



## Extraordinary Academic Board

30 June 2021

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### MINUTES

1. Attendance and apologies

1.1. Present:

Andrew Ginger	Dean of Faculties (Chair)
Rosalind Barrs	Registrar (Secretary)
Diana Bozhilova	HoF for Politics & IR
Naomi Goulder	Dean for Academic Development & Innovation
Lars Kjaer	HoF for History
Marianna Koli	Dean for Education in Business and Economics, HoF for Economics
Peter Maber	Delegate for Head of Faculty for Philosophy
Phi Mackness	President NCHSU
David Mitchell	Delegate for Head of Faculty for Philosophy
Bex Morrison	Director of Academic Services
Indrajit Ray	External Representative
Alice Schneider	HoF for Law
Mollie Charge	Head of Admissions (in attendance)
Scott Wildman	Assistant Vice President for Digital Innovation & Enterprise Learning

1.2. Apologies

Brian Ball	HoF for Philosophy and Head of Research [On research leave]
Catherine Brown	HoF for English

Chris Gallagher Vice Chancellor for Global Learning Opportunities, NU

Susan Green HoF for Art History

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. Processes

2.1 Membership of Committees under Aegis of Academic Board

The background for this item of business which AG had provided was **NOTED:**

There are and would be a significant number of committees under the aegis of Academic Board.

The membership of these committees is important (a) in ensuring the effective conduct of business; (b) (with the exception of those whose substantive roles entail membership of a committee) in providing opportunities from time to time for colleagues to develop professionally.

It is important that there is continuing clarity on the rationale for membership of committees, both for the sake of their effectiveness and for the sake of fairness of opportunity.

The views of AcB were sought which may subsequently lead to a reformulation of protocols.

2.2 Rationalization of Approval Processes and Assessment Boards

The background for this item of business which AG had provided was **NOTED:**

The College has important procedures in place to assess the quality and suitability of new programmes, and to oversee the assessment outcomes of courses and programmes. These procedures involve a close match between the procedure for oversight and the individual element subject to oversight. So, for example, there is a separate CAE for each new programme, and there are a series of CABs. The government has stated that it wishes providers to consider their internal administrative

2.2.1 Programme Approval

SW said that he had had no concerns about the process, as it had been slick and adaptable, and was more agile than that of other

HEIs. IR confirmed this. It was questioned whether the Deans needed to be involved at both the stages of the process: i) the business case/subject matter and ii) the approval event. The Course Approval Event is usually shorter than the agenda timings.

#### 2.2.2 Course Assessment Board/Progression and Award Board

AG thought that there might be more unified boards. SW said that the EDGE boards set a precedent for this. BM said that she had had experience of both models, and it was important to consider course data.

### 3. Shape of the Academic Year from 2022/2023

#### 3.1 Course delivery and course assessment, including options for the teach out of existing courses for continuing students

##### 3.1.1 2022 entry students and onwards were covered by Item 4.

##### 3.1.2 For continuing students (2020 and 2021 entry):

- Overall principle: pursue transitional developments where possible, but avoid 'compromises' that divert time and resources without meaningful benefit to existing learners or towards agreed goals.
- Awaiting results of student consultation and further sector guidance via GuildHE, but based on explorations so far: on any given course, we would need to retain existing teaching and assessment patterns for 2020 and 2021 entry students unless all students on that course explicitly agreed to changes.
- Existing teaching and assessment patterns can be fitted into the semester system as follows (nb dates from the 2022-2023 calendar):
  - o Autumn/Fall (7 September - 17 December 2022)
    - Week 1: arrival and welcome back
    - Weeks 2 - 13: main delivery (12 weeks incl. break)
    - Weeks 14 - 15: coursework / revision (2 weeks)
  - o Spring (9 January - 28 April 2023)
    - Week 1: arrival and welcome back
    - Weeks 2 - 13: main delivery (12 weeks incl. break)
    - Weeks 14 - 16: coursework / revision (3 weeks, with Easter at start)
  - o Summer 1 (8 May - 30 June 2023) 8 weeks
    - Week 1: revision
    - Weeks 2 - 4: final exams (3 weeks)

It was noted that the above dates would make for a very short summer period, which would be undesirable for staff and students alike given the need for annual leave and for a range of summer activities including research. A proposal would therefore be brought back to the next AcB to uphold our commitments to current students under the semester system while ensuring that the summer period would be at least three months.

3.2 Timeline of communication of information to prospective students

This could not be established because more discussions needed to be had under Item 3.1.

