

## Board of Studies 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting

### Minutes

Monday 30 January 2006, University of Manchester

#### Present

Cheryl Penna (Chair), Terry Bransbury, Nigel Beasley, Sue Beech, Janet Flexney,  
Sandra Griffiths, Matthew McClelland (Secretary), Ann Morton (Vice-Chair),  
Joyce Tate, Bland Tomkinson

#### In attendance

Victoria Korzeniowska

#### Apologies

Martin Hodkinson, Hugh Jones, William Mortimer, Alison Robinson

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#### 01.17 Minutes

**Confirmed:** minutes of the previous meeting

#### 02.17 Membership of the Board

**Received:** current membership list

**Agreed:**

PDC should be asked to nominate a Chair, Board of Studies, and a second link.

**Noted:** Victoria Korzeniowska, Partnerships Manager, OUVS, was attending the meeting as an observer.

#### 03.17 Professional Development Committee

**Received:** items referred from PDC

**Noted:**

1. Considerable analysis of entrants to the programme had been undertaken as part of the process of critical appraisal. This would be conveyed to the Professional Development Committee.
2. Reducing the number of withdrawals had been a paramount consideration during the process of major review. The structure of the programme proposed for revalidation sought to address this by providing a more rigid assessment structure, more opportunities for feedback, and more guidance on study skills. The overall quantity of assessment had also been reduced. For existing participants, a second study day had been introduced. A study skills guide, and further guidance for mentor were also proposed for approval later on the agenda.
3. Production of Good Practice Guides was the responsibility of the Membership and Communications Committee. Members of the Board wishing to suggest subjects or volunteer to write one should contact the secretary. However, it was important that the Guides should not duplicate the development of study guidance for participants.
4. Joint development days between May and July would be scheduled

in early February.

**Resolved:**

1. Statistics on withdrawals from comparable programmes should be included in the Critical Analysis.
2. Equal opportunities data to be collected with application data from 2006/7, in accordance with OUVS policy.

**04.17 Annual Report**

**Reported:** The Annual Report was approved at the PDC meeting held on 23 November 2005, and submitted to the Open University on 25 November 2005. Copies of the final report were available from the secretary on request.

**05.17 Programme Revalidation**

**.1 Critical Appraisal**

**Received:** Draft Critical Appraisal

**Noted:**

1. The Critical Appraisal was a comprehensive document which accurately presented the issues arising from the operation of the programme, the process of major review, and the proposed changes to the programme.
2. The Board and programme staff had responded to a considerable range of issues since the validation of the programme, implementing appropriate enhancements.

**Agreed:**

1. Discussion would be limited to matters of substance or principle. Minor amendments or clarifications should be forwarded to the secretary by Monday 6 February 2006.

**Action: All**

2. The document was an excellent evaluative reflection of progress and action taken to respond to issues.
3. In response to a comment that not all the knowledge areas would be directly assessed, it was reported that the Review Group had considered a range of options designed to ensure that participants engaged with a broad range of knowledge before agreeing the current proposals. This debate should be reflected in the Critical Appraisal.

**Action: Matthew McClelland**

**Resolved:**

The Critical Appraisal was approved subject to amendments.

**.2**

**Programme Handbook**

**Received:**

- Report on the revalidation proposals and summary of changes to the Programme Handbook.
- Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 of the Draft Programme Handbook.

**Agreed:**

1. Discussion would be limited to matters of substance or principle. Minor amendments or clarifications should be forwarded to the secretary by Monday 6 February 2006.

**Action: All**

2. The following amendments:

*Chapter 2:*

- a. Section 1 'The Team' should be moved to chapter one.
- b. Section 7 'Contacts' should be moved to the beginning of the chapter and the role of the Programme Manager should be

emphasised.

- c. Section 4.4 should be amended to reflect the role of the mentor-participant agreement as a document demonstrating mutual commitment to the participant's learning, and as a point of reference for reviewing the relationship.

*Chapter 3:*

- d. Section 3.2: a reference to mind mapping should be included.
- e. Section 4: information on plagiarism should be included.
- f. Section 4.7 should emphasise the need for consistency of approach to referencing, and include an example of an accepted method including details of how to reference web-documents and personal correspondence.

*Chapter 4:*

- g. Information on the process for mentors to sign off the PDP should be included.
- h. Learning outcomes should be amended to capture engagement with the reflective cycle through the PDP process.

*Chapter 5:*

- i. A section on techniques for reflecting on reading of theory should be included, drawing on the work of Stephen Brookfield. **(Vice-Chair to provide)**

*Chapter 6:*

- j. A new assessment title and guidance should be drafted requiring participants to provide a personal, reflective account of integrating the Code into their professional practice, drawing on several of the Code's precepts.

*Chapter 7:*

- k. The reading should be more specific and directive, and emphasise academic texts as appropriate. Care should be taken to ensure references to web sites were relevant and appropriate.
- l. Specific learning outcomes should be provided in each knowledge area.
- a. Assignment titles should enable participants to evaluate practice at their own (or other relevant) institutions in the context of practice and scholarship in the sector.

**Action: Matthew McClelland / Review Group**

**Resolved:**

1. The draft chapters of the programme handbook were approved subject to amendments.
2. Chapter 3 'Study Skills' was approved for circulation to current participants.
3. The remaining three chapters would be circulated to the Board for approval electronically

**06.17 Guidance for Mentors**

**Received:** Draft guidance on the role of mentors in relation to assessment

**Agreed:**

1. Discussion would be limited to matters of substance or principle. Minor amendments or clarifications should be forwarded to the secretary by Monday 6 February 2006.

