The Learning and Teaching Board

Minutes Present: Professor J W Sawkins (Chair)
Ms P J Calabrese Ms R J Moir (by Skype)
Mr D Cowan Professor J M Ritchie
Professor F Grant Dr M Sargeant
Professor J Hansen Mr P Travill
Professor B Jones (by Skype) Dr G B Thomson
Dr P Kew (by Skype) Professor M L D Wong (by Skype)
Dr S McLaughlin Dr M King (Clerk)
Mr L J Miles

In attendance Ms J Pilcher (Minute 40)

Apologies Dr S Arthur

33 Welcome and Apologies

33.1 The Chair welcomed Dr P Kew, Dean of the University (Science and Engineering), as a new member of the Board. The Chair also welcomed: Ms J Pilcher, International Recruitment Manager, in connection with the item on Student Recruitment (see Minute 40).

33.2 Apologies for absence were as recorded above.

34 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board approved the Minutes of the meeting of 5 April 2017.

35 Matters Arising Not Otherwise on the Agenda

35.1 The Board noted the report on matters arising from the meeting on 5 April 2017.

35.2 Contract Cheating (Minute 23.3)

The Board noted that the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Student Union President would provide a presentation on contract cheating at the Senate on 17 May 2017. It was also noted that Graphics staff were currently engaged in drafting posters relating to academic misconduct/contract cheating. As per the Board’s recommendation (Minutes 3.4, 23.3.3), the posters aimed to be eye-catching and engaging, with consideration given to the message and tone.

35.3 Student Union: Elections and Oscars (Minute 11)

The Student President reported that the Learning and Teaching Oscars, which had been held on 3 May 2017, had been very successful, with a significant increase in quality of nominations from students. The Board congratulated those members and other staff who won or had been short-listed for the Learning and Teaching Oscars. It was noted that the Dubai Campus had held its Learning and Teaching Oscars in April 2017, and that a similar ceremony had been held at the Malaysia Campus, focusing on the “best teacher” award.

35.4 Graduate Level Apprenticeships (126.3)

The Board noted that consideration would be given to ensuring that students admitted through the Graduate Level Apprenticeship route were incorporated into the University’s existing student representative structures. It was also noted that the Graduate Level Apprenticeships students would need to be provided with an e-portfolio; consideration was then given to extending this to all students. It was further noted that future matters related to the academic aspects of the Graduate Level Apprenticeships would be progressed through the Student Learning Experience Committee.
The Board noted that the Lecture Capture Pilot Working Group was in the process of being established and one of its first tasks would be to scope out the extent of the pilot. It was agreed that Directors of Learning and Teaching should identify to the Head of Academic Quality any further potential participants in the pilot. It was further agreed that all rooms with lecture capture facilities should be identified for all campus locations, so that the pilot could be properly institution-wide.

The Board noted that a CMA summary, together with the presentation, had been circulated for use in raising-awareness and discussing the impact of CMA compliance on programme structures and other relevant matters. It was noted that the issue had been raised as to what process Schools should follow in terms of highlighting forthcoming major changes to programme structures in such a way as to comply with the CMA. It was agreed that a process and timeline, with accompanying guidance, should be developed collaboratively by Schools, relevant Professional Services and key individuals such as those involved in existing marketing and programme approvals procedures. It was agreed that this should be discussed in the first instance by the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), the Assistant Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Head of Academic Quality.

The Board noted that the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Director of Learning and Teaching, School of Social Sciences, which had academic responsibility for PG CAP, had as yet to meet with the Head of the Centre for Academic Leadership and Development to discuss issues related to the provision of PG CAP.

The Board noted the following, additional items related to learning and teaching:

- NSS 2017 had closed, with a 81.8% response rate for HWU, which was much higher than national average of 68%; the Board conveyed its thanks to Schools and in particular to Ms E J Bailey, the Planning Manager;
- The University would be notified of its TEF rating on 12 June, with national publication of the results of all participating UK HEI’s announced on 14 June 2017.

The Board noted that, at its meeting on 5 April 2017, it had been highlighted that the development process would shortly commence for the new University Learning and Teaching Strategy. In this context, the Board had agreed that the current Strategic Process for the Learning and Teaching Strategy remained fit for purpose. It had also been agreed that the process and timeline for the new Learning and Teaching Strategy should be presented to the Board for consideration as soon as possible in order to provide sufficient time for consultation across all campuses.

