

22 JUNE 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**Title: Annual Monitoring Exercise 2010/11****Author: Chair of Academic Development Committee****Purpose of Report:**

The Chair of the Academic Development Committee's Annual Monitoring Exercise report 2010/ 2011 has been prepared following the Academic Standards Sub-committee AME plenary meeting held on the 23rd March 2011. The report has been prepared in accordance with the agreed AME schedule.

Key Issues:

The report summarises the outcomes of the Annual Monitoring Exercise, identifies key issues and trends, highlights examples of good practice and makes recommendations for enhancement to be considered by Academic Board and Directorate as appropriate.

The stakeholders are the University and its collaborative partners.

The Annual Monitoring Exercise supports and enables the progression of the core aims of the Strategic Plan.

Any proposals, actions and responses will be monitored through the Academic Development Committee and its Sub-committees.

An updated Action Plan relating to the previous AME is attached to the report.

The report was approved for submission to the Board by ADC at its meeting on 18 May 2011. ADC noted that although the report was accepted by the Committee as an accurate reflection of the current round of AME, there was a unanimous view that the present system did not provide an adequate mechanism for continuous improvement.

Action required by the Board:

The Board is asked to **approve** the report and refer to CASQE for action.

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

THE ACADEMIC BOARD

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 18 May 2011

Chair of Academic Development Committee's Report to the Academic Board on the findings of the 2010/2011 Annual Monitoring Exercise

1. Summary of the process and outcomes of the Annual Monitoring Exercise

Confirmation was given that the Annual Monitoring Exercise (AME) had been undertaken thoroughly, in accordance with University Regulations and Procedures.

Documentation and guidance for use in the exercise had been revised following comments arising from QAA Institutional Audit, and it had been made available to programme teams earlier than previously to deliver an earlier conclusion to the exercise and a more timely identification of actions for enhancement. The early publication of guidance and documentation was also in recognition of the further work relating to the Enhancing Quality in Assessment and Learning (EQAL) initiative to be undertaken by programme teams during the autumn term. In an attempt to streamline faculty-level processes and avoid duplication, and at the suggestion of the QAA auditors, the departmental-level Quality Improvement Plan had been removed from the process, relevant sections of this template being subsumed under the Faculty Overview and Action Plan. Other amendments, which were intended to provide a more streamlined and focussed process, related to: a requirement to address the key theme identified for the AME – namely: Academic Support; use of more focussed and timely statistical data relating to retention and progression available via Uniview; continued increased focus on identification and dissemination of good practice; increased focus on external engagements (including PSRBs and collaborative provision); and a requirement for a more timely and documented response to external examiner reports.

Subsequent to the 2009/2010 plenary, some additional work had been carried out by CASQE officers and key central staff to refine the template used for central service provider reports. The revisions focussed on greater consideration of progress on issues identified for action in the previous AME report, and on the provision of examples of success and good practice identified during the previous year. In order to identify progress and target action more precisely within a composite report, identification of the location relating to specific issues and a timescale relating to delivery of specific responses was included in the template. The reports had been drafted cognisant of the content of the Faculty/divisional Overviews and Action Plans.

During the summer term 2010 a review of the role of the AME plenary meeting had taken place, and subsequent to consultation with faculties and other stakeholders, a decision had been taken that the plenary event should be replaced by a special meeting of the Academic Standards sub-Committee. All faculties and divisions were represented on the Academic Standards sub-Committee and representatives from the Students' Union, from Student and Academic Services, and from the Services Group were also invited to attend the meeting.

Following faculty-level consideration of programme and other monitoring documentation, faculties/divisions had submitted their Overviews and Action Plans for consideration by the Academic Standards sub-Committee. The meeting also considered reports from the Central Service providers and the MMUnion, and a report of the findings of external examiner reports. In order to meet the requirements of the Institutional Code of Practice for PSRBs, an institutional overview of PSRB engagement had been submitted for consideration.

