**Minutes of the International Foundation Programme first year review meeting held at Loughborough University on Monday 25 October 2010, 09.30, N225**

Present: R Dawson (RD), ADT Science (Chair)

S Dann (SED), Foundation Programme Director

R Pearson (RP), Programme Quality Team

J Spavin (JS), International Manager, Loughborough College

J Reay (JR), Minutes

Jane Horner, ADT Engineering, and Ruth Kinna, ADT SSH, had been part of the Pre-Validation review meeting on 13 October 2010, but were unable to attend today.

A pre-Validation Review meeting on 13 October had reviewed and agreed an appropriate format for Annexe 1 data and relevant documents for IFP APR, and had reviewed the Validation Agreement, recommending changes based on the experience of a year in operation. The recommended changes had been discussed and agreed in discussion between SED and JS for Loughborough College prior to today’s meeting.

The following documents were discussed today (copies attached, circulated ahead of the meeting):

1. LGUF20: Annexe 1 – data relating to IFP Business for 2009-10 academic year
2. LGUF10: Annexe 1 – data relating to IFP Science and IFP Business for 2009-10 academic year
3. Validation Agreement: previous version showing track changes; and final version incorporating changes agreed.

Also attached (as documents referred to in the Annexes above):

1. External Examiner Reports for Business modules, Mathematics and Physics modules, English Language modules, and the overall report from the Programme Assessor.
2. SED’s responses to the 4 External Examiner reports.
3. Minutes from the 2 Student Focus Group meetings held during the 2009-10 academic year.

