

Meeting	Agenda Item	Reference No
11/12/09	26	HEFCW/09/121

1 Issue

- 1.1 This paper presents for information the unconfirmed minutes of the Council's Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee (SETQC) held on 21 October 2009.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 The SETQC is one of the standing committees of the Council and its purpose is to advise the Council on matters relating to the promotion of teaching excellence in higher education, and the enhancement of the student learning experience. It also undertakes HEFCW's statutory responsibilities to ensure provision is made for assessing the quality of education in higher education institutions (HEIs) for whose activities it provides financial support.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council is invited to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting on 21 October 2009.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 There are no timing implications for this paper.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No conflicts of interests have been declared in advance of the meeting.

6 Further information

- 6.1 Contact Dr Cliona O'Neill (Tel 029 2068 2283; E-mail: cliona.oneill@hefcw.ac.uk)

7 Background

- 7.1 The SETQC undertakes HEFCW's statutory responsibilities under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 in respect of quality assessment.

8 Minutes of the SETQC meeting of 21 October 2009

- 8.1 The minutes of the June 2009 meeting of the SETQC are available at **Annex A**.
- 8.2 As reported to the last Council meeting, members debated the desirability of Wales participating in the National Teaching Fellowship Awards. They agreed that if funding were available, they would be in favour of Wales' participation. They would prefer the funding not to be topsliced from Learning and Teaching Strategy Funding. Council agreed to Wales' participation in the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (item HEFCW/09/Min133 refers).
- 8.3 In addition, Members may particularly wish to note the following issues:
- The meeting began with a strategic discussion on skills and employability. The outcomes of that discussion are annexed to the minutes. Members advised that funding for skills should not be hypothecated within the HEFCW third mission fund.
 - Members commented on our review of the hidden costs of study, as required by our remit letter from WAG. They advised that the term 'hidden costs' could be misunderstood. Our advice is provided to Members elsewhere in this meeting is available elsewhere (item HEFCW/09/112 refers).
 - Members discussed HEFCW's draft advice to WAG on widening access. This is provided to Council in item HEFCW/09/112.
 - The Committee discussed quality and standards in England, and how they might impact on Wales. They agreed that Wales should consider any changes proposed for England carefully. They recommended that the Quality Working Group should examine HEFCW's statutory responsibility for quality assurance, with regards to areas identified in England.
 - Members discussed the outcomes of the 2009 NSS. They agreed that Wales should be congratulated on the commendable results achieved.

9 Financial implications

- 9.1 No immediate financial implications arise out of this paper. However, some of the suggestions made by the Committee with regards to widening access would have financial implications if adopted.

10 Communications implications

- 10.1 There may be press interest arising from items discussed at the Committee meetings, such as the National Student Survey results.
- 10.2 Quality matters, such as the outcomes of institutional reviews, and reviews of the quality of higher education in other countries of the UK may also generate press interest, particularly when the outcomes are not favourable.
- 10.3 Matters relating to skills are generating press interest as a result of the current economic climate, and emerging Welsh Assembly Government policies.

11 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

- 11.1 There are no immediate diversity or equal opportunities implications arising from this paper. However, the terms of reference for the Committee confirm that the specific duties of the Committee include advising the Council on matters relating to learning and teaching in higher education, including widening access to higher education and Welsh medium provision.

12 Risk Assessment

- 12.1 Risks associated with the areas arising in this paper are detailed below:

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
Council is unable to meet its statutory responsibilities regarding quality assurance	The Committee advises Council on its statutory responsibilities in relation to quality assurance, using a subset of membership where appropriate.