The adjustments to the documentation and process detailed above were intended as an interim measure to make the exercise more fit for purpose during the 2010/2011 academic session. Annual Monitoring processes are currently under revision as part of the EQAL strand 4 – looking at Quality Assurance and Enhancement of Provision. The developments are likely to result in a radical change to the process, with a focus on live monitoring and continuous improvement. Live monitoring of statistics and consideration of other data will be key indicators in determining programme health to enable a more timely response to issues, an enhancement of good practice, and to maximise a positive impact of the Exercise. Work is currently underway to finalise detail of the process, which will be considered by Academic Board during the summer term 2011 for implementation from 2011/2012 onwards.

2. Action Plan from 2009/2010

To ensure that all key issues from the previous year's Annual Monitoring Exercise Action Plan had been addressed, an update on progress formed the initial section of the meeting. The sub-Committee was able to assure itself that the actions detailed within the Action Plan had been engaged with and that progress had been made to address the issues. Arising from the action plan work to update the Threshold Standards was identified and this would be considered in conjunction with developments relating to the Student Charter.

3. Issues highlighted in the MMUnion and central service provider reports, and the Institutional report on PSRBs

3.1 MMUnion Report

The report from MMUnion was presented by the Union's Student Engagement Co-ordinator, who provided a verbal summary of the headlines from the report.

The student voice continued to be a priority for the Union. The need for the use of more contemporary methods of engaging with students and of capturing the student voice had been a key issue identified by the Union through Annual Monitoring. The Union had seen the addition of two Student Voice Co-ordinators in the Student Engagement Team. The additional resource had enabled increased interaction with the student body and the production of termly Student Voice Reports. The first of these, produced during the autumn term 2010, had been well received and had provided much useful feedback for the central service providers enabling the opportunity for a swift response to issues raised. In addition to the Student Shout Out initiative, the Union was working to create a GOATing (Going Out and Talking to students) strategy to maximise interaction with students and the Union looked to work with the University in this respect. The Union acknowledged the challenges in securing engagement at course representative level and would welcome further discussion with the University to work towards a resolution.

The Union had invested considerable time in engaging students in curriculum design, and had worked with CASQE officers in training students for Programme Approval Review and Modification (PARM) panel membership. The Union had also been involved in sessions for MMU staff at the EQAL conference.

The major issue reported by the Students Advice Centre related to the introduction of student withdrawal procedures and they highlighted the importance of making students aware of the Exceptional Factors procedures. The Union had welcomed the involvement in meetings held regarding the review of Assessment Regulations and looked forward to future involvement in this respect.

Within the report, MMUnion expressed frustration that whilst students commented on certain aspects of their academic experience, a large proportion of their comments related to non-academic matters including a number of basic accommodation and hygiene-related issues. Whilst acknowledging that the buildings project and future rationalisation to two Campuses would eventually provide quality accommodation and deliver standard first class facilities, in the meantime students focussed on their own personal experiences and this was diverting attention away from matters of academic experience.

In its submission for the previous AME, the Union had identified six areas to be addressed as a priority. Progress had been made to address some of these issues however MMUnion wished to re-iterate the six points within the current submission. The areas related specifically to: maintenance, monitoring and enforcement of meaningful University Student Agreement and Threshold Standards documents to enhance the student experience; student representation and tracking of actions taken in response to feedback from students on their learning experience; within the campus review and re-organisation recognition of the needs of all students, including those following non-standard patterns of study; use of plain English to ensure that all programme documentation is student friendly and available on line.

In conclusion, the Chair re-iterated that Annual Monitoring would be moving away from a narrow remit of monitoring standards and quality of programmes, and would broaden to include live monitoring of a number of issues relating to the student experience.

3.2 Central Service Reports

Two composite reports were submitted as part of the AME as follows:

3.2.1 Services

The Services report covered the areas of Facilities, and Learning & Research Information Services, and provided detailed information on key areas of work undertaken during 2009/2010 together with identification of a number of priorities for both Divisions for 2010/2011.