**Action: All**

2. The following amendments:
  - a. Section 2.4: participants who have not been involved in a

reflective programme before should consider whether they need to undertake some development in the area of reflection.

- b. Section 4: the mentor's role in relation to resubmissions should be made more explicit.

**Action: Matthew McClelland / Review Group**

**Noted:**

1. The guidance would constitute a helpful resource for mentors, and should aid consistency in the mentoring relationship.
2. The exercises were intended as examples of ways mentors could engage with participants, and were not mandatory. The publication of guidance for mentors inevitably tended to prescribe particular activities at particular points in the cycle. However, there was no intention to reduce the participant's role as the driver of the relationship, or diminish the mentor's ability to respond flexibly to individual situations.
3. The guidance would form the basis of the mentor strand of training at the joint mentor-participant development days, and a PowerPoint presentation would be made available for mentors who were unable to attend.

**Resolved:**

The guidance was approved subject to amendments.

**07.17 Assessment**

**Received:** Minutes of the Assessment Board meeting held on 19 January 2006

**Reported:**

1. At January's Assessment Board there had been nine first submissions. Three candidates had been referred in the major assignment, three had been referred in the portfolio, and three had passed and been awarded the Certificate. Of four resubmissions, two candidates had passed and two had failed.
2. Many of the assignments lacked depth and analysis, and candidates were not engaging with sufficient reading.
3. Some assignment titles encouraged description, and the learning outcomes were not always sufficiently related to the assignment titles.

**Agreed:**

4. The pass rate was a significant concern. The areas of weakness were not new and the revalidation proposals sought to address this. Measures for existing participants now introduced included the formative assignments, new structure of training, study skills guide, and new guidance for mentors and the impact of these measures would be monitored by the Board.

**08.17 Training**

**Received:** Notes of the Training Team meeting held on 8 November 2005

**Reported:**

The amendments to the training programme in 2004/5 and for 2005/6 had led to a considerable improvement in the quality of training. 100% of participants at the previous two training events had rated the training as good or excellent.

**09.17 Reports**

**1. Branch Coordinator Representative****Received:**

- A report from the Branch Coordinator Representative

**Reported:**

1. Branch Coordinators had been asked to respond to questions about their awareness of and involvement in promoting and supporting the programme. Responses had been received from 10 institutions.
2. The involvement of Branches was very much dependent on demand from local members and the nature of activity in the Branch generally.

**Agreed:**

The involvement of AUA branch and regional structures could be beneficial for participants and mentors on the programme. However, AUA could only play a facilitative role in encouraging individuals to form local study groups and networks. Where there was no demand for such initiatives, they should not be imposed.

**2. Mentor Representatives****Received:**

- A report from the Mentor Representatives

**Reported:**

1. The new web resources for mentors were a useful source of information, particularly in clarifying the roles and responsibilities of mentors. The information was comprehensive and easy to navigate. Some attention could be given to the volume of text on webpages.
2. Introductory training for mentors was relevant and helpful. Joint development days were useful and offered an opportunity to refresh their knowledge of the programme. Arrangements for ensuring mentors were updated regularly, particularly in light of the revalidation, should be considered.

**Agreed:**

1. Mentors' responsibility to up date themselves by engaging in joint development days, and reading material issued by the programme team should be included in the general guidance for mentors.
2. All mentors would be invited to attend specific training events about the revalidation proposals. A presentation would be made available for mentors who were unable to attend the events.

**3. Participant Representatives****Received:**

- An oral report from the Participant Representatives

**Reported:**

A question had been raised about the distinction between the Personal Development Record and the Learning Logs. This was clarified by the guidance presented to the Board in the Draft Programme Handbook and would be fed back to participants.

**10.17 Statistics**

**Tabled:** a report on registrations, withdrawals, and intermissions for the period 14 September 2005 to 30 January 2006.

**Reported:***Participants registrations*

- Total: 29
- London, 27 Oct 05: 17
- Manchester, 26 Janu06: 12

*Mentor registrations*

- Total: 7
- London, 26 Oct 05: 3
- Manchester, 25 Jan 06: 4

*Withdrawals*

- Total: 15
- 2004/5: 1
- 2003/4: 3
- 2002/3: 4
- 2001/2: 5
- 2000/1: 2

*Withdrawals by category:*

- Lapsed: 6
- Personal reasons: 2
- Professional reasons: 3
- Pers. & prof. reasons: 3
- Pers., prof., & course not as envisaged: 1

*Intermissions*

- Total: 5
- 2004/5: 1
- 2003/4: 3
- 2002/3: 1

**Noted:**

The number of mentors being recruited to the programme was very low. Although this was not problematic at the moment, it could be in the future unless numbers could be increased. The programme was marketed to new and potential members, and through Staff Development Officers. Recently, branch coordinators have been targeted with information.

**Agreed:**

1. Links with ARC and AHUA should be exploited to recruit more mentors.
2. Existing mentors should be targeted to help with recruitment.

**11.17 Other Business****Noted:**

1. The issue of allowing participants more than two attempts at summative assessment had been raised.
2. A participant had enquired whether it would be possible to submit the minor assignments earlier in their registration, and separate from the rest of the portfolio.
3. Some consideration might be given to whether it was possible for participants who had failed the Certificate in one element to get some recognition for their learning and development.

**Agreed:**

A paper would be presented to the Board outlining the various options available and issues arising.

**12.17 Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 10 May 2006, London