The Board raised or noted the following points in its discussion of the Learning and Teaching Strategy consultation process and timeline

- As per the current process, there would be extensive, inclusive consultation about the new Learning and Teaching Strategy, involving students and staff at all campus locations and integrating with the University’s international direction; links with research would likewise be fundamental;
- A half-day session would be held on 6 September 2017 to discuss the consultation process in more detail and to undertake an initial identification of key, potential themes to be included in the consultation document;
- The process for a new Learning and Teaching Strategy had been endorsed by the University’s senior officers and would proceed in parallel with processes for developing a new University Strategic Plan;
• The open workshops, which had been held as part of the consultation process on all campuses, had been particularly effective in engaging a wide range of colleagues in shaping the current Learning and Teaching Strategy;
• There would be frequent, ongoing engagement with the University’s key committees.

36.3 The Board approved the consultation process and timeline for the new Learning and Teaching Strategy, noting that an update would be provided to the Board at each of its meetings, with the next one due on 14 June 2017. It was agreed that a communications-friendly version of the Board’s papers should be produced, which would enable Board members to disseminate to, and raise awareness amongst, colleagues and thereby promote widespread engagement in the strategy process.

37 Report on Learning and Teaching Fact-Finding Visits to the US

37.1 The Board noted that, during November 2016, fact-finding visits were undertaken at a selected series of US institutions by the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Senior Deputy Vice-Principal, Malaysia. It was noted that the purpose of the visits was to inform the University’s vision for learning and teaching, and that institutions were selected on the basis of innovative approaches to learning and teaching, including:

• Problem-based/global challenge based learning and teaching
• Extensive deployment of technology-enhanced learning and teaching
• Individual and Group based learning and teaching

37.3 The Board agreed that the fact-finding reports should be considered as part of the new Learning and Teaching Strategy process, and that all Board members should highlight to the Head of Academic Quality any innovative features which they had observed in their visits to other HEI’s. It was further agreed that members could contact the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) if they wished to find out further information on the vision and processes followed to realise this in each of the three US institutions.

38 Academic Management Structures: Improving Cross-Campus Management and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching

38.1 The Board noted that, at its meeting on 1 March 2017, it had considered and endorsed in principle proposals for improving cross-campus management and enhancement of learning and teaching. Since several matters had been raised with regard to clarifying the arrangements and ensuring that they did not replicate nor undermine the existing School structures, it had been agreed that a small group of members should develop the proposals further, with a view to consideration by the Board at its meeting on 5 April or 10 May 2017.

38.2 The Board considered the revised proposals, which focused on the establishment of a cross-campus Learning and Teaching Enhancement Forum at the Dubai Campus and the Malaysia Campus, which would report to the Learning and Teaching Board and which would feature School representatives nominated by School Directors of Learning and Teaching.

38.3 The Board raised or noted the following points in its discussion of the proposals:

• The focus of each Forum was on cross-campus discussion and development of strategic and operational matters related to learning and teaching; the Forum was not intended to undermine existing School structures nor to divert each campus in a different direction; rather the principal purposes were around enhancing learning and teaching and enhancing the student learning experience;
• Each Forum would provide the Deputy Vice-Principals with an established group to progress enhancement-related developments across the campus;
• Schools currently had a number of roles which were not reflected in the Academic Management Structures and which were referred to by differing titles, which caused confusion for students; it was noted that such inconsistencies were more apparent at the Dubai and Malaysia Campuses.

38.4 The Board approved the establishment, with effect from session 2016/17, of a cross-campus Learning and Teaching Enhancement Forum at the Dubai Campus and the Malaysia.
Campus, each of which would report to the Learning and Teaching Board. As part of this, it was agreed that the following matters should be undertaken:

- The remits of the Board, Student Learning Experience Committee, each Forum and the School Learning and Teaching Committee should be reviewed and aligned to avoid duplication;
- The need for a similar Forum for the Scottish campuses should be considered vis-à-vis the current role of the Student Learning Experience Committee;
- The structures and roles, particularly role titles, which were currently in use in Schools and were outwith the scope of the Academic Management structures, should be reviewed with a view to identifying areas of inconsistency and lack of clarity;
- Directors of Learning and Teaching should identify to each of the Deputy Vice- Principals (Dubai and Malaysia) their School representatives on each Forum; the key criteria would be that such individuals would have the authority to speak on behalf of their School on campus-specific matters related to learning and teaching;
- The operation of each Learning and Teaching Enhancement Forum should be reviewed one year after its establishment.

38.5 The Board agreed that the following should be presented for consideration at its meeting on 6 September 2017:

- remit of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Forum and of its members;
- a proposal for School structures and roles outwith the Academic Management Structures;
- a review of the learning and teaching reporting structure, taking into consideration the roles of the Board, Student Learning Experience Committee and the campus-specific Learning and Teaching Enhancement Forum, with a view to confirming the primacy of the Board as a global Learning and Teaching Board operating across all campuses.