The current procedures for annual monitoring were confirmed as robust in identification of issues relating to central service providers, but despite the earlier timing of the AME in 2010/2011 there continued to be a process issue regarding timeliness of response to issues identified. The representative from the Services Division welcomed the introduction of the termly Student Voice reports, which were able to provide a more immediate identification of and response to issues affecting the student experience. MMUnion had extended an offer to central service providers to consult with students on key issues via the GOATing initiative and this opportunity to enhance the role of students as partners in learning was welcomed.

The sustained efforts of Services Division to respond to student feedback were noted, in the context of financial constraints and maintenance issues relating to current accommodation pending Campus rationalisation. Developments to service, including the extended Library opening hours during the examination period in response to student feedback, were welcomed.

3.2.2 Student and Academic Services

The report from Student and Academic Services (SAS) covered five Campus administrations and a number of central units, working together to provide an integrated and consistent high-quality service to applicants, students and staff across the University.

The main service themes in SAS during 2009/2010 related to embedding structural changes made in 2008/2009 and undertaking further re-structure and development in certain areas - including Technical Services, the Careers and Employability Service, and support for the University's research and third stream work - to improve and enhance effectiveness and efficiency of services to applicants, students, and staff; developing and implementing new processes and systems, including those arising from the EQAL initiative; and response to external drivers and challenges.

Challenges related to evaluation of student opinion, currently obtained via a variety of methods including routine surveys; staff-student liaison groups; SIPs comment cards; MMUSU Induction Survey; and the Student Barometer. There was currently no single comprehensive approach and in future this would be addressed. It was also hoped that more analysis could be done of the free-text comments provided by students in the NSS and elsewhere.

Enhancements to the student record system were reported. There had been considerable investment to date, and a number of developments to related strands eg timetabling and the QLS assessment module, were ongoing. The scope of these developments was subject to systems and financial-related constraints, and the importance of communication, interface between administrative and academic staff, and involvement of user communities were also highlighted as conditions of success.

Student and Academic Services were commended for the range of activities and the ambition of tasks undertaken and proposed to ensure an enhanced student experience and provision of a quality service for staff and other users.

Priorities for coming year included:

- Implementation of automated and personalised timetabling in all faculties
- Implementation of the QLS assessment module
- Review and revision of processes for managing student and curriculum data
- Implementation of new academic quality assurance processes and systems to support the first phase of academic curriculum changes (EQAL)
- Beginning work on an Academic Curriculum Management System (ACMS)
- Arrangements and staffing structures for the new Student Hub and the SIPs
- Roll-out of an enhanced course work submission system to all campus administrations
- Implementation of new arrangements for producing student PEEPs
- Pilot online option selection system in All Saints North

3.2.3 Institutional report on PSRBs

An institutional overview of PSRB engagement was presented by the Head of CASQE. PSRBs varied considerably in their requirements relating to approval, review and moderation and this presented a challenge with respect to presentation of qualitative data on engagement. As in previous years, very little explicit feedback on PSRB engagement had been received from External Examiners within their annual reports.

CASQE officers had carried out staff development with programme teams with respect to PSRB engagement. In addition to focusing on the University's procedures in relation to its programmes with PSRB links, the sessions provided the opportunity for an open discussion on PSRB related matters, including MMU/PSRB annual monitoring requirements and programme data.

Local input to the PSRB database provided the information contained within the annexes to the report.

The report included recommendations for action by both CASQE and faculties/divisions. The Academic Standards sub-Committee endorsed the recommendations, in particular recommendations relating to maintenance of data at faculty/divisional level; and to the requirement that, in order to improve the system for capturing and reporting on qualitative data at institutional level, FADCs be required to provide a brief annual report highlighting significant issues relating to PSRB engagement.

4. Institutional-level commentary on the findings of external examiners' reports

External examiner reports submitted for the 2009/2010 period had been scrutinised widely at programme and faculty level as part of the Annual Monitoring Exercise for 2010/2011 [see summary appendix]. CASQE officers had also carried out a systematic scrutiny of the reports looking at matters of an Institutional and over-arching nature. Data had been collated under a number of Institution-wide headings, including the Combined Honours programme; Collaborative Provision; PSRBs; and Employability and Work Based Learning.

