Teaching and Quality Enhancement Committee

Summary

This is the report of the TQEC meeting of 16 October 2013.

Recommended Action

The Board is asked to note the report and approve the following recommendations:

- Approval of the proposal for Birkbeck to publish External Examiner reports to ITS account holders, subject to the revisions to the report form specified in 7.2 (paragraph 7)
- Approval of proposals for new, amended, withdrawn and suspended programmes as listed in Appendix 1 (paragraph 8)
- Approval of a proposal to allow up to 240 credits of Accredited Prior Learning on first degrees (paragraph 9)
- Approval of the Regulations for the International Programmes MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Organizational Psychology (paragraph 10)

Professor Sue Jackson
October 2013
ABExCo 16 October 2013
Academic Board 28 November 2013

REPORT OF THE TEACHING AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

ABExCo and Academic Board are invited to receive the report of the Teaching and Quality Enhancement Committee from its meeting of 16 October 2013 and to consider its recommendations:

- Approval of the proposal for Birkbeck to publish External Examiner reports to ITS account holders, subject to the revisions to the report form specified in 7.2 (paragraph 7)
- Approval of proposals for new, amended, withdrawn and suspended programmes as listed in Appendix 1 (paragraph 8)
- Approval of a proposal to allow up to 240 credits of Accredited Prior Learning on first degrees (paragraph 9)
- Approval of the Regulations for the International Programmes MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Organizational Psychology (paragraph 10)

1 CHAIR’S REPORT
1.1 The Chair noted successful recruitment of students onto three year undergraduate programmes via UCAS and the need to consider how to optimise learning and teaching to meet their needs. She also reported on Strategic Planning Committee’s discussions over the summer on the characteristics of the Birkbeck student body, undergraduate and postgraduate provision and learning and teaching. SPC had agreed that Birkbeck students are diverse in terms of background and academic experience but distinctive in terms of their independence and their combining of study with other commitments. The discussion on learning and teaching had focused on flexible delivery to meet these needs, including online and blended learning; and on fostering critical engagement - a distinctive characteristic of much of Birkbeck’s academic body – among students. The next step would be to consider how this might be embedded in the curriculum.

1.2 The Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching will open with an event on 6 November 2013.

2 LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
2.1 TQEC discussed a first draft of priorities for learning and teaching in 2013-14 and beyond. The priorities centre on learner support including English language, study skills and making the transition to postgraduate study; student feedback; assessment; employability; three term learning; the new Centre for Transformative Practice and online provision. A strategic approach, taking initiatives forward in an integrated manner, is needed.
3 STUDENT CHARTER
3.1 TQEC considered and gave feedback on the development of a student charter setting out expectations and responsibilities of students, the College and the Students’ Union. Its view is that the Charter should emphasise the distinctive aspects of Birkbeck and be explicitly linked to our mission. The Committee, in tandem with the Student Experience and Widening Participation Committee, will consider a draft Charter next term.

4 LEARNING AND TEACHING WORKING GROUP
4.1 The working group has focused on assessment strategies, supported by a project funded by the Higher Education Academy; and on work to embed the relationships between College and School TQECs.

5 STAFF SURVEY
5.1 TQEC received a report on the recent staff survey. Members were invited to discuss survey feedback on mentoring and line management with colleagues in their Schools, with the aim of increasing engagement.

6 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY
6.1 TQEC considered a report on Birkbeck’s performance in the NSS. Although the scores are comparable with previous years, the College has slipped in the league tables, while other institutions have taken strategic approaches in order to improve their rankings. As well as discussions in TQEC, SEWP and SPC, the outcomes in relation to each School are being discussed with Executive Deans and Assistant Deans.

6.2 In response to the feedback on identifying personal tutors, TQEC will revisit the personal tutor policy and review the practice for communicating information on personal tutors to students and vice versa.

6.3 In response to the feedback about advice and guidance on module choice, TQEC noted that the move to online module choice in the Flexible Study project needs to be accompanied by appropriate advice for students.

6.4 TQEC has asked the Schools to consider their NSS feedback and report back on responses and outcomes in January.

6.5 TQEC also agreed a proposal to run NSS-style surveys for non-finalists in place of the current surveys. This will allow issues to be identified and addressed before the NSS.

7 EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORTS
7.1 Following a query raised at Academic Board on HE sector practice for publishing External Examiner reports, TQEC heard that most institutions do publish the reports to staff and students. It is a QAA requirement for institutions to make the full reports available to students.

7.2 TQEC endorsed the proposal for Birkbeck to publish External Examiner reports to all ITS account holders (staff, students and students invited to
enrol), subject to revisions to the report form to state that reports will be published and to differentiate between a section confirming that standards have been met and a section for any specific comments for examination boards to consider.

7.3 Academic Board is invited to approve the proposal for Birkbeck to publish External Examiner reports to ITS account holders, subject to the revisions to the report form specified in 7.2.