3.3 Student Voice: Consultation

PMac reported that 66 responses had been received during the consultation [Redacted- restricted information]

4. Education Strategy

4.1 Update

4.2 Next steps

5. Assessment Briefs: timeline for peer review and approval of Assessment Briefs for 2021/22

The following proposals were considered and **APPROVED**, on the understanding that the deadlines would be typically followed during the transition period and that there was discretion to make distinctions between assessment briefs and exam papers:

- Deadlines are typically to follow the following pattern (but allowing for exceptions, e.g. due to late faculty hires or extensive changes required after assessment panels, as agreed with the Dean for ADI and Head of Quality Assurance).
  - o Each year, by early summer: Academic Services notify all relevant approval parties (including EEs) of proposed timelines for the following academic year.
  - o Each semester/term, by 3.5 weeks before classes begin: HoFs or their delegates complete internal review of core course documentation (including assessment briefs and exam papers) and make it available for sharing with EEs and relevant others (who will be reminded of the deadline for comments). **(A)**
  - o By 2 weeks before classes begin: all comments received; assessment panels take place and faculty are notified of any necessary changes. **(B)**
  - o By 1 week before classes begin: VLE with all course materials including assessment briefs is available to students (unless significant changes were required in which case, relevant sections of the VLE can be kept hidden until classes begin).
  - o Classes begin: VLE with all course materials including assessment briefs is available to students. **(C)**

- *E.g. for 2021/22*
  - Mobility-only Fall courses:
    - o A: 25 August 2021 / B: 5 September 2021 / C: 13 September 2021
  - Non-EDGE NCH Michaelmas courses (*\*plus any required 3<sup>rd</sup> sitting papers from 2020-2021*):
    - o A: 3 September 2021 / B: 13 September 2021 / C: 27 September 2021
  - All non-EDGE Hilary / Spring courses (including mobility-only Spring courses):
    - o A: 15 December 2021 / B: 24 December 2021/ C: 10 January 2022
  - Any outstanding Trinity exam papers:
    - o 8 April 2022 / 18 April 2022
6. Teaching modalities for non-EDGE programmes for 2021/2022 onwards
- 6.1 NCH Diploma: The proposal for Critical Reasoning and Science Literacy, and potentially for Applied Ethics in future years, that i) around 60-70% of the weekly sessions are held online-only in usual daytime hours and ii) 30-40% of the weekly sessions are held as flagship on-ground events (professorial or other such lectures) in the evening was **APPROVED**.
- 6.2 Office hours: The principle that office hours are to be provided online was **APPROVED**.
- 6.3 Pandemic-related contingency scenarios
- The following principles, which would be invoked in case of reduced room capacities (due to social distancing) and/or students needing to self-isolate were **APPROVED**:
- Degree programmes (non-EDGE)
    - o Large lectures (typically, those with 20 or more students)
      - Online only.
    - o Small lectures / Seminars (typically, those with 19 students or fewer)
      - Primarily on ground, but made available through NUFlex for those who cannot attend otherwise.
    - o Group tutorials
      - Primarily on ground, but made available through NUFlex for those who cannot attend otherwise.
    - o 1:1s
      - Online only.
  - Mobility programmes

- o Where a course has 2 equal-length, equal-size, classes per week (as is typical for mobility-only courses):
  - If the course is taught in sections of 19 students or fewer:
  - Both of the 2 weekly sessions are to be primarily on ground, but made available through NUflex for those who cannot attend otherwise.
  - If the course is taught in sections of 20 or more students:
    - Either:
      - o 1 of the 2 weekly sessions is to be online only, and the other is to be primarily on ground, but made available through NUflex for those who cannot attend otherwise.
    - Or:
      - o Both of the 2 weekly sessions are to be made available through NUflex.
- For other mobility course teaching patterns, the guidance for our other degree programme courses applies.
- Diploma
  - o Deliver an increased proportion of sessions online only.
  - o Operate a sign-up system for remaining, selected, (e.g keynote / professorial) on-ground sessions, making these available through live-stream and as recordings for those who cannot attend on-ground.

It was **NOTED** that if on-ground attendance for any on-ground component of any course falls to 50% or lower of total attendance for that component, this triggers a discussion (and decision) as to whether the overall learning experience would be improved with a switch to online-only delivery (of that component) for the rest of the semester / term. It was also **NOTED** that, in all cases, where a course has multiple sections, parity of learning *opportunities* across sections needs to be maintained.

## 7. Programme/Course Approvals and Modifications

### 7.1 MSc Digital and Technology Solutions: CAE Outcome Report

This course was **APPROVED**, subject to the Chair receiving no concerns.

### 7.2 BSc Project Management and Digital Transformation Degree Apprenticeship Programme: CAE Outcome Report

This course was **APPROVED**, subject to the Chair receiving no concerns.

7.3 Modern Art and Architecture: 1850 to Present (course)

This course was **APPROVED**, subject to the Chair receiving no concerns.

7.4 NCHCW525 The Writer's Voice: Influence and Innovation and NCHCW627 Final Year Project and Publishing Horizons (modifications)

These course modifications were **APPROVED**, subject to the Chair receiving no concerns.

8. Date of next meeting

18 August provisionally. If HoFs were unable to attend, they were asked to provide RB with names of a Faculty substitute. BM warned AcB that there would be revised policies, procedures and AQF Chapters to consider.