Issues relating to programmes with collaborative provision were highlighted. External examiners made a number of explicit comments that fell into areas including assessment, communication/working relationships, administration and facilities. Despite some examples of good practice a small number of examiners reported on inconsistencies in practice in moderation practice. It was reported that such issues were considered within the link tutor forums facilitated by CASQE and latterly by CPO. As part of the ongoing work to address the Institutional Audit Action Plan it has been agreed to undertake a review of collaborative provision over the summer 2011 and feedback from external examiners will be considered as part of that process.

Good practice was noted in areas including flexible, innovative and intellectually diverse curricula; interaction and involvement with industry and the professions; imaginative and broad range of assessment methods; excellent and supportive feedback; the use of social media; and support to students.

Overwhelmingly, the reports evidenced positive affirmation of the academic standards of awards and this had been recorded in Overview Reports for all faculties/divisions, with systems in place to address specific issues raised in individual reports and effective monitoring at faculty level.

Revision to the Quality Action Plan and procedures for AME for the current session required a more timely and documented response to reports. Examiners had also demonstrated continued confidence in the operation of the University's Assessment Regulations, and where comments concerning the Regulations had been recorded these would be fed into the annual review of Regulations.

As an enhancement to the process of response to examiners, a move towards a more timely response to external examiners on institutional-level matters would be on the agenda for CASQE. Some reformatting of the report template to more readily identify matters of institutional significance would facilitate identification of such issues.

5. Matters of institutional significance

Two emerging institutional themes had been identified from scrutiny of the reports submitted for the plenary. These formed the basis of detailed discussion at the meeting.

5.1 Theme 1: timeliness and quality of feedback on assessment

Faculty/divisional representatives were asked to consider and discuss how programme teams would ensure the quality and timeliness of feedback to students. Good practice and areas for enhancement were explored and the key points and recommendations from the discussion were as follows:

- There was currently some mismatch between external examiner observation and commendation with respect to feedback, and the perceptions of students and subsequent response within the NSS and other surveys
- There is a need to ensure that all students fully understand the organisational and administrative procedures that shape their experience – in particular in relation to feedback
- Develop feedback systems and targets and keep these under review
- Ensure early engagement/communication with students even where summative assessment has not yet taken place
- Establish and maintain reasonable expectations with respect to timing of feedback
- Consider the significance of feedback for formative assessment
- Consider the use of alternative methods of feedback including a traffic light system of indication of progress as part of formative feedback; use of electronic feedback; and use of other social media including facebook
- Introduction of NSS champions at divisional level to address issues including those relating to feedback
- Development of generic feedback sheets and further use of the MLE

Issues for enhancement would be captured within the Action Plan arising from the 2010/2011 AME.

5.2 Theme 2: Good practice relating to employability and work-based learning

Faculty/divisional representatives had been asked to prepare and provide a brief overview of an example of good practice relating to employability and work-based learning and the following were presented as examples of good practice, which were commended by the Academic Standards sub-Committee:

Art and Design

As part of the EQAL modification of undergraduate programmes, a cross-faculty unit (known as Unit X) had been included in programme structures at all three levels within the Faculty of Art and Design. Unit X was a cross discipline unit taking advantage of the possibilities of collaborative professional space.

Hollings

Hollings faculty presented as good practice the development of their Open Professional Programme (OPP). The programme is industry-facing, with students' course work based on issues at their place of work. To date, 65 students had been involved in the OPP in the Clothing, Design and Technology area, and 10 within the Food, Tourism Management area. Developments at Institutional level relating to the OPP were ongoing.

An employability-themed conference at Hollings was also cited as good practice.

Health, Psychology and Social Care

The Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Care reported on innovations relating to the inclusion in programme design of 20 credit units which include elements of work-based learning/placement learning as an alternative to full placements. In the current economic climate students were often unwilling or unable to fund or be funded for full one year placements, and the shorter placement opportunities had proved attractive.

