- i) *Monitor inspection outcomes of ITT Centres and the practical challenges these may present;*
 - ii) *Note the update on the funding for Graduate Teacher Programmes;*

- iii) *Note the planned Estyn-HEFCW conference to be held in Spring 2011; and*
- iv) *Refer issues arising from this paper to the QAESG for their consideration.*

7 ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (SETQC/10/43)

7.1 The Committee considered a draft HEFCW Circular on the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL), which had been developed in response to the *FoF* objective regarding flexible learning and recognition of prior learning. It took into account the outcomes of work commissioned by the Welsh Higher Education Credit Consortium in 2009 surveying practice across the sector.

7.2 Members welcomed the paper and the increased flexibility APEL afforded to the sector and students. Members identified the importance of ensuring processes were consistent with the work of other sectors and that developments in this area were 'joined-up'. They also identified the necessity to ensure the quality of APEL procedures, and agreed that this issue could be discussed by the QAESG.

7.3 Some members suggested that there would be value in establishing an APEL support centre, either on a pan-Wales or a regional basis. The HEW PVC group had discussed the possibility of the latter and could continue these discussions particularly in the context of the regional strategies. Prior work funded by HEFCW on *Strategic Development of High Level Learning for the Workforce In Wales* had identified no cross-sector consensus on setting up a single centre. Members noted that the outcomes of this work had been taken forward by the University of Glamorgan as part of the pan-Wales ESF-funded project on work-based learning.

7.4 Resolved: to

- i) *Note the arrangements and guidelines for APEL and the opportunities they afford to the sector and students; and*
- ii) *refer relevant issues arising from this paper to the QAESG.*

8 RECENT HEFCW DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO *FOR OUR FUTURE* (SETQC/10/44)

8.1 This item provided an update on key developments relating to *For our Future* and the Committee's remit, many of which had been discussed at previous meetings. It invited Members to provide further views to inform Council on these policy areas.

8.2 The Committee thanked members who had been involved in the Widening Access Task and Finish group. The Widening Access strategic approach had been approved by Council in September, subject to minor amendments. The approach would be subject to a full equality impact assessment consultation. It would be published in December 2010.

8.3 In response to questions on the schedule of changes to the funding system, HEFCW identified that responses to the 'capping' consultation had been taken into account in drafting a forthcoming circular, *Guidance on the management of full-time undergraduate student numbers from 2011/12*, which would be published at the end of September.

8.4 Resolved to:
i) Note the update on For our Future developments.

9 SETQC ANNUAL REPORT (SETQC/10/45)

9.1 This item provided the draft annual report of the SETQ Committee for comment, prior to submission to Council in autumn 2010, and as required by the Committee's standing orders.

9.2 It was noted that further work was required to expand on how the Committee had contributed to HEFCW's Corporate Strategy themes of social justice and a buoyant economy. There would also be amendments to the format of the report.

9.3 Resolved: to
i) Submit any further comments on the Annual Report to the Secretary by correspondence by 12 October.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 There was no other business.

11 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

11.1 Future meetings of SETQC would be held on 15 December 2010, 16 February 2011 and 8 June 2011.

11.2 Resolved: *to note the dates of the next meetings.*

12 UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 JUNE 2010 (SETQC/10/46)

12.1 The unconfirmed minutes of the Council's Research, Innovation and Engagement Committee held on 29 June 2010 were presented for information.

12.2 Resolved: *to note the minutes of the Research, Innovation and Engagement Committee.*

13 WIDENING ACCESS: 2010/11 REACHING WIDER ALLOCATIONS
(SETQC/10/47)

13.1 This item informed SETQC of the Reaching Wider Partnerships' 2010/11 allocations as proposed by the Reaching Wider Advisory sub-group, and approved by the Chief Executive. It also included the sub-group's recommendations for the further development of the Reaching Wider initiative.

13.2 Resolved: *to note the allocations for 2010/11 and recommendations regarding the Reaching Wider Initiative.*

14 WELSH MEDIUM PROVISION: COLEG FFEDERAL UPDATE
(SETQC/10/48)

14.1 This item set out progress on work to establish the Coleg Ffederal for Welsh medium provision.

14.2 Resolved: *to note the Coleg Ffederal update.*

Signature.....

Date.....