

SCOTTISH ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CREDIT AND ACCESS

UNCONFIRMED

Minutes of the forty-first meeting of the Committee held at 1.00 pm on Tuesday 17 October 2006 at the QAA Scottish Office, 183 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5QD.

Present:

Professor John Harper (Chair) (Robert Gordon University)
Professor Sam Allwinkle (Napier University)
Ms Lynn Tully – for Ms Sarah Breslin (Scottish Qualification Authority)
Ms Margaret Dundas (National Access Co-ordinator)
Mr Robin Harding (Open University)
Ms Rachel Heaney (Student member)
Ms Ruth Howard (SWAP-East)
Professor David Kirk (Queen Margaret University College)
Ms Rowena Kochanowska, (University of Strathclyde)
Mr Gerard Madill (Universities Scotland)
Professor Andrew Nash (University of Glasgow)
Dr Jane Polglase, (Association of Scottish Colleges)
Professor Mike Swanston (University of Abertay)
Professor Simon van Heyningen (University of Edinburgh)

Officers:

Dr David Bottomley (QAA Scotland)
Dr Alan Runcie (QAA Scotland/Universities Scotland)
Ms Heather Gibson (QAA Scotland)

Apologies for absence:

Ms Sarah Breslin (Scottish Qualification Authority)
Professor Robert Craik (Heriot Watt University)
Dr Alan Davidson (University of Dundee)
Dr Bill Harvey (Scottish Funding Councils)
Professor Roy Leitch (Interactive University)
Ms Alison Lumsden (Perth College)
Professor Alex McLennan (Bell College)
Dr Anne McGillivray (University of Paisley).
Mr Norman Sharp (QAA Scotland)
Professor Allan Walker (Glasgow School of Art)
Professor Andrew Walker (SAC)

1. **Membership and apologies**

- 1.1 It was noted that SACCA had three new members; these were, Professor Andrew Walker (SAC), Professor Allan Walker (Glasgow School of Art) and Dr Anne McGillivray (University of Paisley). The Committee also received paper 42-01 which set out membership for 2006-07.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising**

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed as being a correct record of the meeting held on 14 June 2006 (paper 42-02) apart from one amendment to the last sentence of paragraph 4.2 which now read "This might include the provision of work-based qualifications, which could allow those already in work to undergo an additional form of study in higher education."

Minute 4.7 Potential programme of work with the Sector Skills Development Agency

- 2.2 It was reported that a representative from the Sector Skills Development Agency would be invited to the next meeting of SACCA.

Minute 6.2 Burgess Group proposal for a credit framework for England and Wales in higher education

- 2.3 The points noted in this minute were communicated informally to the Burgess Group and also raised formally at one of their meetings. These points had been noted by the Burgess Group.

Minute 7.2 European Diploma Supplement and Information about Learner Achievement

- 2.4 It was reported that arrangements for another event to support the Scottish HE sector with implementation of the EDS were in hand. It was also noted that the UK Socrates/Erasmus Council were organising a workshop on the Diploma Supplement, Certificate Supplement and Europass in Glasgow in November 2006. It was agreed that officers would consider how SACCA's work interacts with this to avoid duplication of work and the potential for confusion.

Minute 8.1 SACCA Website

- 2.5 It was reported that the SACCA website would be online by the end of December 2006.

Minute 10.3 National Courses Database

- 2.6 It was reported that the meeting between relevant bodies and involving the Scottish Executive Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department had not been arranged. This would be rectified in the near future.

3. Programme of Work for the 2006-07 session

Programme of work for SACCA and the SCQF, 2006-07

- 3.1 The Committee received papers 42-03 and 42-05 which provided an outline of proposed priorities for the programme of work in 2006-07 and an opportunity for the Committee to consider and revise its remit.
- 3.2 There was considerable debate by the Committee about what should be the main priorities for the next session. A consensus emerged that the Committee should have a more active, less passive role. It was decided that this would mean that it should focus on a few areas of project work rather than engage less deeply with a number of areas. After discussion, these areas of project work were identified as:
 - 3.2.1 Joint Degrees as part of the Bologna Process - how to best support the sector to implement these. A small group would discuss how best to progress this outside the meeting.
 - 3.2.2 College-HEI transitions, in particular managing transitions from HEI to College. A specification would be drawn up by a small working group (to be constituted) and submitted to the Scottish Funding Council for funding.
 - 3.2.3 Work Based Learning.
 - 3.2.4 Extending the use of SCQF within higher education in Scotland.
- 3.3 In addition, it was agreed that SACCA should continue its monitoring and informing role in respect to initiatives in Europe, credit frameworks in the rest of the UK, SCQF developments and various other issues with concern to its remit. These could be presented either as agenda items for information or circulated between meetings.
- 3.4 It was agreed that officers would consider these points with members of the Committee outside the meeting and report to the next meeting.