Humanities, Law and Social Science

Work based and employability activity within the Faculty of Humanities, Law and Social Science was varied due to the nature of the range of disciplines operating within the Faculty. Activity was, however, successfully co-ordinated by one of the Senior Learning and Teaching Fellows and the Faculty was committed to enhancing resources for students with regard to such areas as Careers advice. The Faculty hosted an annual Employability Fest and operated an Employability Forum to share best practice.

Institute of Education

There was no representative from the Institute of Education to present this item.

MMU Business School

The MMU Business School demonstrated a commitment to work-based learning in its collaboration on foundation degrees with Tesco and McDonalds. Placement Fairs run by the School were also cited as good practice.

MMU Cheshire

MMU Cheshire presented as an example of good practice their self-negotiated units which facilitated the development of skills related to employment. The Faculty also cited the work of their Business Development Manager/Community Engagement Officer in this respect.

Science and Engineering

Many of the programmes within the Faculty of Science and Engineering were targeted at clear career paths from level 4 onwards. The Faculty had rich resources to enable development of skills, citing in particular their Environment Science area.

The good practice examples cited above demonstrated constructive and pro-active approaches to enhancing the student experience with respect to the areas of employability and work-based learning. CASQE would liaise with CeLT regarding dissemination of this good practice.

6. Action planning for 2010/2011

The Academic Standards sub-Committee considered the action plans for 2010/2011 provided by faculties/divisions as part of their Overviews and Action Plans. In most cases, the sub-Committee was happy to confirm that the plans included actions that were sufficiently challenging to meet the strategic objectives of the University.

The following Action Plans were, however, referred back to the faculty for re-consideration and further work: Hollings (in particular to consider the position of timetabling within the action for 2010/2011, and to consider whether the actions were sufficiently challenging in nature); Health, Psychology and Social Care (in particular to include within the action plan issues relating to collaborative provision); Humanities, Law and Social Science (to include items for action by the faculty in addition to those to be considered outwith).

7. Recommendations for enhancement

Enhancement Issues from 2010/2011 plenary

- Complete work to replace the existing Annual Monitoring Exercise with a live improvement process that is fit for purpose;
- Continuing work on the Threshold Standards for the Student Learning Experience, both to ensure implementation of the current Standards and also to consider updating;
- Begin working with MMUSU towards a new Student Charter;
- Achieve further improvements to active academic support and feedback, including effective use of academic tutors and formative assessment;
- Continue efforts to integrate information from the various sources of student feedback and opinion, including qualitative data from student comments;
- Ensure that system and process improvements, such as those from the EQAL project, make effective use of user input;

- Ensure effective briefing to, and dialogue with, External Examiners on the implementation of changes to organisation and process in assessment and the curriculum.

Enhancement issues recorded within the 2009/2010 AME

- Review the purpose and operation of the AME to ensure an enhancement-led process which will enable effective and timely monitoring of programmes in all modes and levels of delivery;
- Continue efforts to enhance opportunities for student voice and feedback, ensuring active responses and feedback on actions taken, including consideration of the implementation of an electronic-based tracking mechanism to maximise student involvement in monitoring and evaluation processes;
- Continue efforts to enhance flexible access to facilities and appropriate learning resources for part-time, postgraduate and CPD students, linking to planned capital improvements and associated facility management;
- Early development of plans to transfer from WebCT to Moodle, with staff training to be considered a priority.
- Continuing attention and action required on student retention and success to improve overall performance;
- Continuing innovation on employability in an increasingly adverse climate for graduate employment prospects;
- Continuing review of the effectiveness and impact of more centralised processes and information.

APPENDIX

External Examiner Reports 2010 – Institutional issues and analysis

1. Approximately 375 external examiner reports have been submitted following Examination Boards during summer and autumn 2010. A review of these reports has been undertaken using the themes identified in the sub-headings below. The themes selected were identified in part from institutional priorities but were added to following consideration of the External Examiner reports. Good Practice and commendations are identified. In addition issues that require resolution are identified for the Academic Standards Sub-committee to consider and propose actions to address concerns.

