

Tertiary Education Services, trading as New College of the Humanities
 QAA HER (plus) Review, February 2015

ACTION PLAN

Published: July 2015

Latest revisions: February 2016

RECOMMENDATIONS

The QAA made the following recommendations:

Recommendations	Owner	ACTION	Completion date	Indicators
R 1. Ensure that the status of the NCH diploma as a non-credit bearing award is made explicit to all stakeholders (Expectation C). Para. 3.6	Director of Marketing	To update current website.	Completed	Current website has credit ratings for each degree module and no ratings for each diploma module.
		To include in all draft marketing collateral for 2016 entry.	Completed	All draft marketing collateral for 2016 entry has credit ratings for each degree course and no ratings for each diploma course.
		To include in draft NCH Diploma Certificate.	Completed	NCH Diploma Certificate [to be first awarded on 19 September 2015] incorporates the wording: 'The NCH Diploma is a non-credit bearing qualification.'

	Registrar	To include in the document 'Writing references for students: guidelines'.	Completed	The document 'Writing references for students: guidelines' now includes, 'when writing about achievement in the NCH Diploma, it must be stated that it is a non-credit bearing qualification'.
R 2. Ensure effective representation and regular monitoring of the collective student voice at all levels of the organisational structure (Expectation B5) Para 2.46	Academic Board	To discuss student attendance at open agenda items of the Academic Board meetings.	Completed	Discussion at Academic Board.
		To consult the NCH Student Union President about a dedicated officer attending open agenda items of the Academic Board meetings.	Completed	NCH Student Union President consulted.
	SU President	To draft a proposal for a dedicated officer to attend Academic Board, for consideration by Student Union Officers, and the re-drafting of the Constitution.	1.9.2015	Proposal considered and approved by NCHSU; and Constitution amended.
			30.9.2015	Attendance at Academic Board by dedicated officer, or acting officer until new SU Officers have been elected.
	SU President/ FLO	To obtain feedback from student body about student representation. A new engagement process is in development: The Faculty Liaison Officer [FLO] to attend more AcB meetings in Hilary term. FLO to report to SU on attendance at AcB and the Michaelmas SSLC meetings. FLO and Subject Student Representatives to attend TSEP	31.3.2016	Feedback collated and considered by Academic Board and the SU.

		workshops in January/February.		
R 3. Further develop the annual programme reporting process to ensure consistency and to monitor formally agreed actions (Expectation B8) Paras 2.67 and 2.68	Heads of Faculty	To review Staff Review procedure to ensure that teaching observations appear consistently across all programmes.	Completed	Staff Review procedure reviewed and agreed by Academic Board in consultation with Operations and HR Manager.
	Registrar	To draw up action plan to capture actions from Programme Monitoring Reports and from the Annual Programme Monitoring Report.	Completed	Action Plan distributed to Heads of Faculty.
	Academic Board	To monitor completion of actions.	2.6.2015 and 25.6.2015	Action plan monitored by Academic Board.
	Registrar	To obtain feedback on the 2014/15 Programme Monitoring Reports and Annual Programme Monitoring Report from the SSU Quality Assurance Officer, for inclusion in a Quality Assurance Network meeting, which will include training on the report forms to be used for the new NCH programmes from summer 2016.	By 31.3.2016	Heads of Faculty receive further training in the writing of reports.

AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmation	OWNER	ACTION	Completion date	Indicator
A 1. The development of the assessment practice document and its related policies for approval and implementation at the	SSU QAO	To provide training in the procedure for developing assignment briefs and internal moderation, the process for peer review to agree briefs, and the criteria for grading descriptors.	6.5.2015 8.6.2015	Heads of Faculty attend SUU-led workshop - Quality Assurance Network Meeting. Academic staff attend Teaching and Learning Dissemination

