

Quality Enhancement Themes

Steering Committee for Integrative Assessment

UNCONFIRMED

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee for Integrative Assessment held at 11:00 on Wednesday, 3 August 2005 at Patterson's Land, University of Edinburgh.

Present:

Professor Simon van Heyningen, University of Edinburgh (Chair)
Professor Dai Hounsell, University of Edinburgh
Professor David Lines, The Robert Gordon University
Dr Sarah Mann, University of Glasgow
Professor Brenda Smith, Higher Education Academy
Professor Mantz Yorke, Liverpool John Moores University

Officers:

Ms Helen Gibson, SHEFC
Mr Keith MacDonald, SHEFC
Mr Gerard Madill, Universities Scotland
Dr Alastair Robertson, QAA Scotland
Ms Elizabeth Anderson, QAA Scotland

Apologies for absence:

Mr Win Hornby, The Robert Gordon University
Ms Jill Little, University of Paisley Students' Association

ACTION

1 Welcome

- 1.1 The Committee Chair welcomed the members and officers to the third meeting of the Enhancement Steering Committee for Formative Assessment.

2 Minutes

- 2.1 The Committee agreed that the minutes from the meeting of the Steering Committee on 15 June 2005 (paper QET-FA-03-01) were an accurate record subject to a change in paragraph 7.1, to clarify that the Committee did not wish to exclude consideration of practice at modular level.

EA

3 Matters Arising

- 3.1 The Chair reported that at the last meeting it had been unanimously agreed that the originally given timescale of the theme (six months) was insufficient to complete work of lasting value to the sector. Therefore the Committee had put a proposal to the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) to adjust the timescale

allotted to the theme in order to allow the Formative Assessment Committee to complete a long-term project. This proposal is outlined in the Appendix to paper 03-02.

4 **Next Steps**

- 4.1 The Committee received a response to its proposed programme of work and timescale from SHEEC (paper 03-02). SHEEC suggested that the Formative Assessment Committee consider a programme of work to look in detail at current emerging practices and to analyse these in terms of their impacts, strengths, weaknesses, general applicability etc. The 5-year plan would allow for this work to continue into the next year and to finish no later than summer 2006, an extension of the original timescale of six months. However, the subject level work should wait until the outcomes from the first stage have been produced; these outcomes would then be handed over to the Higher Education Academy subject centres for their consideration on how to take forward at subject-level.
- 4.2 It was noted that SHEEC welcomed the proposal of having institutional contacts for the theme, however, SHEEC recommended that the decision of who the contact for the theme should be for the HEI ought to be a decision for individual institutions. Guidance on the activities and responsibilities of the contact would be very helpful, however, in aiding institutions decide the most appropriate person to undertake this role and ought to be included in the letter from the steering committee requesting nominations.
- 4.3 In the following discussion the Committee wished to recommend further discussion regarding institutional contacts to SHEEC, as there was a consensus amongst members that having one for each theme could become a significant burden for institutions to manage, especially given the current competing responsibilities on staff's workload.
- 4.4 Professor Hounsell presented a proposed programme of work for the theme, revised from earlier proposals in light of the response from SHEEC. Paper 03-03 suggests three strands of work, including;
- a literature overview on optimising formative and summative assessment
 - a survey of good practice across a wide range of subjects and institutions written up as case-studies
 - a small number of exemplars chosen from the range of case-studies and analysed in greater depth and detail.

A network of institutional associates would be involved in collecting and analysing case-studies and they will be formally acknowledged in published outputs. The project would run from October 2005 to August 2006 with the case-studies completed by mid-February, the literature overview by the end of June and the exemplars by end of August. The Committee agreed that the suggested model represented the best way forward for the theme.

4.4 It was agreed that the Higher Education Academy subject centres previously contacted should be involved by attending meetings of the Institutional contacts and encouraging participation by Scottish members in bringing forward case studies. ADR/BS

4.5 Professor Hounsell agreed to consider taking on the work and to discuss the details of the project further with QAA Scotland. ADR/DH

5 2006 Enhancement Themes Conference

5.1 Dr Robertson reported that the next annual enhancement themes conference would be held on 27 January 2006 at the West Park Centre in Dundee. The Committee was invited to consider topics for workshops on the Assessment outcomes as presented in paper 03-04. The Committee agreed that the following topics would be useful:

- optimising the balance between formative and summative assessment
- developing and implementing a range of innovative assessment techniques (it was agreed that this would be a good workshop in which to involve students and focus on their experience of assessment)
- measuring and recording student achievement (it was agreed that this topic may or may not be useful depending on the outcomes of the Burgess group and that it should be a more generic topic so that discussion could proceed in a variety of directions depending on input from the Burgess group's report).

It was suggested that the student versions of the assessment outcomes produced by sparqs could be used as a basis for a student-centred workshop. ADR

5.2 Dr Robertson also asked Committee members if they would be willing to facilitate at the above workshops. There were several notes of interests and Dr Robertson agreed that QAA officers would follow up before the next steering committee meeting. ADR

6 Any other business

6.1 The Committee discussed the title of the theme and agreed that the title should be changed to *"Integrative Assessment: Optimising the Balance between Formative and Summative Assessment"*.

6.2 The Chair reported that the outcomes publications from the Assessment Theme have now been published and disseminated across the sector. The Chair thanked all those at the QAA who contributed to the work of producing the publications.

7 Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 18 November 2005 EA from 11.00 to 13.00 in Edinburgh, venue to be confirmed.