

CONFIRMED

Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Enhancement Steering Committee for The First Year on Monday 19 June 2006, held at QAA Scotland office, Glasgow.

Present:

Professor Ron Piper, University of St Andrews (in the Chair)
 Professor Terry Mayes, Glasgow Caledonian University
 Mr Tim Cobbett, Edinburgh University Students' Association
 Dr Andrew Eadie, Glasgow Caledonian University
 Dr Leona Elder, University of Abertay, Dundee
 Ms Veronique Johnston, Napier University
 Professor David Lines, The Robert Gordon University
 Ms Birgitta MacDonald, Edinburgh College of Art
 Dr Anne McGillivray, University of Paisley
 Dr David McCausland, University of Aberdeen Business School
 Dr Jonathan Weyers, University of Dundee

Officers:

Dr David Bottomley, Assistant Head of QAA Scotland
 Dr Christine Macpherson, Assistant Director (Enhancement)
 Ms Marjorie Craib, Administrator, QAA Scotland

Apologies:

Mr David Beards, SFC
 Dr Pete Cannell, The Open University in Scotland
 Mr Steven Findlay, Heriot-Watt University Students Association
 Dr Simon Guild, University of St Andrews
 Ms Erica Hensens, Sparqs
 Mr Bill Johnston, University of Strathclyde
 Mr Gerard Madill, Universities Scotland
 Ms Sandie Randall, Queen Margaret University College
 Dr Liz Thomas, Higher Education Academy

		ACTION
1.	Welcome The Chair welcomed members and officers to the fifth meeting of the Enhancement Steering Committee for The First Year.	
2.	Minutes The Minutes of the meeting (QET-FY-05-01) held on 29 March 2006 were approved as a correct record. However it was noted that Anne McGillivray was present and her apologies had been recorded in error.	
3.	Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda	
3.1	Launch Event on 26 April and workshop feedback The Chair referred to item QET-FY-05-02 and confirmed the event held at the Radisson, Glasgow on 26 April had been a success and	

<p>3.2</p>	<p>well attended. It was agreed that Betsy Barefoot’s presentation and the workshop feedback be placed on the website providing a useful resource for project directors, institutional contacts and the extended network of practitioners.</p> <p>Enhancement Themes Website Dr Macpherson confirmed the First Year projects and scoping paper are now on the website. The Committee agreed minutes of previous Steering Committee meetings also to be added. The Committee agreed we should utilise the website as a vehicle to communicate with our extended network and those with a specific interest in the first year. It was suggested it may be useful for Project Managers to establish project blogs as a way of recording their progress. Links to other resources (i.e., the work being carried out by HEA on the first year and international sites) would also be useful.</p>	<p>CMM</p> <p>CMM</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Commissioning Projects Dr Macpherson confirmed 55 applications received in total. One successful bid is to be chosen for each project. Dr Macpherson confirmed a small sub committee met prior to this meeting to propose a list of successful candidates based on the criteria of the scoping of the project. This will be circulated to the Committee once completed.</p> <p>The Steering Committee agreed that it is important to capture the interest that has already been expressed and to encourage or find ways to involve those responsible for unsuccessful project applications... It was suggested that those whose bids have been unsuccessful should be invited to allow their expression of interest to be intimated to their respective main institutional contacts to contribute to the institutional discussions of the nature and purpose of the first year.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that once the successful project leaders are announced they can then contact the wider network encouraging and allowing their interest in this area to be publicised.</p> <p>It was also suggested a website forum could prove useful where interested individuals can discuss first-year projects to maintain momentum. The Steering Committee agreed to consider how best we can capture this interest and to liaise with Dr Macpherson.</p> <p>Finally, Dr Macpherson confirmed that additional funding had been agreed to support live case studies. Further details would be forthcoming.</p>	<p>CMM</p> <p>All/CMM</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Institutional Engagement (linked to commissioning projects) The Chair reported that the subcommittee evaluating the expressions of interest had been confident of identifying projects for commissioning and project leaders in relation to all the proposed projects except the</p>	