<p>start of the new academic year (Expectation B6). Para 2.52</p>	<p>Head of Economics and Registrar</p>	<p>To finalise draft of the Assessment Practice Guidelines.</p>	<p>14.7.2015</p>	<p>Event. Final Assessment Practice Guidelines are produced.</p>
			<p>1.8.2015</p>	<p>Academic Board's approval of Assessment Practice Guidelines document.</p>
			<p>14.9.2015</p>	<p>Further training for staff in the use of the Assessment Practice Guidelines document and Assessment Policies at the start-of-year induction and training day.</p>
			<p>16.3.2016</p>	<p>Staff attend further training event on Assessment.</p>
	<p>HR Manager/Registrar</p>	<p>Academic staff to attend the Teaching and Learning Dissemination Event on 6 January 2016; theme of Formative and Summative Assessment. Economics Link Tutor to attend.</p>	<p>6.1.2016</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning Dissemination Event held on 6 January 2016.</p>
		<p>To obtain feedback from academic staff on training event via survey, to identify effectiveness of training and to identify 'gaps'.</p>	<p>27.1.2016</p>	<p>Academic Board consider the survey results.</p>
		<p>To use agreed template for training agenda/schedules for T&L Dissemination Events.</p>	<p>Trinity 2016</p>	<p>Academic Board review usage.</p>
	<p>To invite Faculty to use shared 'Items for T&L Dissemination Events' document to identify training needs for future events.</p>	<p>Trinity 2016</p>	<p>Academic Board review usage. Academic Board review</p>	

		To improve feedback on training events: At the end of a dissemination event, participants to be told that they will be sent a link to a feedback survey and are to be encouraged to complete it. Immediately after an event, HR Manager to circulate link to participants.	Trinity 2016	response rates.
WORK TO CAPITALISE ON IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICE				
GP 1. The embedding of a research culture within the student learning experience (Expectation B3) Para 2.24		<p>Dissertation presentation days were held, as annexes of the College's interdisciplinary research club (the Ottoline Club), for History and Philosophy third-year students to present the findings of their dissertation research to an audience of students and faculty. These were held on 25 March and 3 June respectively, and all academic staff and students were invited. This has been an excellent way of encouraging younger students to emulate the research culture of their elders, and has also demonstrated our validation of the excellent and original findings of the third-year research by creating this forum in which they could be heard.</p> <p>Philosophy introduced our most advanced third-year philosophy dissertation students to relevant research seminars at the Institute of Philosophy and to individual external academics specialising in their fields.</p> <p>English has experimented with having several Faculty members attend the same lecture: the lecture is led by one of the members, but the other is free and encouraged to contribute at any point. The result is that both members speak from and to their own research expertise, and students see an example of a professional level of academic exchange in the subject of the lecture. It has been decided to build more such lectures into the new</p>	27.1.2016	Heads of Faculty report to Academic Board on plans for 2016 dissertation presentation days.

		<p>degree.</p> <p>It has been Dr Daniel Swift's practice to give English students two weeks, at the end of each of his courses, in order to write a longer 'research' essay, for which he has been able to use his own research expertise to guide the students' reading. Following the popularity and success of this model, it has been decided that the same will be done in all English period papers henceforth in both the ULIP and new NCH degree programmes.</p> <p>The new NCH English degree programmes contains, like those for Philosophy and History, a dissertation element, in which (for English) research presentations and vivas both count as part of the summative assessment of this course.</p>		
<p>GP 2. The effective use of the tutorial system to support teaching and learning (Expectation B3)</p> <p>Para. 2.25</p>		<p>The tutorial system is continuing and it is also being extended: work on timetabling for the new degree programmes has identified the desire to make more use of the tutorial system in teaching the minor subjects, which we will now be doing. In addition, in the new degree programmes, there will be a concentrated period for two of the courses, where students can focus on the main course of study through a series of consecutive weeks of one-to-one tutorials (previously every two weeks, interchanged with one-to-ones in another course), to create an opportunity for them to develop intellectual depth.</p> <p>Attendance at (or listening to recordings of) tutorials given by new members of staff, by Heads of Faculty, as part of peer review has been introduced. This is to ensure that tutorials, as well as lectures, given by any given</p>	<p>July 2016</p>	<p>Programme Team Meeting consider new Programme Monitoring Reports.</p>