Response of Programme Team to Previous Report

2. In a small number of cases (less than 1%) External Examiners reported that they had received no response to their previous report. “The process of closing the feedback loop is a quality issue that the University must address” (Qualter).
3. Whilst receiving a response from the Programme Team a few external examiners expressed concerns about the quality of that response. Issues raised within reports included reporting a delay in responding, a desire for sight of the action plan and continuation of the problem raised (Fallone re: inconsistencies in the way moderation is evidenced / recorded).
4. Whilst concerns about receipt of response or delay in responding were few in number, MMU requires all Course or Programme Leaders to respond to external examiner reports within a set period. It is clear that further work is undertaken to ensure that all teams comply with this request.

Placement Learning / Employability / Work-based Learning

5. Seventeen external examiners raised specific comments relating to placements, work-based learning and employability. In the main these comments recognised existing good practice, with examples including:
 - “excellent relationship with practices in Manchester hugely beneficial and unparalleled” (Mackenzie)
 - “impressed with opportunity to work in public history settings” (Twell)
 - “Languages and TEFL combinations are very popular with students and also enhance employability” (Crawley-Jackson)
6. In other cases external examiners suggested ways in which placement, work-based learning opportunities could be enhanced. There was a view from one

external examiner that “MMUBS still has a very traditional view of work-based learning and that lessons could be learned from more contemporary approaches” (Gibson-Sweet). Hardwell suggested that vocational skills and practical experience should be embedded, whilst Zack-Williams highlighted that the potential for employability is immense if properly marketed.

7. Two external examiners made explicit reference to areas for improvement to meet external quality assurance demands. Stoker emphasised that the “team should consider how to make work placement outcomes more explicit and transparent across all pathways in line with QAA guidance on WBL” and Browne reported that “the issue of time and support for mentors and recognition of the role has not been resolved. Ofsted will expect the University to address this issue”.
8. The area of employability is important to MMU and further work may be needed to embed such skills within all courses. The focus of graduate outcomes within unit specifications may help to embed employability but it is likely that further work will be needed as MMU rolls out the EQAL Undergraduate Curriculum Framework.

Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

9. Many Programmes have engagement with PSRBs who have their own reporting processes. These feed into the Annual Institutional Overview on PSRB engagement. A review of external examiner reports identified very little explicit comment about PSRB related issues. Where mention of PSRBs was made it tended to focus on concern regarding the prescription laid down by individual PSRBs rather than quality processes for concern by the institution.

Collaborative Provision

10. Whilst external examiners are asked to make comment on collaborative provision the responses made are variable. However a number of external examiners did make explicit comment that fell into areas including assessment, communication / working relationships, administration and facilities. In this category responses were more mixed and possibly reflect differences in engagement within each of the faculties.
11. There is evidence from external examiner reports of consistency in practice between the delivery at MMU and the partner programme:
 - “great care is taken to ensure compatibility of provision and standards” (Broadbent)
 - “the standards required of students at Stockport and MMU are now equivalent” (McCormack)

- “once again I was impressed by the consistency of moderation ... delivered by different colleges / tutors – this is to be commended. I am pleased to note that the consistency of practice across the collaborative partners reflects very well upon the efforts of all staff on awards which are delivered at multiple sites” (Considine).

12. Issues relating to the assessment and moderation were raised in a few external examiner reports, e.g. students at S. Cheshire College receive mixed messages re: assessment requirements and referencing, and hand-in dates are problematic (Walsh). In other cases issues relating to “the moderation and standardisation of marking expectations between partner colleges ... was questionable ... with different expectations and requirements across the three sites” (Davis)
13. In some cases scrutiny of external examiner comments highlighted differences in practice from different programme teams working in the same partner organisation. For example, O’Sullivan reports that Manchester College appears to work well with MMU (FdA International Marketing) whilst Stoker reports that “there is undoubtedly more work to be done in establishing the reality of the relationship between the partner college and the University” (Fd New Media Design).
14. A small number of external examiners identify that student progression routes are not as clear as they might be and that students do not consider themselves as MMU students. In a few cases administrative issues have been raised include lack of consistent presentation of Board papers and issues relating to the enrolment status of students. One external examiner identified a lack of laboratory / experimental facilities (Robertson-Begg).
15. Whilst the numbers of external examiners highlighting collaborative provision issues and good practice is relatively small there are issues raised that MMU needs to take action to address. As part of the ongoing work to address the Institutional Audit Action Plan it has been agreed to undertake a review of collaborative provision over the summer 2011 and it would be wise to consider the feedback from external examiners as a part of that review.

