1. Introduction

1.1 On 13 March 2013, an Internal Subject Review (ISR) of Joint Honours programmes in Science was undertaken in accordance with the University’s Policy and Procedures for Internal Subject Review. The review covered the following programmes:

- Joint Honours in Accounting and Information Systems BSc
- Joint Honours in Accounting and Mathematics BSc
- Joint Honours in Accounting and Statistics BSc
- Joint Honours in Biology and Psychology BSc
- Joint Honours in Biology and Chemistry BSc
- Joint Honours in Computing Science and Mathematics BSc
- Joint Honours in Economics and Information Systems BSc
- Joint Honours in Economics and Mathematics BSc
- Joint Honours in Economics and Statistics BSc
- Joint Honours in Mathematics and Psychology BSc
- Joint Honours in Nutrition and Psychology BSc

The purpose of the review was to provide the subject provider with an opportunity to reflect on whether its programmes remain current and are effectively taught, to identify opportunities for their further enhancement, to enable the University to assure itself of the standards of provision, and to decide whether to re-approve the programmes for a further period.

1.2 The Review Team comprised:

- Dr Andrew Newman, International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies (Chair)
- Dr David Fairbairn, School of Civil Engineering and Geosciences (FLTSEC representative)
- Dr Catherine Exley, Institute of Health and Society (ULTSEC representative)
- Dr Kathleen Johnson, University of Liverpool (External Subject Specialist)
- Mr Zhenhua ‘Sky’ Jin, School of Arts and Cultures (Student representative)
- Dr Simon Meacher, QuILT (Secretary for the Review Visit)
- Mrs Lauraine Pye, QuILT (Secretary for the QA check and Visit follow-up)
- Miss Gillian Whittaker, Faculty of SAgE (Observer)

1.3 The Review Team was provided with a reflective commentary compiled by the subject provider and given access to supporting documentation. During the review visit, meetings were held with academic staff, support staff and current students.
1.4 The Review Team was also provided with the report of a pre-ISR QA check (attached as Annex A) which took place on 13 February 2013, the purpose of which was to inform the Review Team and ultimately assure the University that institutional quality management procedures were being implemented appropriately. The findings of the QA check were considered by the Review Team at a briefing meeting held on 26 February, and the team used its discussion of the findings as a basis for questions asked during the review visit.

The QA check revealed some minor gaps in the documentation reviewed. In most cases, missing evidence was subsequently received or assurances were provided that appropriate policies would be fully implemented (e.g. Peer Observation of Teaching). The School will need to ensure, via its ISR action plan, that all issues detailed in Appendix I are fully addressed.

A review of Blackboard provision (three modules specific to the Joint Honours in Science programmes) was carried out by QuiLT, and this found that Blackboard content was, in general, designed and presented logically and clearly.

2. Overall Judgement

2.1 On the basis of its review of the above programmes, the team were able to place confidence in the security of standards and the quality of student learning opportunities to enable students to attain such standards.

2.2 The team therefore recommend to ULTSEC that all of the programmes reviewed be approved for a further six years.

3. Exemplary Practice Commendation

3.1 The involvement of students in helping to design their own learning, firstly by taking student interests into account and working with the central Timetabling team to customise how modules are offered on the programmes, and secondly through the flexibility of topic choice and investigation in the final year research project. (Ref. 10.1)

4. Good Practice Commendations

4.1 The enthusiasm, dedication and responsiveness to student needs of the core programme team, in particular the Degree Programme Director, academic administrator and teaching support administrator. (Ref. 9.2)

4.2 The three study skills modules, which were introduced after the identification of gaps in the curriculum when mapping programmes to the Graduate Skills Framework, and which embed the ability to learn how to acquire skills and reflect on them. (Ref. 10.1; 11.3; 11.5)

4.3 The efforts made by the School of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development (AFRD) to engage Joint Honours with other parts of their provision, and to recognise the benefits of being part of a multidisciplinary school. The Review Team gained a clear sense that the interdisciplinarity of the schools underpins the Joint Honours programmes and saw this as a key strength. (Ref. 11.4)

4.4 The success of the School in the last few years in establishing a cohort identity. (Ref. 9.3)
5. **Recommendation to the School**

5.1 The Review Team encourages the programme team to continue in its efforts to try to address issues of variability in the return of feedback and release of marks, and to ensure that communication of subject-specific information is effective. (Ref. 10.4)