		<p>member of staff at the College, are of a satisfactory quality.</p> <p>As mentioned for GP 1 above, English has decided to allow students two weeks to write an extended 'research essay' towards the end of term for period courses. The first of the two tutorials during this period is used in order to monitor, encourage, and direct progress on the essay - rather than to give feedback on an existing essay - which is a new use of the tutorial hour for English.</p>		
<p>GP 3. The innovative opportunities provided by the NCH diploma for interdisciplinary learning (Expectation B3)</p> <p>Para 2.26</p>		<p>The opportunities for interdisciplinary learning have been developed so that the minor courses within the new NCH degrees are in a different subject from that of the student's major courses.</p> <p>The design of some courses has particularly focused on making the combinations of subjects work within degree programmes, for example Beyond English course and International Development course.</p> <p>The methods of enquiry from one subject to be used in lectures and tutorials for other courses is encouraged.</p> <p>Opportunities for interdisciplinary learning continue within the NCH Diploma:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - philosophy and the natural sciences are the Core disciplines. - Critical Reasoning and Critical Thinking offer conceptual tools which are of use both to thought about ethical questions (in Applied Ethics) and in the empirical investigation of the physical universe (in Science Literacy). - Students are explicitly permitted and encouraged to attend lectures in any subject taught within the College. - Faculty members visibly constitute examples of 	<p>July 2016</p>	<p>Programme Team Meeting consider new Programme Monitoring Reports.</p>

		<p>interdisciplinary exploration by attending lectures in disciplines other than their own; many Faculty members attend the Professorial lectures in many of the disciplines, and Dr Lipscomb and Dr Swift, for example, attended each other's lecture courses, which respectively explored the sixteenth century from the points of view of the disciplines of historiography and literary criticism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professorial Fellows, as Visiting Professors are henceforth to be known, have provided a similar example by attending each other's lectures. - Several of the Professorial Fellows acknowledge the interdisciplinary nature of the College in the way in which they lecture in their respective disciplines. Prof. Daniel Dennett has given an evolutionary account of humanities subjects, and Prof. Nicholas Humphrey has given an evolutionary account of consciousness and culture. Prof. Lawrence Krauss has quoted poetry (as he does in his books) which he considers to be particularly expressive of the perceptions about the universe which scientists and poets arrive at via different methodologies; Sir Trevor Nunn, who has a particular interest in quantum physics and in drama which deals with it, has attended lectures by Professor Lawrence Krauss. <p>Both the contents and attendance of Diploma lectures, therefore, constitute different models of interdisciplinarity.</p>		
GP 4. The systematic process for termly review of individual student performance, progression and development (Expectations B4 and	Heads of Faculty	English and Economics now run 'Careers Collections' for second- and third-year students. English Career Collections consist of 15 minutes, added to the standard 15 minutes of feedback on academic progression, in which the Faculty asks the student about her or his ideas concerning life after graduation, and what exploratory or developmental career steps have been by the student	2015/16 27.1 2016	Other faculties to consider incorporating a careers element in their termly Collections. Academic Board review after Collections had taken place at

<p>B6)</p> <p>Paras 2.35 and 2.54</p>	<p>Head of Faculty for English</p>	<p>taken thus far.</p> <p>The aims are:</p> <p>1) to assure students that the Faculty are not solely interested in their academic development, but also in the transition which they will make from undergraduate work to whatever they will choose for themselves thereafter, and that Faculty will at any time be happy to speak to them about these things.</p> <p>2) for Faculty members to offer any advice from experience which they may have, concerning both particular types of work, and the situation of uncertainty about what to do next</p> <p>3) to alert students, as appropriate, to any particular contacts which the Faculty have to offer in relevant areas of work</p> <p>4) to advise students to ask any Faculty member to write a reference for them if it is likely that at any point in the future they would want one, so that the reference is written whilst memory of the student is still fresh.</p> <p>Dean of Careers to convene meeting with Heads of Faculty and Registrar to discuss further integration of Careers.</p> <p>The more systematic monitoring of attendance through the new NCH Attendance Policy will mean that reports on attendance will be easier to build into the Collections as appropriate.</p>	<p>1.3 2016</p> <p>27.1.2016</p>	<p>the end of Michaelmas term.</p> <p>Feedback obtained from students studying English programmes.</p> <p>Heads of Faculty and Registrar attend meeting.</p> <p>Academic Board review after Collections have taken place at the end of Michaelmas term.</p>
<p>GP 5. The contribution of visiting fellows to enhancing professional awareness and</p>	<p>Dean of Careers</p>	<p>Visiting Fellows on the Professional Programme are an invaluable resource, providing students at NCH with a practitioner's perspective and the very latest practices from the workplace.</p>		