	<p>first—that which focused upon the institutional engagement. In order to fill this particular position, it was agreed that it may be desirable for representatives of the Steering Committee to identify and approach potential project leaders.</p> <p>The Committee agreed the importance of its own role in fostering and maintaining strong institutional contact throughout the theme. Many of the members of the Steering Committee were the main Institutional Contacts for the theme, but the full set of main Institutional Contacts should be invited to a meeting early in the autumn.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that a small budget would be available to institutions to promote their own engagement with the theme. This might be used in a variety of ways, including interactions between universities in reflecting on policies and procedures which may either be inhibiting or promoting their First Year experience. It was agreed that terms of reference should be produced for the provision of such funds to universities and that these should include a requirement that access to the funds required (i) a plan for expenditure, which would have to be approved, and (ii) the promise of a brief report on activities and impact.</p> <p>It was agreed that the HEA work on the First Year provides further opportunities for liaison, and it is important to create synergy and link in with HEA effectively. The HEA's recent emphasis on developing institutional liaisons might mean that they would also support universities in their institutional engagements.</p>	<p>DB</p> <p>DB</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Relationship with other enhancement themes</p> <p>Integrative Assessment The Chair referred to QET-FY-05-04 and confirmed that the joint First Year/Integrative Assessment meeting held on 30 May in Edinburgh had been a success with a strong emphasis on First Year and the possibility of a continuing association with IA which may prove useful. Professor Mayes highlighted David Nicol's presentation linking Formative Assessment and First Year was well received.</p> <p>Dr Bottomley confirmed that Dai Hounsell was the lead for this theme and that data collection was expected to be completed by August with the final report available by November. Dai will be utilising first-year case studies, and this may prove a useful connection to the First Year theme.</p> <p>Research/Teaching Theme Dr Bottomley confirmed that Professor Andrea Nolan, Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching) University of Glasgow has been appointed as Chair with the remainder of the Steering Committee to be appointed shortly.</p>	

<p>7</p>	<p>Relationship of HEA First Year projects to support work of Steering Committee and QAA First Year projects. The Chair reported that the HEA held a successful first-year dissemination event on 11 May in Edinburgh. The event was attended by more than 150, mainly Scottish, delegates who were presented with the preliminary findings from HEA’s research on the first year experience, undertaken by Professor Mantz Yorke and Professor Bernard Longden, and initial results of a literature review on the first-year experience, undertaken by Professor Lee Harvey and Sue Drew of Sheffield Hallam University. It was agreed it would be valuable to utilise these findings in our meetings with the institutions and project leaders. The Chair confirmed these preliminary reports can be located on the HEA website and suggested this work provides us with opportunities to work with the people involved in that project. Mantze York is part of the Integrative Assessment Committee and this could prove a helpful link.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Management, outcomes and dissemination of the Projects. The Chair highlighted the importance of successful management, useful outcomes and effective dissemination of the theme. It is important that the theme remains visible, proactive and with a high profile through the main institutional contacts and the extended network of practitioners. It was agreed that the proposed seminars and guest international speakers will raise awareness across the sector.</p> <p>Dr Bottomley highlighted the need to have a robust mechanism in place to ensure the management of the projects in terms of formal progress and delivery. In this respect, the Steering Committee endorsed a proposal that Professor Mayes undertake the role of “critical friend” with regard to the project leaders. He could both act as a support mechanism and monitor the projects in terms of (for example) content and deadlines</p> <p>Support and management of the projects was discussed further with suggestions including the establishment of a ‘user group’, devised from the network of practitioners to encourage peer support or developing a website forum.</p> <p>The Committee considered how to ensure that the outcomes and dissemination of the projects would be useful and accessible. It was noted that the overall intended outcome was to increase awareness of the first year as an area for focus, rather than to be developmental per se. Development would take place at institutional level, and as such should involve the network of practitioners. Suggestions for the format of tangible and practical outcomes included: published documents, (with careful consideration of their format) and development of a virtual learning environment with multimedia, video clips, message boards and discussion forums, providing a blended learning approach.</p> <p>It was noted that as well as taking a variety of formats, the outcomes</p>	

	<p>of this theme would be of interest to a variety of different groups including institutional leaders, policy makers, faculties and individual practitioners. Outcomes should be produced with the different groups in mind.</p> <p>In addition, the Committee was invited to consider the sustainability of engagement with the theme as well as the embedding of its outcomes.</p>	
9	<p>Shape of next academic year After discussion the Chair suggested the following meetings and seminars over the next academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 August 2006 (early September?): Steering Committee meeting (afternoon) preceded by a meeting for initial discussions between Steering Committee members, project directors and main institutional contacts (morning) • October 2006: invited international speaker to address a wide group including the network of practitioners, and a brief Steering Committee meeting as a means of providing update on initial progress by the project directors. • Early February 2007: invited international speaker; Steering Committee meeting with formal reports from project directors and main institutional contacts. • March 2007: Enhancement Themes annual conference: progress and outcomes to date can be presented as workshops. • June 2007: Steering Committee meeting to include (verbal) updates from project directors on outcomes identified and from the main institutional contacts. <p>It was hoped that the Project 1 director and Terry Mayes would be involved in the February and June meetings in particular.</p> <p>It was agreed the above schedule of meetings to be finalised as soon as possible to accommodate diaries and in particular those for Steering Committee meetings and provisional dates for international speakers.</p>	
10	<p>Any Other Business There was no other business.</p>	
11	<p>Date of next Meeting: 29 August: venue to be arranged in light of 9, above.</p>	