6. **Recommendations to the Faculty**

6.1 The Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering (SAgE) should take an urgent decision about the future management and potential expansion of Joint Honours programmes to prevent a detrimental impact on recruitment. The Review Team believes that keeping all Joint Honours programmes together under the current management arrangements is the best way forward. In addition, the Faculty should provide appropriate resource to support the existing high quality management of the Joint Honours programmes, and to support succession planning, in particular if this area of provision is to expand in the future. (The Review Team is aware that this finding contradicts the earlier recommendation by the Review Team for the Maths & Stats ISR). (Ref. 9.2; 11.2)

7. **Recommendations to the University**

7.1 That ULTSEC approve all of the programmes considered by this review for a further six years. (Ref. 2.2)

7.2 That the significance of the role of Subject Advisor is given appropriate recognition by Directors of Excellence in Learning & Teaching and Heads of School. (Ref. 10.3)

7.3 That QuiLT update the role description for Subject Advisors. (Ref. 10.2)

7.4 That the Marketing and Student Recruitment Directorate be asked to assist the School in developing a strategy for the promotion of the Joint Honours programmes. (Ref. 11.2)

8. **Background**

8.1 In accordance with University policy, to avoid duplication of effort it is recognised that modules studied by Joint Honours students, and the review of academic provision in a more general sense (content, appropriateness of resources for delivery, research-informed teaching etc.) are included in the review of the relevant subject. The focus of the ISR for the Joint Honours in Science programmes was primarily on the student experience, student support and the quality management of these programmes.

8.2 The Joint Honours in Science programmes are managed on behalf of SAgE Faculty by AFRD, with all academic aspects of the programmes being delivered by academic schools alongside their own single honours programmes. This has been the case since 2009/10; all students currently on the programmes (who have proceeded normally through the stages of study) therefore have had an administrative home in AFRD since Stage 1.

8.3 The Joint Honours programmes allow students to study specific combinations of two subjects with equal emphasis on both subjects. Since 2006 a number of Joint Honours
programmes have been withdrawn. This rationalisation has occurred as a result of unresolvable timetabling clashes leading to poor student feedback; consistently low Stage 1 entry numbers; and the withdrawal of, or significant changes to, single honours programmes linked to Joint Honours rendering Joint Honours provision unviable.

8.4 Overall, AFRD have ensured that the Joint Honours programmes are those which build on the learning, teaching and research strengths within each of the linked Schools, and are where Schools are committed to engagement with the quality management of the degree programmes through the Subject Advisor system. The programme team has also exchanged learning with representatives from the Combined Honours Centre in mechanisms for managing the student cohort. These factors help to ensure that the quality of the student experience is maintained and enhanced where possible.

8.5 The suite of Joint Honours programmes is not considered to be closed; market testing is underway for programmes which could include Geosciences and Philosophical Studies, for example. This potential expansion follows careful evaluation by AFRD and the linked Schools of the ability to engage with the management arrangements and to maintain the quality of the Joint Honours student experience.

9. **Student Experience**

9.1 The Review Team met with a group of students who were course representatives for a range of stages across the suite of Joint Honours programmes.

9.2 The student representatives were unanimous in their praise for the support provided to them by the degree programme director and programme administrative team, in particular citing the approachability and availability of these staff to answer queries and provide information. Throughout the visit, the Review Team themselves recognised the enthusiasm and dedication of the core programme team, in particular the Degree Programme Director, academic administrator and teaching support administrator, as well as their responsiveness to student needs, and commends this as good practice. The Review Team recommends that the Faculty should provide appropriate resource to AFRD to support the existing high quality management of the Joint Honours programmes, and to support succession planning, in particular if this area of provision is to expand in the future.

9.3 Students were proud of their status as Joint Honours students, something which the Review Team recognised as clear evidence of the efforts of AFRD to establish a cohort identity, which it commends as good practice. Students also expressed how they valued highly the opportunity to multi-task and combine skills, and to work on mutually supporting subjects provided by different schools as being special virtues of studying these programmes at Newcastle.