39 Global Learning and Teaching Transformational Initiatives: Updates

The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) provided a verbal report on the Global Learning and Teaching Transformational Initiatives as follows:

- a report on the Academic Framework was due to be submitted by the Project Leader;
- discussions were in progress with regard to the location of and staffing for the Learning and Teaching Academy;
- learning and teaching activities currently undertaken by the Centre for Academic Leadership and Development would continue (PG CAP, LEADS and Enhancement Themes); the Learning and Teaching Colloquium 2017 would not be held; no decision had as yet been taken on the Learning and Teaching Symposium;
- a report on the various projects would be provided to the University Leadership Forum at its meeting on 18 May 2017;
- the vision for the Learning and Teaching Academy would be shaped as part of the consultation on the new Learning and Teaching Strategy, with the aim of formally launching both simultaneously in September 2018.

40 Discussion Item: Student Recruitment Update

40.1 The Board noted that, as part of its Standing Agenda Items, there were two reports per annum related to student recruitment:

- In May/June: to update on projected intakes for September entry and key issues arising;
- In October/November: to review the September intake and identify relevant actions to inform the Student Recruitment Strategy.

40.2 Ms J Pilcher, International Recruitment Manager, provided a review of project intakes and related issues. The key points were as follows:

Scottish Campuses
- UG applications to Scottish campuses had decreased by -10% on last year. RUK recruitment had contracted by ~25% in applications and acceptances to date;
• Scottish, Wider Access and EU applications were also down but Unconditional Firm acceptances were up overall by +2%;
• International (non-EU) applications at UG level had dropped by -6% but acceptances were up on last year considerably at this stage;
• PGT applications to Scottish Campuses had decreased overall by -8% but early acceptances were significantly up on last year – by +43% for Unconditional Firm Acceptances and +38% for Conditional Firm Acceptances.

Dubai Campus
• Dubai data showed a -11% decrease in applications but a +39% increase in acceptances overall (as of end of March 2017). There was a particular concern over recruitment to the Degree Entry Programme (applications down by -36%); however, early acceptance rates for the DEP were positive at +29% on last year.

Malaysia Campus
• Recruitment to the April intake for the Foundation programme was below target (158 intake against target of 225), but applications for the July and September intake were tracking ahead of last year.

40.3 Discussion
The Board raised or noted the following points in its discussion of student recruitment:
• A significant amount of time and effort was being expended by Schools, Recruitment and Marketing on conversion. Other proactive approaches included: reviewing agency network and increasing the number of articulation pathways;
• Contributing factors to declining applications included increased competition (all locations), currency exchange rates (Dubai) and short-timescales to apply (Malaysia);
• There was some discrepancy over the Dubai data, which the Deputy Vice-Principal (Dubai) and the International Recruitment Manager agreed to discuss outwith the meeting;
• There was a need for the University to be more prompt in responding to changing market demand and market forces;
• The new international scholarships had attracted large numbers of applications;
• The promotion of pathways through INTO partnerships could be an opportunity to increase international student numbers; it was agreed that the Deputy Vice-Principal (Dubai) and the International Recruitment Manager should discuss this further outwith the meeting;
• The development of an International Foundation College for all foundation programmes was at an early stage of discussion; the current 2-year Masters programmes could provide a model for the pre-Masters provision offered through this route; it was agreed that an update on the proposed International Foundation College should be presented to the Board for consideration in due course, and the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Assistant Principal (International) would bring this forward in due course.

40.4 Widening Access
The Board noted that a report had been provided on Widening Access, including draft key objectives for the University’s Widening Access Strategy. It was agreed that the Colleges and Wider Access Officer should be invited to comment on the report by correspondence.

41 ELIR Action Plan
41.1 The Board noted that, as part of its Standing Agenda Items, and to facilitate reporting to QAA Scotland and to the Scottish Funding Council, it considered annually progress towards the action plan associated with the outcomes of the most recent ELIR and of QAA UK Transnational Education Reviews (TNE). It was noted that the latest version of the ELIR3 and TNE Action Plan had been deferred from the meeting on 1 Mach 2017, pending further consideration of actions highlighted as “still to be progressed”.

41.2 The Board noted that most actions were now “complete”; the remaining actions were in progress, relating to the PGR student lifecycle, the Learning and Teaching Academy and
research-teaching linkages. It was noted that, if the ELIR4 cycle followed the same timetable as ELIR3, the University could have its ELIR review in January-March 2020; as per ELIR3, this would coincide with REF (TEF would also be ongoing).

41.3 The Board approved the ELIR3 and TNE Action Plan.

**42 Student Union Item: Annual Learning and Teaching Report**

42.1 The Board noted that, as part of its Standing Agenda Items, the Student Union provided, each May, an annual report on its activities related to learning and teaching for consideration: the 2016/17 report had been produced by the President of the Student Union.

