



Academic Board

26 January 2021

MINUTES

1. Attendance and apologies

1.1. Present:

AC Grayling	Master (Chair)
Brian Ball	HoF for Philosophy and Head of Research
Rosalind Barrs	Registrar (Secretary)
Diana Bozhilova	HoF for Politics & IR
Catherine Brown	HoF for English
Chris Gallagher	Vice Chancellor for Global Learning Opportunities, NU
Andrew Ginger	Dean of Faculties
Naomi Goulder	Dean for Academic Development & Innovation
Susan Green	HoF for Art History
Lars Kjaer	HoF for History
Marianna Koli	Dean for Education in Business and Economics, HoF for Economics
Phi Mackness	President NCHSU [from Item 5.2]
Bex Morrison	Director of Academic Services
Indrajit Ray	External Representative
Martin Smith	Executive Dean
Alice Schneider	HoF for Law
Scott Wildman	Director of Apprenticeships
In attendance:	
Shimon Agur	VLE & Library Resources Manager [item 6]

1.2. Apologies

Uta Poiger

Dean of College of Social Sciences and
Humanities, NU

1.3. Notice of meeting

1.3.1. Notice of this meeting had been given to all members.

1.3.2. No members declared any conflict or potential conflict of interest.

1.3.3. The meeting was quorate.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

2.1. The Minutes of 7 December 2020 were **APPROVED**.

2.2. The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of 15 December 2020 were **APPROVED**.

3. Matters arising

3.1. Matters arising were updated.

4. Chair's Actions

4.1 NCH Diploma Team Terms of Reference

The inclusion of the Head of the LAUNCH Programme and the LAUNCH courses (Introductory and Applied Capabilities) Course Leader, and a quorum of the Chair (or nominee) and Head of LAUNCH Programme (or nominee) and at least one student representative for term-time meetings, were approved.

BB queried the inclusion of the LAUNCH Course Leader. MK said that, for reason of practice, it was good for the CL to hear feedback from the student representatives directly.

4.2 NCH Diploma Regulations

MK, RB and Ioannis Votsis, NCH Diploma Coordinator, had discussed the questions outstanding and had made recommendations to the Chair which were approved.

One further matter outstanding had been the penalties for NCH Diploma academic misconduct. This was discussed under Item 5.5.

4.3 Undergraduate Student Attendance Policy

The minor change of removing 'either 24.3 or' from #24.6 was approved.

4.4 Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures

On advice from AS and CB, amendments were approved for #18, #19 and #22, around criminal offences.

4.5 Emergency Modifications to English Course Descriptors

The following modifications had been approved:

NCHEN409 5 hours of two-to-one tutorials reduced to two hours of two-to-one tutorials.

NCHEN508 4 hours of one-to-one tutorial per student reduced to two hours of one-to-one tutorials per student.

NCHEN509 5 hours of two-to-one tutorials reduced to two hours of two-to-one tutorials.

4.6 Removal of assessment compensation for Degree apprenticeship programmes

SW reported that apprentices need to achieve all learning outcomes in order to acquire the competency required by ESFA and Ofsted. This had been approved.

4.7 Maths entry requirement for Economics majors

BM reported that the institution-level Review Panel established to consider the future direction of Economics had recommended that the A-level (or equivalent) Maths requirement for entry from September 2021 would be removed. BM said that the Quality Team was processing the documentation but, noting views of existing students, wanted to check the rationale. MK explained that, previously, courses had been geared to A levels and they needed to be adjusted now. BM asked whether any courses would need to go through the course modification process. MK said that this would not be necessary because the learning outcomes would still be relevant, and it would be the pace of the courses that would differ. It was **AGREED** that the progression of the Economics 2021-entry students would be closely monitored during the academic year.

ACTION: MK to report to AcB on the progression of Economics 2021-entry students during the 2021/22 academic year.

5. Academic Quality Framework, Policies, Strategies and Guidance

5.1 Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards

RB, the former Assistant Registrar and the Academic Services Coordinator had reviewed the Regulations and had suggested revisions in an attempt to clarify terminology. BM and BB had recommended progression criteria for postgraduate students.

BB questioned how the progression would work in practice with regard to Progression and Award Boards.

ACTION: BB, BM and RB to meet to discuss the logistics of PABs and postgraduate progression.

The revisions to the Regulations were **APPROVED**.

5.2 Admissions Policy

MS explained that one minor revision was necessary for #8 because the UKVI were now using 'Student Route' instead of 'Tier 4'.

The revision was **APPROVED**.

5.3 Tier 4 and International Students Admissions Policy

This policy would now be called Student Route Visa and International Students Admissions Policy (see Minute 5.2.) and the revisions were **APPROVED**.

5.4 Student Academic Engagement Policy

This item was **DEFERRED**.

5.5 Academic Misconduct Policy: NCH Diploma Penalties

MK, BM and RB had recommended an additional section to Annex A for penalties to apply for NCH Diploma misconduct because those for the degree programme had not been appropriate. The revisions were **APPROVED**.

5.6 Student Welfare Policy

The Head of Student Wellbeing had reviewed the policy and had recommended revisions, including those of job titles and roles. The policy was **APPROVED**.

5.7 AQF4 Programme and Course Approval and Modification

For Degree Apprenticeships, one independent industry expert appropriate to the programme being proposed was no longer required and was removed from the Approval Panel Membership. This was **APPROVED**.