9.4 A number of students highlighted possible issues around inconsistency of student experience with their peers on single honours programmes. These included receiving exam results for the same subject after single honours students, feeling that they were sometimes ‘playing catch-up’ with single honours students in the same subject area, and having to study alongside a different year group when taking Stage 2 modules in their third year. Variability in arrangements for submission of and feedback on assessed work within the different schools participating in the Joint Honours programmes was found to be confusing by some students, although others could appreciate that schools chose to use different
Teaching: quality management and enhancement

10.1 The Review Team discussed the issue of timetabling clashes with the programme team. The Degree Programme Director explained how timetabling modelling is a standard part of
programme development, and also that collaboration between students, staff and the central timetabling team has led to a significant decrease in clashes, particularly in Stage 3 of the programmes where there tends to be a greater flexibility of module choice. Students are engaged in helping to design the programme regulations, considering which combinations of optional modules could be prioritised, and determining which modules are made compulsory. Close liaison with, and cooperation from, the Timetabling team prevents favoured module combinations being overridden by the timetabling system which normally works according to numbers of students on a module. The Faculty Quality Team allows the Joint Honours team more time to finalise its programme regulations in order to accommodate this process. One of the optional Stage 3 modules is the ACE3901 Joint Honours project, which requires students to apply skills and knowledge acquired across their whole degree programme to a literature investigation or small research project on a topic of their own choosing. The Review Team found that this, together with the collaboration on programme regulations, was a very positive example of involving students in the design of their own learning and recommends this as a feature of exemplary practice.

10.2 The Review Team met with Subject Advisors representing all subject areas which contribute to the Joint Honours programmes, and asked about their understanding of the expectations placed on Subject Advisors by the University, which were in line with the University’s role description (which the Review Team noted as being in need of an update by QuILT). Subject Advisors are required to liaise with the programme management team within AFRD with regard to the curriculum and other academic matters, particularly those which arise from their subject-specific Board of Studies; provide advice and support to students; coordinate induction arrangements; assist with recruitment; and participate in Staff-Student Committees, Boards of Studies and Boards of Examiners. However, communication by Subject Advisors with the Joint Honours programme team is not consistent. Programme team staff are able to get round this by communicating with administrative staff in the other school offices instead. The Review Team heard that Subject Advisor attendance at Staff-Student Committees is sometimes an issue, but also saw evidence in the Commentary of the relationship between Joint Honours and Subject Advisors working more effectively, e.g. the moving of the Business School to its new premises at Downing Plaza and the careful management of information to students meaning that changes to timetabling for programmes with Accounting and Economics were effected with no adverse impact on the student experience.

10.3 With regard to the nomination of staff to serve as Subject Advisors – which was also of significant interest to the Review Team – individual schools’ mechanisms for this are unclear and there does not appear to be a defined system of rotation in place. At least for new programmes in the Joint Honours suite, an appropriate member of staff would be identified as part of an initial conversation between AFRD and the linked school. In light of this, and the variability in engagement with the Joint Honours programmes by Subject Advisors, the Review Team recommends that the significance of the role of Subject Advisor is given appropriate recognition by Directors of Excellence in Learning & Teaching and Heads of School.

10.4 Students had highlighted their inconsistent experience of receiving marks on assessed work and the Review Team was interested in following this up with the programme team and Subject Advisors as representatives of the different participating subject areas. Staff recognised and understood students’ frustrations, but the mechanisms for release of marks
whether by module or cohort and whether using NESS or Blackboard is a matter of choice for individual schools. The programme team does try to help in this regard by emphasising the need for fairness at the module level. The Review Team encourages the programme team to continue in its efforts to try to address issues of variability in the return of feedback and release of marks, and to ensure that communication of subject-specific information and practice is effective.

11. **Resources, student support, recruitment, retention and achievement.**

11.1 The Review Team received a tour of learning resources from the academic administrator to the Joint Honours programmes, and learned that Joint Honours students have the same access to resources as single honours students. These include access to library facilities, use of ReCap, and access to Blackboard. Adoption of ReCap by staff is a matter for individual schools, and something over which the programme team therefore have little influence. Students are in any case aware that use of ReCap is not always appropriate for all teaching. A new social learning space in the Agriculture Building was opened in September 2012 and Joint Honours students had been consulted as to the best use of this space. Joint Honours has three of its own Blackboard module pages, but these do not appear to be used much by students.