Promoting the lifelong learning opportunities afforded by the SCQF

- 3.5 The Committee received paper 42-05, which asked that SACCA consider and comment on the conclusions of a report prepared by QAA Scotland consultants. The report identified and explored the potential of the SCQF to promote lifelong learning opportunities in higher education particularly with regard to credit-based links between Colleges and HEIs.
- 3.6 The Committee noted the points regarding the content and use of the Guidelines on Facilitating Credit Based Links in Higher Education and agreed that the Guidelines should be promoted in order to increase their use across the sectors.
- 3.7 Although the report noted that there was dissatisfaction with the Mapping Website from the MTB project it was recognised by SACCA that resources over and

above that already available required to be identified to support it. It was agreed that long term management of the website would be referred to the working group mentioned above in 3.2.2. In the meantime it was suggested that a letter be sent from Norman Sharp to Heads of Institutions to remind them of the importance of keeping institutional information up-to-date.

- 3.8 The Committee noted that the issues raised in the report regarding Degree-HN links and the bridging toolkits would be picked up in the new SACCA programme of work. In addition, the issue raised about enhancement activity in Colleges would be referred to the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC).

Proposal for continuation of Flexible Delivery 'Co-ordination Groups'

- 3.9 The Committee received paper 42-06 which contained a recommendation that resources should be identified to support two co-ordination groups one for flexible entry and the other for flexible provision. These groups arose from the work of the Flexible Delivery Enhancement Theme.
- 3.10 SACCA considered that the work was important, however; unless extra resources could be found to support the work given the resource constraints of SACCA, then the work could not be supported at this time.

Summary of results of a Scottish Executive scoping exercise on the Recognition of Prior Informal Learning (RPL) – higher education sector

- 3.11 The Committee received paper 42-07 which gave a summary of the responses to the Scottish Executive's RPL scoping exercise.
- 3.12 The Executive had carried out the exercise to attempt to identify emerging issues around the demand for RPL and how these might be addressed. The exercise also attempted to identify priority areas for development. It was noted that the outcomes from the exercise would be used to advise the Lifelong Learning Group within the Executive on the future policy direction of RPL within the context of the Lifelong Learning Strategy.
- 3.13 SACCA welcomed the results but noted a concern surrounding the methodology of the exercise, it was felt that questions had been designed to pre-empt particular responses.
- 3.14 SACCA also noted that there was good practice in the area of RPL in the College sector particularly in the Social Care and Health areas and it was agreed that a report showcasing practice should be presented at the next meeting.

4. European Developments

Self-certification of the framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland against the framework for the European Higher Education Area

- 4.1 The Committee received paper 42-08 which provided details of the conduct and conclusion of the process to verify that the framework for qualifications of higher education in Scotland is compatible with the framework for the European Higher Education Area.
- 4.2 SACCA welcomed the report and congratulated the working group and their officer support for their hard work. The report was a very important piece of work and SACCA considered that its completion should be promoted to the Scottish higher education sector and beyond. Ways in which to do this included the construction of a web-page on the SACCA website containing the report and the dissemination of a communiqué to the sector. The communiqué could include some kind of "sign-off" from a senior member of the Scottish higher education sector.

Overview of developments within the European Commission including the ECVET and EQF

- 4.3 The Committee received paper 42-09 for information which gave an update as to the legislative process being undertaken by the European Commission with the aim of establishing the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

5. Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF)

- 5.1 The Committee received an oral report, which gave an update on the latest discussions about the arrangements for formalizing the Development Partnership for the management of the SCQF.
- 5.2 It was reported that the new SCQF Company Board would hold its first meeting on 15 November 2006 and, as part of its business for that meeting, appoint its Chair. In addition, the constitution of the Quality Assurance Committee would also be discussed.
- 5.3 In addition, arrangements would be made to appoint a Chief Executive Officer.

6. Any Other Business

The Measuring and Recording Achievement Steering Group (the 'Burgess Group'): the UK Honours Degree: Provision of Information – Second Consultation

- 6.1 The Committee received paper 42-11 which invited it to respond to the second consultation regarding the Honours Degree classification System.
- 6.2 SACCA decided that responses should be handled by Universities Scotland and that individual institutions should send their responses to them.

7. **Date of Next meeting**

7.1 The date of the next meeting is 13th February 2007.