6. Assessment

6.1 Examinations 2021

BM reported on the consultation she had carried out with the students and on the survey that the NCHSU Team had conducted. She said that the students recognised the position the College was in with regard to planning for the examinations and that arrangements would not please everyone, but they had valued being consulted. The students were broadly in favour of 24-hour examinations. IR shared his experience at Cardiff where some programmes had had set-time, closed-book examinations to complete within a 24-hour window, with extra time for 'administration' added to the set time. After extensive discussion of the merits of open-book and closed book examinations, and set windows and 24-hour windows, plus formats and type of questions, it was decided that HoFs would confer with their Faculties as quickly as possible and then confirm the mode of their examinations to NG so that she, BM and RB could discuss this on 1 February. It was recognised that students need some indication of what the arrangements will be so that they can start to prepare, and that Faculties needed specific as well as general guidance in order to write the examination papers.

Shimon Augur explained how examinations could be taken in Canvas, either as an essay-based paper or as a quiz. Students were already familiar with Canvas, but extra training would be given to them. SW

reported that apprentices had used Canvas today for an examination and it had worked very well.

Students had not been in favour of proctoring, and College had found that that the two platforms available would not be suitable.

LK asked whether College would be open for students if they were unable to take exams at home. BM said that, at present, no guarantee could be given.

ACTION: HoFs to consult Faculties and confirm mode of examinations to NG by 29 January.

6.2 No detriment principles

These would be part of the discussion at the meeting on 1 February (see Minute 6.1).

6.3 Award External Examiner

RB reported that no nominations had been received.

ACTION: RB to ask the Quality Team to advertise on Jisc.

7. Faculty Reviews 2019/20

7.1 Law Faculty Review

The Review was **NOTED**.

8. Student Engagement

8.1 Michaelmas 2020 Engagement Meetings Report

It was recognised that Peter Maber's offerings as Lead on Academic Engagement were a great resource. The report was **NOTED**.

ACTION: CB to ask PM to remind students and staff about his offerings as Lead on Academic Engagement.

8.2 Registers for attendance monitoring

This item was **DEFERRED**.

8.3 Student Wellbeing Termly Service Report Michaelmas 2020

The report was **NOTED**.

9. Governance

9.1 External Academic Board member from September 2021

ACTION: RB to send AcB a reminder about submitting suggestions for an external member.

9.2 Report from Contingency Planning Group

BM reported on the work the facilities team has been undertaking in 19 Bedford Square; on the wellbeing cases that have increased; and discussions around teaching for the remainder of this term.

9.3 Report from Academic Contingency Planning Group

Subsequent to the meeting, NG reported:

9.3.1 Michaelmas student feedback had been reviewed and ACPG had identified appropriate advice and reminders for students and faculty, which were communicated respectively through regular student emails and through the January all-staff meeting and shared Faculty Updates and Reminders document.

9.3.2 Progress on Hilary teaching preparations had been reviewed and appropriate steps where elements were missing or questions of possible re-consolidation of split groups arose were identified.

9.3.3 Priorities in relation to the timing and communication of the decision to stay online-only throughout Hilary were identified.

9.3.4 The ACPG had discussed the pros and cons of online proctoring software and student feedback on the prospect of online exams.

10. Apprenticeships

10.1 Update on WhiteHat Apprenticeships Partnership

SW reported that all workstreams were coming to an end; and that WhiteHat had changed its name to Multiverse.

10.2 Nomination of External Examiner

SW confirmed that criteria 1-11 in Part Five had been met. RB said that, as Chair of TLEC, she was then happy to approve the nomination. AcB **APPROVED** the appointment of Dr Usman Naeem, School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science, QMUL.

11. Deans' Updates

11.1. Dean for Academic Development and Innovation

Subsequent to the meeting, NG reported:

11.1.1 2021/22 Planning

- NCH degrees: Further to discussions between the Academic Deans and Heads of Faculties, adjustments are being made to the teaching sections of course descriptors for 21 entry, to maintain 1:1 tutorials and average contact hours, but to introduce a wider variety of tutorial formats into our teaching overall
- [Redacted – restricted information]

11.1.2 Further future planning

- Curriculum planning ideas were shared on 31 December 2020.
- Individual and working group meetings would be taking place throughout January and February 2021, with each Faculty also involved.

- NG would produce a summary with recommendations for the relevant committees at the end of February 2021.

11.2. Dean of Faculties

This item was **DEFERRED**.

12. Programme/Course Approvals and Modifications

12.1. BSc (Hons) Business and Digital Transformation Outcome Report

This would be a 100% online programme. This programme was **APPROVED**, subject to Northeastern and NCH programme development team working with appropriate staff at NCH to ensure that the programme meets UK legal requirements regarding the recording of synchronous classes.

12.2. MSc Digital Politics and Sustainability and Security Outcome Report

The title of the programme had been changed to MSc Digital Politics and Sustainable Development. This programme was **APPROVED**, subject to final financial planning.

12.3. MSc AI with a Human Face

This programme was **APPROVED**, subject to final financial planning.

12.4. English: Modifications to NCHEN630 Cultures of London and

NCHEN610 North American Literature, whereby both would have a reduction of 2:1 tutorials from five to two, were **APPROVED**, subject to the Quality Team ensuring that all versions of the Course Descriptors are displayed on the College website where there are differences in teaching and learning strategies

12.5. History: NCHHI406 Britain the Wider World to be replaced by NCHHI468 World History.

LK had met all the conditions set by the Programme and Course Modification Review Group (PCMRG), therefore the modification was **APPROVED**.

12.6. Politics & IR: Introduction of two courses Green Political Thought and Sustainable Development. The PCMRG had only be able to consider the modification request form and documentation on 25 January, and the outcome with conditions had not yet been sent to DB, as HoF.

13. Retention of Student Reports

13.1. **ACTION: CB and RB meet to discuss the retention of Collections reports.**

14. AOB

There was no other business.

15. Date of next meetings

Monday 15 March 2021 14.00 – 16.00

Tuesday 11 May 2021 14.00 – 16.00