11.2 Following on from comments made by student representatives in the earlier meeting, the Review Team wished to discuss marketing of the programmes. The Review Team referred to the assertion that students had only found out about the Joint Honours study route through researching single honours programmes. The programme team conceded that Joint honours did not have its own entry in the University prospectus or the online course finder, and regretted that Joint Honours were not being promoted positively by the institution. Although the programme team had been working with the Marketing and Student Recruitment Directorate on publicity, it felt unable to move forward with further ideas for promoting Joint Honours until the Faculty had reached a decision about the future management of the suite of programmes. Furthermore, the prospectus team was reluctant to make changes until a firm decision had been reached. The Review Team recommends that the Marketing and Student Recruitment Directorate be asked to assist the School in developing a strategy for the promotion of the Joint Honours programmes.

11.3 Whilst AFRD could recognise the positive aspects of allowing Joint Honours programmes to be managed by individual schools, it believes that it has supported the programmes effectively in a number of ways, a view which is supported by the Review Team. Co-ordination of the degree programmes from a single administrative home (i.e. AFRD) allows the Joint Honours cohort to be considered as a distinct student group with particular needs, and AFRD has been working with Joint Honours students to engage them in the development of a student-focused experience which is responsive to those needs and which supports success. The development of new modules specifically for Joint Honours students which includes ACE1050 Skills for Joint Honours, which aims to support students in their transition to learning at HE level, is a clear example of this (see also 11.3). The external subject specialist was particularly impressed by the study skills modules and saw these as an effective means of embedding the ability to learn how to acquire skills and reflect on that learning.
AFRD is also well-suited to managing and supporting multi-disciplinary programmes given the resident strong understanding of issues arising from interdisciplinary study, which stems from the breadth and depth of research within the School. The Review Team recommends that SAgE should take an urgent decision about the future management and potential expansion of Joint Honours programmes to prevent a detrimental impact on recruitment. The Review Team believes that keeping all Joint Honours programmes together under the current management arrangements is the best way forward.

Discussion in the meeting also included support for Joint Honours from the Library and the Careers Service. In the light of concerns raised by students through Staff-Student Committee about their lack of information literacy skills, such as uses of databases and referencing, a number of new modules were developed for inclusion in Joint Honours programme regulations, one of which was ACE3901 which is described in 10.1 above. Two further modules were ACE2053 Skills for Joint Honours which was designed with input from the Careers Service, and ACE1050 Developing Graduate Skills which was designed with input from the subject liaison librarian (see 11.2). There is a Joint Honours Career Advisor who provides advice, guidance and support to all students that includes preparation of CVs, interview techniques, and volunteering, for example. Co-ordination of employability and careers advice between the Joint Honours disciplines is not always easy to achieve, however, AFRD has a Student Recruitment Assistant who is tasked with circulating specific information of this type to all students regardless of discipline.
# Internal Subject Review of Joint Honours in Science

## Pre-Visit Review of local implementation of University QA policy

Checklist for completion by ISR Secretary

1. **CURRICULUM**

   **Comments**
   
   Programme specifications:
   * Are they up to date and complete and do they match the programme regulations? Do they match the versions published on the web?
   * Do aims and intended learning outcomes map to the FHEQ level descriptors and outcomes for a specific award? How do they compare with the subject benchmarks?

   The Programme Specifications don’t appear to have been received for upload to the website and are therefore not published. The versions provided for the QA Check were updated ranging from 2010 to 2012. The Subject Area need to check that all programmes listed on the Programme Specification are live programmes i.e. GL13 and CG83.

   All programme codes are included in the overarching Programme Specification.

   A full list of Programme Regulations are listed on the website under AFRD. This list does not match the list on the AFRD Website. Following discussion this is due to only those programmes that are taking new entrants as the other programmes are being phased out. In 13/14 it is likely that there will be 5 Joint Honours Degrees.

   The aims adhere to FHEQ levels appropriately.

   The programmes are in line with the audit description provided in the QAA document ‘Arrangements for joint, combined and multidisciplinary honours degree programmes’.

   External Examiner reports confirm that programmes are achieving the benchmarks associated with the subjects they study i.e. Natural Sciences.

