



# Academic Board

## 20 May 2022

---

### MINUTES

#### 1. Attendance and apologies

##### 1.1. Present:

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Naomi Goulder    | Acting Dean of Faculties (Chair)                                      |
| Alison Statham   | Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning                               |
| Marianna Koli    | Dean for Education in Business and Economics and HoF for Economics    |
| Brian Ball       | HoF for Philosophy and Head of Research                               |
| Lars Kjaer       | HoF for History   |
| Peter Maber      | Acting HoF for English  |
| Bex Morrison     | Director of Academic Services   |
| Alice Schneider  | HoF for Law   |
| Inger Hansen     | Vice President NCHSU  |
| Scott Wildman    | Assistant Vice President for Digital Innovation & Enterprise Learning |
| Callum Barrell   | Lecturer Politics and International Relations                         |
| Diana Waters     | Executive Assistant [Minute Secretary]                                |
| Rebecca Harrison | Academic Registrar [Secretary]  |

##### 1.2. Apologies

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Jacqueline Shorrocks | Interim Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs [co-opted]  |
| Saxony Anders        | President NCHSU                                       |
| Chris Gallagher      | Vice Chancellor for Global Learning Opportunities, NU |

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Uta Poiger      | Dean of College of Social Sciences and Humanities, NU |
| Diana Bozhilova | HoF for Politics & IR                                 |
| Mollie Charge   | Admissions Manager                                    |

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 18 March 2022 were **APPROVED**.

3. Matters arising

- 3.1. Matters arising were **updated**.
- 3.2. [18.03.2022 Action 1] Review the process for matters arising with DW

DW will share live Matters Arising document with action owners within 2 weeks of the last meeting (or sooner, where actions are urgent), reminding them of their actions and deadlines to update progress ahead of the next AcB.

4. Project '23

4.1 **Degree Structure and Disciplines**

Colleagues across the university network are involved in various developments relating to 23 entry undergraduate degree programs. We are working in close collaboration with Boston in order for the degrees to be double validated.

This item is the summary of the currently proposed frameworks for those degrees, to be potentially adapted in the ongoing process.

We are not at the stage for this to be a regulation for approval for the new degrees, but for transparency, this is to show the principles that are being considered to guide the development of programme specifications and regulations. A final framework will come to the AcB for approval.

Single Honours - Do we want to commit ourselves going forward to having the 30-credit dissertation/project being on top of the 180-credits of courses planned for the main degree discipline or do

we want to make it possible that someone can get a single honours degree with the 180-credits including the 30-credits dissertation?

It's common in the sector that you can have a single honours degree without having more than half of your credits in the main discipline.

MK - Dissertation should be optional. Students should be able to choose what type of assessment they perform well on, given their individual strengths.

NG - In the document, it is written: *dissertation/special project*. The concept isn't necessarily that it takes the form of a traditional dissertation, it can also be a project of some other kind.

MK - It is better to have more choice, and that is consistently the view of the students.

**4.2 document** is more substantial on core competency and it does propose that capstone or final project/dissertation is an essential matter built into our degree structure/regulation.

AS - It doesn't necessarily have to be a standard traditional academic dissertation, It could be an executive company project, policy brief that students have worked on with your external stakeholders, etc. The conventional way is that a substantive capstone project would reside within a student's principal subject. If the student is doing joint honours, they will then choose which of the two subjects they are placing it in.

The main issue is whether the capstone should be included within the 180 credits for their major or be an addition to it, which would mean that effectively the students will be expected to complete 210 credits in their major subject.

MK - For Economics the same rules apply. Also in the US, it is a 4-year degree (first - basic, second - intermediate, third - advanced courses, fourth - capstone and possibly some electives) whereas in the UK is three years. We are unable to squeeze the amount of advanced economics students take, into three years.

The dissertation being outside of 180-credits would be more beneficial, as students might wish to do 270-credits in Economics depending on their future goals. Also in favour of giving students more choices rather than less.

BM - FHEQ (The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications) for level 6/honours degree states that there is no requirement for dissertation, but it does talk about the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts.

**Summary:** In some subjects, the Capstone would need to be outside the 180-credits in order to enable a sufficient range of courses.

#### 4. 2 Core Competencies and Writing

BB – We require a point person who is full-time and will manage liaisons with partners.

NG – Agrees this is crucial and had proposed for the budget to engage in this partnership developing work but we need to conclude job descriptions. Looking at new posts and some will be able to support academics with their work in 22/23. Some of the work would be for faculty and some would be for professional posts.

The longer term vision would be that anyone interested in integrating experiential elements or publishing engaged elements into their teaching would be able to work with specialists in those areas.

BB- writing proposal -This is sort of taking some of that out of the major into some separate courses that are not subject specific.

NG: Not necessarily out of the major, but nonetheless integrating it with some subject specific courses, which might be major courses, it would be more of integrating writing.

BB- The concern is we're basically diluting what we teach and Philosophy teaches generic skills rather than philosophy specific.

NG – Not every discipline might require hosting an academic writing component within their courses. So for Philosophy, it might not make sense to integrate this into their course as their students get through their writing requirements through other programmes.

The concern is that this proposes that students will have a course or multiple courses where the primary learning objective is how to write and has no intellectual content other than how to write.

One of the proposed advantages of the first part of this proposal which is to have 5 credit writing elements embedded into their design, is to acknowledge that people learn how to write in particular context.