Combined Honours

16. It was pleasing to note that of those twenty six external examiners who specifically mentioned Combined Honours provision there was consistent agreement that combined honours students were of a comparable standard to those single honours students.

17. An administrative point regarding changes to the Student Record Systems identified that problems were minimal and did not affect the material outcome for students (Starie).

Assessment / moderation issues

18. A number of External Examiners raised issues regarding assessment. These issues are considered through the Annual Review of Regulations.

Good Practice

19. A range of good practice was identified in courses across the University. Themes included such areas as:

- Flexible, innovative and intellectually diverse curricula
- Interaction and involvement with industry and the professions
- Imaginative and a broad range of assessment methods
- Excellent and supportive feedback
- The use of social media
- The support to students

Other issues

20. A small number of issues arose that do not fall into particular themes. One such area relates to change at MMU, e.g. the historic issue relating to the removal of departmental offices; and the desire for external examiner engagement with the drafting of the EQAL framework. Other issues are individualistic and detailed on the attached report.

Conclusions

21. External examiners confirm the academic standards of awards and the quality of the student experience at MMU. The issues raised above should be considered in context, i.e. as the views of a small number of external examiners rather than generic concerns about the quality of courses at MMU. It is intended to use the feedback from the Academic Standards Sub-committee to identify actions from this report.

Manchester Metropolitan University

Actions arising from Chair of ADC's AME Report to Academic Board on the findings of the 2009/10 Annual Monitoring Exercise:

LEAD MONITORING RESPONSIBILITY IN BOLD; actions to feed in to committee business planning cycle

1. Summary of the outcomes of the Annual Monitoring Exercise

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
1. Review role and composition of plenary meeting.	CASQE	2010/11	High	Streamlined format for meeting introduced during 2010/11

2. Issues highlighted in the Students' Union and central service provider reports

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
2.1 Recommendation to explore possibility of 'tracking issues' document to monitor issues raised by students.	DVC (SE) CASQE Students' Union	2010/11	High	Revised AME procedures include a proposal for tracking issues element to monitor progress of issues raised by students, staff and external examiners.
2.2 Review appropriateness of central service provider template and associated processes.	CASQE Director of Student Services, Head of Library Services	2010/11	Medium	Revised template introduced for 2010/11
2.3 Further development of centralised timetabling and work relating to the availability of timetables.	PMI	2010/11	High	Update on centralised timetabling provided to ADC in March 2011(individualised timetables to be generated as soon as option choices confirmed at start of term for Level 4 only). Draft timetables should be available by end of May 2011. Site consultation ongoing.

3. Matters of institutional significance

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
<p>3.1 Early development of plans to transfer from WebCT to Moodle, with staff training to be considered a priority.</p>	<p>DVC (SE) Learning and Research Technologies, CeLT</p>	<p>2010/11</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Appointment of e-learning technologists linked to faculties will assist plans for transfer to Moodle. Moodle training sessions now in place. Resit students and VLE use to be addressed in supporting documentation for new Assessment Regulations, as WebCT will not be available after 31 August.</p>
<p>3.2 Continued efforts to enhance flexible access to facilities and appropriate learning resources for part-time, postgraduate and CPD students, linking to planned capital improvements and associated facility management.</p>	<p>Services Group SAS</p>	<p>2010/11 - 2011/12</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>SAS is continuing to make efforts to enhance services for part-time, postgraduate and CPD students. Recent developments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extended opening hours of the Aytoun SIP and the School of Law office on two evenings per week; • the introduction of new University-wide procedures for coursework submission which allow students to submit work whenever academic buildings are open; • the introduction of online coursework submission for all part-time postgraduate students in the Business School; • the provision of reassessed coursework via WebCT in MMUBS;