   **Evidence**
   
   - Programme specifications
   - Programme regulations
   - FHEQ
   - Subject benchmarks

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*Appendix I*
### CURRICULUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Module outline forms:  
*Review a sample: do these appear complete and up to date?*  
*What is the state of mapping to the Graduate Skills Framework?*  
*Do assessment loads conform with the University Assessment Tariff (unless exemptions apply)?* | There are three modules owned by AFRD for Joint Honours ie ACE1050, ACE2053 & ACE3901. All other modules delivered on Joint Honours programmes belong to other Schools and will be reviewed under each subject areas provision. MOFS are up to date. The assessment loads conform to the tariff for those modules listed above. | Module Outline Forms  
MOFS database  
Assessment Tariff |
| Qualifications and Credit Framework:  
*Check programme regulations: do programmes conform with University’s credit arrangements (unless they have approved exemptions)?* | All Joint Honours programmes conform to the Qualifications and Credit Framework.  
A full list of Programme Regulations are listed on the website under AFRD. This list does not match the list on the AFRD Website. Following discussion this is due to only those programmes that are taking new entrants as the other programmes are being phased out. In 13/14 it is likely that there will be 5 Joint Honours Degrees.  
Explore as to whether there should be more links to match programmes that are being delivered. | Qualifications and Credit Framework  
Programme regulations |
| External examiners’ reports:  
*Check reports for confirmation from examiners that the quality and standards of the programmes are appropriate*  
*Are reports reviewed at Board of Studies with students present?*  
*Is there evidence of actions recommended by EE being considered and actions identified at BoS?* | External Examiners confirm the quality and standards of the programmes. There was evidence that recommendations from External Examiners are considered and implemented eg anonymity of students and the suggestion to include a poster presentation.  
A response is provided to External Examiners via the Joint Honours Board of Studies minutes. This was evident for each academic year. There did not appear to be any reference made in the Staff-Student Committee minutes.  
It is not always clear from the minutes as to whether there is Student Representation at the Board of Studies. | External examiners’ reports  
Board of Studies responses  
Board of Studies minutes  
Staff-Student Committee minutes |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHING AND LEARNING</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Peer observation      | **Check there is a policy; ask to see a list of staff who have been observed in the past 12 months. How does the school take an overview of this? The school should have an annual report on this which is seen by the School executive committee and Board of Studies. Does the scheme seem effective?** | A disclaimer is on file to state that 'Information regarding Peer Observation and dissemination of good practice for Joint Honours in Science can be found in the discipline specific internal Subject Review documentation'.

For the Joint Honours provision there are 3 modules ie ACE1050, ACE2053 & AC3091; what Peer Observation happens for these modules?

It is noted in the minutes of the AFRD Learning and Student Experience Committee stating ‘...It was noted that unfortunately the scheme had not run effectively in 2010/11 or 2011/12. However, Peter Rowlinson confirmed that he would prioritise this for 12/13 with the support of Tina Huddart. AFRD-LSEC confirmed that the focus areas for review were Stage 1 teaching, practical/field teaching and small group teaching. Given the limited reach of the scheme in the two previous years, the aim in for 12/13 would be to review all teaching staff, defined as those with more than 15 hours of teaching’.

There was no record reference Peer Observation contained in the AFRD Executive Board minutes.

Recommend further discussion. | School Peer Observation policy
University Peer Observation Policy
Board of Studies minutes
School executive committee minutes |
### ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK ON ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment procedures: Only ask for evidence of school assessment procedures in the first instance. Does this reflect the principles of exam policy, late submission of work, and scaling &amp; moderation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The External Examiner reports indicate that sufficient materials are supplied.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam papers, projects and model answers are provided to External Examiners; this is in accordance to the University Policy.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check how the school monitors return of feedback on assessed work within the four week period and how often this has not been met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Commentary identifies that the University has a policy to return marks and feedback on in-course assignments within 20 days.</td>
<td>Board of Studies minutes Staff-Student Committee minutes Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend further discussion. Feedback turnaround policies discussed at BoS.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Submission of work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check the school’s procedure for the submission and consideration of extension requests (may be part of an overall assessment policy) for consistency with University policy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The submission of work policy is highlighted in the School Handbook and is cross referenced in each Joint Honours Degree Programme Information Handbook. This is consistent with the University Policy.</td>
<td>University Late Submission of Work Policy Personal Extenuating Circumstances Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the documentation in the Module Boxes there is evidence that work is submitted; this looks as if it could be done electronically. Need further clarification on the submission of work process ie receipting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommend further discussion on how this policy works against cross teaching provision.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board of Examiners minutes and those of Module Moderation Board (where applicable): Do the minutes demonstrate compliance with University Regulations and Guidance for Boards of Examiners? Check attendance levels.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Board of Examiners minutes indicate staff attend however, it is not clear if there is appropriate representation from each of the subject areas ie Subject Advisors. In some cases it is noted that there are no Subject Advisors present.</td>
<td>University Regulations Guidance for Boards of Examiners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Examiners minutes Module Moderation Board minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The minutes provide evidence as to how each student result is arrived at and the degree classification. AFRD do have a PECS Sub-Committee but it was not clear, until explained how to identify if PECS had been applied.