8 PROGRAMME APPROVAL
8.1 Programmes Committee did not meet last term but conducted its business by circulation of papers. TQEC confirmed that all the programme proposals reported had been considered by College programme development panels.

8.2 Academic Board is invited to approve the proposals for new, amended, withdrawn and suspended programmes as listed in Appendix 1.

9 COMMON AWARD SCHEME: ACCREDITED PRIOR LEARNING
9.1 TQEC endorsed a proposal to allow up to 240 credits of Accredited Prior Learning enabling Higher National Diploma (HND) holders to top up to degrees. This is in line with University of London regulations.

9.2 Academic Board is invited to approve this proposal.

10 INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME REGULATIONS
10.1 Academic Board is invited to approve the Regulations for the International Programmes MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Organizational Psychology, which TQEC has endorsed. The document is available from this link.

11 PROGRAMME MONITORING AND REVIEW
11.1 TQEC noted and was satisfied with departmental responses to recent reviews in Law and Psychological Sciences. It commended the good practices being identified in reviews, which are published on the Academic Standards and Quality (ASQ) website. The Committee will consider what more can be done to promote this information.

11.2 TQEC also agreed a proposal for annual programme monitoring and portfolio review to be conducted as a single exercise, with dual reporting to TQEC and SPC.

12 PROGRAMME SPECIFICATIONS
12.1 TQEC noted progress in completing Programme Specifications for Certificates of HE and postgraduate programmes, following completion of programme specifications for first degrees as part of the preparation for KIS. 50% of the Programme Specifications have been submitted. TQEC will continue to monitor progress.

13 INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS
13.1 TQEC noted the extension of the agreement to issue conditional offers to applicants on level 3 access courses at all 49 FE and designated Colleges
within M25, providing new student recruitment and access opportunities. It also noted the data being development to monitor recruitment and progression of students from this route.

14 OTHER MATTERS
14.1 TQEC noted reports on
   • Publication of the 2014-15 Key Information Set (KIS);
   • Student retention strategy development;
   • Three term learning.

Katharine Bock
October 2013
College Programmes Committee – 27th June 2013
Report to TQEC – 15th October 2013

Summary
This paper is a report from the College Programmes Committee of new programmes, major programme amendments and withdrawn/suspended programmes. Copies of all paperwork is available here:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/committees/programmes/20130627

The following was approved via Chair’s action:

FULL PROGRAMMES

MSc Human Resource Development and Consultancy
BA Psychosocial Studies
BA in Contemporary History and Politics
MSc Comparative Business Systems
BA History and International Relations
MSc Politics of Population, Migration and Ecology
MA Social and Cultural Geography
Grad Dip Foundation Programme for Postgraduate Study
BA Media Management (top up to Fd Arts & Media Management)
BA Arts Management (top up to Fd Arts & Media Management)

MAJOR AMENDMENT

Grad Cert History of Art and Architecture
Programme Spec Grad Cert History of Art and Architecture
MSc Human Resource Management
MSc Management Consultancy and Organisational Change

PROGRAMME WITHDRAWAL:

Cert HE Language and Film/Media (Arts)
  o Cert HE French and Film/Media
  o Cert HE German and Film/Media
  o Cert HE Portuguese and Film/Media
  o Cert HE Spanish and Film/Media
Cert HE Spanish and Latin American Studies (Arts)
Cert HE Culture and Language (Arts)
  o Cert HE Culture and Language French
  o Cert HE Culture and Language Japanese
  o Cert HE Culture and Language Portuguese
  o Cert HE Culture and Language Spanish
MRes/PG Dip Research in Law (Law)
LLM Law & Social Justice (Law)
Biodiversity and Conservation; Biological Sciences (Science)
  o Cert HE Biodiversity and Conservation
  o Dip HE Biodiversity and Conservation
  o Cert HE Biological Sciences
  o Dip HE Biological Sciences

Biomedicine; Chemical and Molecular Biology (Science)
  o BSc Biomedicine
  o Cert HE Biomedicine
  o Dip HE Biomedicine
  o BSc Chemical and Molecular Biology

Cert CE Professional Studies (SHPP)

BA Linguistics and Culture (SHPP)

MA Communication (SSHP)

Family and Systemic Psychotherapy (SHPP)
  o MSc Family and Systemic Psychotherapy
  o PG Cert Family and Systemic Psychotherapy

MRes Business Strategy and Environment

MA London, Cities, Culture: Urban and Metropolitan Histories

MA Medicine, Science and Society (SHPP)

PROGRAMME SUSPENSION

MA Television History and Practice (Arts)
MRes Earth Sciences (Science)
MSc Climate Change Geoscience (Science)
College Cert Geology (Science)
Grad Cert Geological Field Techniques (Science)
Cert HE Field Geology (Science)