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the extension of online enrolment to all new and returning students based within the University. <p>Work is ongoing to extend or supplement these activities. The construction of the new student hub, plans for 24 hour opening in at least one building for parts of the from 2012/13, and a review of postgraduate study facilities led by RED will provide an opportunity to consolidate services in a cost-effective way to serve these groups better. Facilities have improved the vending provision across the University from September 2010, reviewing provision across all sites, re-tendering the current vending contract and introducing additional facilities and a wider range of food and drink offerings that previously. Following the extension of opening hours at All Saints, Library Services has extending term-time evening and weekend opening hours in Crewe. The ongoing development of the MLE, including the provision of digital rather than just physical resources, will also enable students to access services remotely and more seamlessly.</p>
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4 Trends and/or generic themes

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
4.1 To review University processes, systems and regulations in order to better meet the needs of non-HEFCE funded students.	DVC (SE) Services Group P&MI Student Services CASQE	2010/11 – 2011/12	Medium	Learning and Research Information Services within the Services Group is making a significant contribution to developments under EQAL, due to deliver within the given timescale; the actions reported under 3.2 will also help to meet the needs of non-HEFCE funded students.

5 Institutional-level commentary on the findings of external examiners' reports

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
5.1 To develop overview report on institutional issues arising from external examiners' reports.	CASQE	2010/11	Medium	CASQE members have reviewed external examiner reports to identify institutional themes

6 Collaborative Provision

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
6.1 Monitor revised AME process for collaborative partners.	CPO CASQE	2010/11	Medium	Scrutiny by CASQE, in consultation with CPO where necessary, of AME7s from the 09/10 round will highlight any references to collaborative provision. The outcomes will be fed into the plenary meeting at the end of March. If no issues are raised, the plenary may wish to consider the need for further modifications to the reporting process to give confidence that issues raised in QAPs relating to collaborative provision have been dealt with satisfactorily.

7. Effectiveness of student voice in quality management

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
7.1 Monitor impact of implementation of Threshold Standards and review University Student Agreement.	DVC (SE) CASQE Students' Union Quality Enhancement Sub-committee	2010/11	Medium	Implementation of Threshold Standards added to QESC agenda. Faculty representatives to provide update reports to QESC in summer term.
7.2 Continue efforts to enhance opportunities for student voice and feedback, ensuring active responses and feedback on actions taken, including consideration of the implementation of an electronic-based tracking mechanism to maximise student involvement in monitoring and evaluation processes.	DVC (SE) Students' Union CASQE	2010/11	High	Recent developments include: optional piloting of online unit survey across all faculties and establishment of Student Evaluation Policy Group and Student Evaluation Strategy Sub-group. Student communication group also

				formed in Marketing and Communications led by PVC Communication. Further work in conjunction with Students' Union on maximising participation in NSS.
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8 Key examples of good practice to be evaluated and disseminated

Identified Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
8.1 Further development of monitoring and tracking system for specific group of students developed by MMU Cheshire.	Quality Enhancement Sub-committee	2010/11	Medium	Added to Quality Enhancement Sub-committee agenda for summer 2011 for further development.
8.2 Development of CeLT's Academic Practice database.	CeLT FADC Chairs	Ongoing	Medium	

9 Additional issues raised at ASSC Plenary Session

Identified issues for consideration	Responsibility	Timescale	Priority status	Response
9.1 Faculties to ensure that local action taken to augment the information held in the PSRB database to provide a full set to data to facilitate the production of an evaluative report on institutional engagement with PSRBs.	Faculty staff with PSRB involvement, FADCs, CASQE	Ongoing	Medium	CASQE Officer has requested an update report from each faculty utilising the PSRB database to provide current faculty data. Information also requested on whether regular updates are being reported to Faculty Quality Officers.