Recommend further discussion, in particular the impact of non attendance of Subject Advisors and to receive an outline on how the PECS process is implemented for Joint Honours programmes.

There is a Module Moderation Board but there is no formal record. This has been highlighted and needs to be addressed.

The process for moderating is conducted outside the BoE and presented as a final mark.

Recommend further discussion.

<p>| Assessment criteria (marking criteria): How does the school make students aware of assessment criteria? Are criteria clear and applied consistently? | Clear and thorough marking criteria are available in the UG Degree School Handbook. Following discussion I’m advised that the notice board shows a full outline of assessments in Semester 2. There should be a link included in Blackboard to assessment criteria. There is clear evidence in Module Guides contained in the module boxes relating to assessment criteria. It looks as if the marking criteria forms part of the feedback to students by simply circling ‘descriptions’. This needs to be explored. It is not clear if this information is returned to students or how they receive the feedback. | Degree programme handbooks Module guides Commentary |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIAL PROVISION</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Honours and Combined Studies programmes:</td>
<td><strong>Comments</strong>: There is a clear record in the BoS minutes to show that External Examiner recommendations are followed-up. Clear request in BoS minutes for Subject Advisors to keep AFRD informed of module and regulatory changes. It was evident in the minutes that it has been communicated that Mathematics will be undergoing a curriculum overhaul. It’s clearly recorded in the BoS any review information; this covers assessment, programme, induction, admissions and AMR.</td>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong>: Board of Studies minutes Annual Monitoring and Review reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative provision (where applicable):</td>
<td><strong>Comments</strong>: Not applicable</td>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong>: QuILT to provide relevant MoA Board of Studies minutes Annual Monitoring and Review reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Accumulation and Transfer (where applicable):</td>
<td><strong>Comments</strong>: Not Applicable</td>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong>: University Regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-based and Placement Learning (where applicable):</td>
<td><strong>Comments</strong>: Not Applicable</td>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong>: University Work-based and Placement Learning Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible and Distributed Learning / Distance Learning (where applicable):</td>
<td><strong>Comments</strong>: Not Applicable</td>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong>: University Flexible and Distributed Learning Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **LEARNING RESOURCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blackboard (or other VLE):</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Sample some module and community sites to check on level and variability in provision. Key issues:</em> 1) are the module guidelines and intended learning outcomes clearly stated? 2) is the course/module clearly structured and easy to navigate e.g. not more than 3 folders deep? 3) is staff contact information visible and are contact hours displayed? Does the School have a policy / minimum standard governing the use of Blackboard?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Commentary informs that handbooks, module information and careers advice can be found on Blackboard. At present, the minimum VLE threshold has been introduced for stage 1 and there will be further rollout of this as per the University schedule.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QuILT will arrange for access to Blackboard. Access to other VLE to be arranged by the school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND ACHIEVEMENT**

| Accreditation of Prior Learning: |
| Check School’s statement on APL. Does it comply with University policy? Ask to see some sample cases of where APL has been granted to check what evidence the decision was based upon. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A policy exists and complies with University policy. Recommend clarifying how this works with cross teaching. There has been no APL applied for the three modules owned by AFRD for Joint Honours.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Policy on the Accreditation of Prior Learning School APL statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Management information (use of Annual Degree Programme Statistics and Cohort Analysis): |
| Are student progression, completion statistics and distribution of degree classifications over time being monitored by the Board of Studies? |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BoS clearly record and monitor the Student progression and completion statistics. This is broken down for each Joint Honours programme. Best example seen so far in formerly recording this information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme statistics provided by the School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Degree programme handbooks:  
*Check contents against the University guidelines focusing on important areas e.g. assessment criteria; feedback; contact hours; scaling and moderation; good academic practice; information on module choice and programme structure; personal tutoring; induction; plagiarism* | The School and Programme Handbook are in accordance with the University guidelines.  
There is a clear list of Subject Advisors contained within each Programme Handbook.  
There was no evidence in the School Handbook or the Subject Handbooks relating to moderation and scaling. | Degree Programme Handbooks |
| Module guides:  
*Review a sample to check what is provided; look at consistency across modules and whether school is managing this / following any faculty guidelines. Check coverage of key issues such as assessment criteria and feedback.* | There are Module Guides contained in the module boxes which indicates that there is a consistent approach.  
There was evidence of assessment and marking criteria. The feedback seemed to consist of circling the marking criteria. There needs to be clarification on how this is returned to students.  
There is a marking sheet used which may be electronic – could this be an example of good practice? Further clarification needed. There is a clear plagiarism statement on this document.  
There was another version of a marking sheet which contained a 5 point scale ie 75, 65, 55, 45 & Fail. At either end of the scale there are positive and negative comments. There was also a section for self evaluation. There did not appear to be clear guidance on how this works or who receives this. Recommend exploring how this works. This could be another example of good practice.  
There did not appear to be any evidence of 2nd marking on work contained in the module boxes. It was not clear if there was anonymous marking. | Module guides  
Blackboard/VLE |
### STUDENT SUPPORT