The requirements for NUpath where students would want to do the American degree will be covered in the course equivalency. Although this might change, it means that we don't have to meet all of the NUpath equivalencies now, we can start thinking about which ones we would want to do now, which ones work, which are the easy ones to do, which are the ones that might be more challenging.

The idea of having a writing professional involved would be very welcomed by many economists, so we wouldn't have to learn how to be writing experts as well as the economists.

The turnover of economics and business at the moment is enormous and it's just not going to be feasible unless we offer the working conditions and pay that keeps people around for longer than a year. The idea of the current Launch lecturer for Professional Education, has been briefly discussed. Launch is an incredibly intensive programme in term time, the timeline to develop this has to be in summer.

How does this sound to the incoming student? Will it make them more or less likely to choose us when they know they have to spend 15 credits in the third year on a course called excitingly writing for many audiences? How would this sell to a 17-year-old, which is actually the most important parameter here?

NUpaths don't necessarily have to exist in unique bespoke modules. As for the concern about taking writing in Philosophy, there is no reason why that writing across audiences and genres couldn't actually be covered in core Philosophy modules.

There is a favour to the proposal which is to acknowledge that in Philosophy we teach writing as in most humanities subjects.

People who have degrees in the humanities could get accredited in their own subject for writing, and that could come with extra feedback time in the workload model.

We have to be careful if there is a specialist subject writing within a course, and to make a student do another course on that would be doubling up on their work with very similar skills.

Perhaps there is a middle way here where we say students have to take courses with these attributes, and you can get that course either by integrating five credits which has an academic writing person or by demonstrating to the college that you are in fact competent to do that within your course without going to the writing person.

MK - Business or international relations students haven't found this to be most beneficial to their course. It has to be presented in a more engaging way.

Part I - Core Competencies - **has been APPROVED**

Part II - Writing - Requires further discussion and has not been approved

## 5. Assessment

### 5.1 Terms of Reference - Academic Board 6.0 DRAFT 03

Research representative is missing from the document, although it was stated in the previous document.

**ACTION: NG - Head of Research should be reinserted and then noted as APPROVED.**

#### 5.2.1 Assessment Strategy

Further discussion about definitions of assessment and authenticity, so it could be refined over the coming weeks and brought back to the next AcB.

AS to request from the board and the associate heads feedback and comments.

**ACTION: AS - to lead on completion of amendments and changes before the next AcB.**

5.2.2 AQF7: Academic Regulations for Taught Awards Part C

The only amendments of this document are around reflecting some of the language in the assessment strategy.

If the Assessment Strategy is under review, then AQF7 will need to be modified in relation to that.

5.2.3.1 Introduction to Assessment Regulations

This paper outlines the changes that we have put into the assessment of regulations for Taught Awards document.

The proposed modifications have come through this academic year with vastly increased number of assessments going through the processes from mobility students, but also from NCH students, and moving to online assessments and submissions.

One big change which is being proposed is to have multiple submissions prior to the assessment deadline. When the assessment closes, the faculty member will take the last submission for marking.

24 hour window is a five percent penalty deduction, 48 hours is capped at 40 percent and anything after the 48 hours would be deemed as a fail.

Messages come from Canvas will include reminders for assessment deadlines.

Those modifications have been reflected into the academic regulations for Taught Awards document, which is 5.2.3.2.

No changes have been applied to any definitions in marking.

The mark and the deduction are being done by the faculty, but the checking is done by the registry.

Further discussion about late penalties will take place at the next AcB.

The main reason for this proposal is so that there's consistency across student canvas and Quercus records.

5.2.3.2 Assessment Regulations

**APPROVED** – apart from needing resolution specifically on the point about whether faculty members are going to be entering deductions.

**ACTION: AS** – to speak to HoFs regarding faculty deducting late penalties on assessments to inform the final decision.

5.3 AQF8 Student Recruitment and Admissions

Students coming from high-risk countries have to go through a more rigorous assessment, it is a regulatory thing making sure they have genuine intention to study.

**APPROVED**

5.4 Academic Reference Form

**APPROVED** – to be reviewed after a year

6 Programme/Course Approvals and Modifications

6.1 Examiner Nomination Form English 2022

[Redacted - restricted information]**APPROVED**

6.2 Programme and Course Modification Request Form for an Apprenticeship programme

7. Research - Expecting a quite substantial research outcome to be presented to the board later in the summer

8. Any other business – no other business

9. Chair's Actions

10. Dean's update – no update

11. Work related learning

11.1 Terms of Reference - Work Related Learning Management Board

- [Redacted- restricted information]Third party has been commissioned to provide an Ofsted-like inspection (6-8th June).
- Third party has been commissioned to provide an ESFA-like audit (4-6th July)
- [Redacted- restricted information]Online BSc (Hons) in Digital & Technology Solutions, and MSc in AI & Data Science to launch October 2022. [Redacted- restricted information]
- Cohort-2 of nd/nc Career Accelerator Studio in the USA launches w/c 13th June.

12. Careers

Careers currently working with NU Careers on an entrepreneurship incubator and a Launch style service for Mobility

Careers also busy securing XN projects for next year's Launch.

13. NCH Prizes –

Prize giving will take place between 13-17 June

BM – the subject prizes are nominated by the faculty/HoFs

14. Date of next meeting

July 2022