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| **1** | **LGUF10 & LGUF20 Data: General comments** | **Actions** |
|  | The format of the IFP Annexe 1 documents had been discussed and agreed with both ADTs and college staff prior to this meeting. Data, which had been difficult to gather this year, are now being gathered concurrently.  The following general points were noted:   * **Item 1: Recruitment**: though not previously mentioned, it was felt that including IELTS scores at entry would be helpful. SED was able to confirm this is being done for the current group. * **Item 2: Withdrawals:** It was felt that withdrawal numbers were acceptable for programmes of this type. * **Item 4: Destinations**: it had been recommended that students who have not responded to enquiry about destination were included, to differentiate from those who had responded and were unplaced. * **Achievements**: pdf files of the IFP Board decisions from 7 and 21 July are attached to these minutes. SED advised that there had been a high proportion of Distinctions in IFP Science, and a much higher proportion of Distinctions in IFP Business in the September group than the January group. * **Item 5: Documents attached**: the British Council report referred to in the Pre Validation meeting replaces ‘Faculty QEO’s Summary’ – copy now attached. JS clarified that this accreditation process is carried out every 4 years, and accredits college to deliver English Language qualifications – copy certificate included as last page. |  |
| **1.1** | **LGUF20 IFP Business:** |  |
|  | **3: Withdrawals:**  Fairly usual reasons (with one anomaly). |  |
|  | **4: Destinations:**  A large proportion had been placed, at equivalent institutions (1994 group, Russell Group).  The January start group generally did less well (only 2 Distinctions), and a lower proportion were placed. Efforts have been made to improve this, with the introduction of higher IELTS requirements to enter – 5.5 for the cohort under review, raised to 6.0 for the next intake in January 2011. |  |
|  | **5: from Documents attached:**   * External Examiner reports indicated concerns about the January start, which is very intensive, with no breaks (4 days at Easter) and no half terms * Requirement for 2 Programme Boards: the question was raised as to whether 2 Boards were required, rather than combining into a single Board at the later date. SED feels it would be unfair to make the September cohort wait for results, and this may also have an impact upon their applications to other universities. It was agreed that 2 Programme Boards were a requirement. |  |
| **1.2** | **Raising the profile of IFP with LU admissions tutors**: |  |
|  | On reviewing destinations, RD asked about joint degrees. SED explained that Information Science and Mathematics now have routes from both pathways (not available to the previous cohort). RD asked about others – ie in dept of Computer Science, Computing & Management, IT Management for Business, which have a route through the Science pathway, but not through Business.  SED would be very pleased for anything ADTs can do to promote awareness of the existence of both pathways among admissions tutors in departments. RD will raise this with Computer Science. JR to send progression criteria documents to RD.  Science departments already know about the IFP through SEFS, but RD himself was unaware that there were 2 pathways in the IFP. The course would benefit from some additional publicity to raise awareness with admissions tutors in all departments, but particularly SSH departments about the pathways, how offers are made based on agreed progression criteria, and making them aware that these are bright students whose only lack is English Language.  SED emphasised again that these students are lower risk to departments than a general international applicant, in that they are known to us, and we know that they are rigorously examined – results of Distinction, Merit, Pass can be taken as accurate indicators of ability. | RD  JR  ADTs |
| **2** | **LGUF10 IFP Science:** |  |
|  | **1: Recruitment**  It was noted that 3 students had A-levels on entry. SED advised that 2 had strong A-levels, but weak English, and that these had performed well. The third had weak A-levels, and he failed at both first and second attempts. It had now been agreed that A-level applicants come to LU admissions tutors in departments for review.  Conversely, SED asked if all admissions tutors could be reminded that if, in the summer, a good A-level student fails to meet the 6.5 or 7 IELTS required for direct entry, they could be referred to IFP. JS confirmed to RD that minimum entry for IFP is 5.5, with minimum of 5.0 in writing.  RD will raise this with the Admissions team (Wendy Ferguson). | RD |
|  | **2: Withdrawals**:  Of the 4 who withdrew, 2 transferred to the Business stream, and 2 found the English Language hard and transferred to English Language courses at college. |  |
| 3 | **Changes to Agreement** |  |
|  | The following changes have been discussed with and agreed by LC: |  |
|  | **4.2:** Changes to marketing / publicity material to be reported/approved. |  |
|  | **4.4:** A-level applicants to be referred to LU departments. Particular departments wish to review all applications (Civil, Aero/Auto). |  |
|  | **4.5:** Any requests to transfer destination departments to come to LU. |  |
|  | **5.2:** Review of Collaborative Provision: paragraph stays as was, following advice from RP. |  |
|  | **6.3:** Wording amended to: ‘Progression requirements will indicate whether a separate IELTS examination is necessary’, to reflect the fact that some departments do not require IELTS if students achieve 70% in the 2 English language modules. |  |
|  | **6.4:** disappears from original document. |  |
|  | **6.4: (previously 6.5):**  There had been some discussion about the requirement for 120 credits to achieve the award, and whether a student achieving 100 credits could be awarded a pass. Alternatively, whether using condonement would be advisable when a student with a good profile missed out on a module.  SED had discussed this with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Teaching), who prefers to use condonement, as this would involve a quality overview decision.  This raised some further discussion:   * RP confirmed that condonement would apply to the IFP as a finalist award (stand-alone qualification). * While SED felt it would not be appropriate to condone on English language modules, it would be possible to use common sense based on progression criteria for the destination department/degree programme. * RP recommended that we draft a ‘condonement policy’, and consider including condonement in the programme regulations. | SED |
|  | **8.4:** Any instances of academic misconduct are dealt with by LU. |  |
|  | **9.2:** Requirement to update contact details, following problems this year with Business School/Economics being able to contact students regarding interview arrangements. |  |
|  | **9.3:** clarifies actions relating to deadlines for examination papers. |  |
| **4** | **External Examiner reports & responses** |  |
| 4.1 | We have agreed minimum requirements for module boxes.  Guidance on differentiating to clearly identify second marking has been disseminated. |  |
| 4.2 | **Dissemination & discussion of EE Feedback:**  The normal process for EE reports is that they would go to Teaching & Learning Committee. SED agreed, but pointed out that EE reports were received during the window when college staff were not available. This year, feeling that we needed to respond quickly, SED had drafted responses and sent to Janet Ruffoni, IFP Manager, for comment.  It was agreed that this process should continue, with reports and responses being sent to college managers, and should then be discussed with college staff formally at the meeting in August when all return from summer vacation.  To complete the process for this year, the reports and responses should be discussed at a special Operations Group meeting (JR to finalise arrangements). | JR |
| 4.3 | **Operational Responsibilities document:**  Following discussion between SED and JS last week, SED to draft a document setting out responsibilities, to include the summer period. | SED |
| **5** | **Acknowledgments to colleagues** |  |
|  | SED wished to record our thanks to staff in both college and LU, who have helped to make the implementation of the IFP a success. In particular, SED mentioned:   * Subject Advisers, who had been very helpful. * Lots of people at college who have made things work, but particular thanks go to **Joan Powell**, who took on the role of examinations liaison, and who had to learn all of LU exam processes. |  |
|  | RD commented that the programme appears to have been an ‘excellent’ collaboration, resulting in a successful pilot year, and would like to see more.  JS is very happy to be collaborating, and acknowledged the help from college colleagues already involved in collaborations in HE, and also SED’s ‘excellent support’. |  |
| **6** | **Other matters:** |  |
| 6.1 | **UCAS Applicants with year 12 qualifications:**  SED would like admissions tutors to be encouraged to refer bright international students with good year 12 qualifications to IFP (if IELTS is at 5.5) or SEFS (if IELTS is at 6.5). | ADTs |
| 6.2 | **Modules update:**  **Chemistry** modules are now in place, and coming on stream for next year.  **Sports Science**: we now have the outlines of 4 Sports Science modules.  **Economics**: college staff worked very hard to product module specs acceptable to LU Economics staff, but they are not running this year.  We need to feed back to departments that a very low cap on offers will result in very low numbers, or no students on programme. Specialist modules cannot be offered for very small numbers of students. | ADT (SSH) |
| 6.3 | **LC admin liaison** |  |
|  | College now have a person half time for admin liaison (Emma Griffin). |  |
| 6.4 | **Learning Teaching Committee meeting 4 November 2010: APR / Validation review:**  RP advised that this is now on the Agenda.  Minimum requirements:   * A report (which could be a combination of the minutes of the two meetings we’ve held) * Original Agreement document showing tracked changes * To which Ray would speak.   Deadline for receipt of papers or the Learning & Teaching Committee meeting is: 10am Thursday 28 October 2010. |  |
| **7** | **IFP certificates and special paper** |  |
|  | JS reminded the meeting about the requirement for special paper for printing IFP certificates and transcripts, which includes both LU and college logo’s.  RP will follow this up. | RP |
| **8** | **Any Other Business:** |  |
|  | A meeting is required between SED, RP for the PQT and Academic Registrar (JCN) ahead of Claire Atkin’s return from maternity leave. | RP |