| Personal tutoring:  
*Check on the School’s progress in implementing the University framework for personal tutoring* | There was evidence of student attendance registers.  
Recommend exploring how students receive feedback.  
Personal Tutoring for all Joint Honours programmes is conducted by AFRD. The Commentary outlines the Personal Tutoring process.  
There appears to be only one reference in the BoS minutes relating to Personal Tutors. This informs that Skills Building module was developed to increase interaction within Joint Honours cohort and with their personal tutors ...  
The AMR clearly records the improvement of Personal Tutoring since it has been brought into the School. There are some minor concerns about accessibility of particular tutors. | Commentary  
Board of Studies minutes  
Annual Monitoring and Review report |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Ethical approval:  
All schools should have a policy on the ethical approval of undergraduate and taught postgraduate research. Ask for some examples of paperwork used. | There is awareness of the Policy on Ethics.  
Recommend further discussion | School Policy and examples  
Faculty-specific guidelines |

### QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

| Module/stage evaluation questionnaires:  
*Check a sample with example questionnaire and summary of results (check BoS minutes to see how these have been followed up).* | There was evidence in module boxes that evaluation questionnaires are completed. For ACE1050 11/12 don’t appear to understand how this module fits with their degree programme. The BoS minutes Jan 12 clearly state that a clearer instruction is needed as to why this is being taught.  
ACE2053, it was identified that there had been a | Sample of questionnaires and summaries of results provided by the School  
Board of Studies minutes  
Staff-Student Committee minutes |

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**8.**
### Quality Management and Enhancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timetabling problem which had to be resolved via flexible learning. The action is to rectify this for academic year 13/14.</td>
<td>Board of Studies minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a record in the BoS minutes regarding student concerns from feedback ie the lack of ReCap in the smaller teaching rooms. This was an item reported as a result of discussion at SSC. Details from the module questionnaires are clearly recorded in the BoS minutes.</td>
<td>Board of Studies minutes Staff-Student Committee minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are 3 BoS held each academic year ie November, January &amp; May. Following discussion it was confirmed that the Subject Advisors were in attendance and a 1 Student Representative. Another Student Representative had sent apologies.</td>
<td>Board of Studies minutes Annual Monitoring and Review reports Staff-Student Committee minutes Accreditation reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are 4 SSC meeting per academic year ie March, May, November &amp; December Following discussion.....The SSC minutes do not provide a clear indication as to who the Student Representatives are and Subject Advisors.</td>
<td>Board of Studies minutes Annual Monitoring and Review reports Staff-Student Committee minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A diagram outlines the AFRD Degree Programme management Structure to Faculty level.</td>
<td>Commentary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student feedback:**

*Check BoS minutes: how are the views of students (and graduates) being considered and action taken in response? A particular focus is needed on any joint honours/combined, collaborative or distance learning programmes.*

**Board of Studies schedule:**

*Check how many BoS there are in the school. For each one, check BoS minutes and AMR reports for compliance with the schedule review. Key issues are: programme data; Staff-Student Committee minutes; contact hours; PSRB/employer/industry liaison; annual module review; extensions; check BoS attendance levels*

**Staff-Student Committee:**

*Check frequency of meetings and feed through and feedback from Board of Studies. Is School complying with University student representation policy? Check attendance levels of student representatives at BoS and SSC.*

**Clarity needs:**

*Clarify School’s committee structure if not apparent from the commentary*

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For further information about ISR please contact:

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