42.2 The President of the Student Union highlighted a range of initiatives and developments outlined in the Annual Report, including:

- The Union’s support for the University in the Teaching Excellence Framework;
- The success of the new post of Combined Studies School Officer;
- The highly engaged, supportive group of School Officers in 2016/17;
- Ongoing developments related to PGR representation and support;
- Developing online training for Class Reps, which could be delivered globally across campuses and to ALP and IDL students;
- Collaboration with Orkney, Dubai and Malaysia student representatives to ensure that they were part of the wider student community;

42.3 The Board noted that a report on the 2016/17 Learning and Teaching Partnership Agreement would be submitted as part of the Student Union’s next Annual Report on Learning and Teaching.

42.4 The Board raised or noted the following points in its discussion of the Student Union Report:

- The Student President Malaysia had opted to continue as a full-time student rather than as a Sabbatical; it was agreed that the Deputy Vice-Principal (Malaysia) and the Academic Registrar should discuss this further;
- Factual inaccuracies had been corrected, and the relevant sections revised in the report, which would be submitted to the Global Student Liaison Committee;
- The Student Union and the Directors of Learning and Teaching, School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society, should meet to consider the most effective and efficient means of student engagement and representation at the Orkney Campus;
- Action was being taken to enable the 2017/18 School Officers to be appointed, trained and in place as soon as possible before the start of next session;
- There should be similar learning and teaching reports from the Dubai and Malaysia Student Presidents: it was agreed that the Deputy Vice-Principal (Malaysia) and the Deputy Vice-Principal (Dubai) should discuss this with the Head of Academic Quality with a view to ensuring that these reports were likewise presented for consideration to the Board annually at its May meeting.

42.5 The Board extended its thanks to the Student Union President and the Student Engagement Manager for both the report and their ongoing contribution to learning and teaching.

**43 University Risk Register: Learning and Teaching**

43.1 The Board noted that, as per its Standing Agenda Items, it conducted a twice-yearly (May and November) review of the University’s Learning and Teaching Risks.

43.2 The Board approved the current Learning and Teaching Risks as accurate and agreed that this should be notified to the Senior Risk Administrator.

**44 Review of Remit of Learning and Teaching Board**

44.1 The Board noted that, in accordance with all Boards of the University Executive, it was required to review its Terms of Reference on an annual basis (to be conducted each May,
as per the Board’s *Standing Agenda Items*). It was also noted that, while the Senate Effectiveness Review was still in progress (due to provide final recommendations on the three primary committees to the Senate on 17 May 2017), the Board was still required to conduct its annual review of its Terms of Reference. It was further noted that the implementation of these Terms of Reference was expected to be time-limited and would be withdrawn following the establishment of the University Learning and Teaching Committee.

44.2 The Board endorsed the 2017/18 version of the Terms of Reference, noting that the only changes related to updating of membership. The Board agreed to recommend approval of the updated Terms of Reference to the University Executive.

45 **Student Learning Experience Committee: Minutes and Action List**

45.1 The Board noted that, as part of its *Standing Agenda Items*, the minutes of the recent meeting of the Student Learning Experience Committee on 5 April 2017 had been provided for consideration, as had the latest version of the SLEC Action List, which had been provided in order to facilitate oversight of, and engagement in, the SLEC agenda by the Board.

45.2 The Board endorsed the SLEC Action List and also the approach adopted by the new Chair of the Committee in allocating School-related tasks.

46 **Watt Makes Us Distinctive**

The Board noted that, at the meeting of the Senate on 29 March 2017, the Principal had highlighted the distinctive characteristics of Heriot-Watt University; these were now being presented to the Board for information, in view of the correlation with the HWU Graduate Attributes. It was noted that the distinctive characteristics would inform the new Learning and Teaching Strategy.

47 **Papers for Information**

The Board noted the following paper, which had been provided for information on the Board’s SharePoint site: https://intranet.hw.ac.uk/ps/registry/ar/lt/LTB%20Meeting%20Papers/Forms/AllItems.aspx

- QAA View Point: How universities and employers can work together to improve graduate outcomes: evidence from QAA reviews

48 **Quality Enhancement Officer**

The Board noted that Mrs P J Calabrese, Quality Enhancement Officer, would be leaving Heriot-Watt University at the end of May to take up a post at another university and, as a consequence, was attending her last meeting of the Learning and Teaching Board. The Board thanked the Quality Enhancement Officer for her contribution to the work of the Board, particularly in the capacity of Clerk to Student Learning Experience Committee, and conveyed its best wishes for the future.

49 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Board will be held on Wednesday 14 June 2017, **9.15 am**, Anderson Room, Library. There will be a meeting of the Student Learning Experience Committee at **2.15 pm**, Anderson Room, Library.