A meeting of the e-Learning Sub-Committee was held on Friday 11th May 2012 in River Room 3, Tower Building at 2pm.

Present: Ms J Aitken, Dr J Blicharski, Mr S Cross (Convener), Dr M Frame, Mr D George, Mr N Gornall (DUSA), Dr N Hine, Ms E Keir, Mrs N Lafferty, Mrs L Martindale, Dr A Mason, Ms L Monk, Mrs L Morris, Dr D Moyo, Dr D Sloan, Mr N Taylor, Dr L Walsh, Mrs J Warden-Fernandez.

In attendance: Dr M Glover.

Apologies: Mr J Borg-Barthet

1. MINUTES

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting of the e-Learning Sub-Committee of 24th February 2011.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 2(4): Working Group on AV & IT in Teaching Rooms

Noted: that the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) would lead on discussions regarding improvements to the Audio Visual and IT infrastructure and coordination in centrally planned teaching rooms.

Minute 4 (v) (23.9.11): Establishment of a Research Group

Noted: that Dr Hine convened the eLearning Research Network within the Centre for Research and Innovation in Teaching and Learning. This academic research group aimed to have a positive impact on e-learning issues at the University. However, it would have a different agenda to the e-learning Sub-committee as it would focus on active research outputs rather than on strategic learning and teaching issues.
3. **STANDING ITEMS**

(i) The Sub-committee heard a report from Head of eLearning, LLC.

**Noted:** that after consultation the following dates were chosen for the Service Pack 8 upgrade to the VLE: Wednesday 18 – Wednesday 25 July 2012.

**Noted:** that support for the summer school would be available along the same lines as previous years.

**Noted:** that Question Mark had not been upgraded for 3 years possibly due to an incompatibility with the SOE, but that the ongoing project to move to managed staff desktops may allow for a future upgrade.

**Noted:** that the ExamOnline software was to be implemented by the College of Life Sciences as a pilot exercise.

(ii) The Sub-committee heard a report from Ms Keir on behalf of the Director of Information & Communication Services

**Noted:** that the upgrade to office 365 including sharepoint was planned for 22\(^{nd}\) June at global and user level. 500mb of storage would be allocated to each user and students would be encouraged to use skydrive from the start of 2012/13. ICS would monitor and manage the impact on the network from this development.

**Noted:** that the 365 implementation would be available across platforms including for Mac users. More details can be found at: blog.dundee.ac.uk/dundeemail

**Noted:** that staff desktops are to be upgraded to windows 7 on a user-managed desktop basis and that demonstrations of the new set up would begin in the near future.

3. **STRATEGIC ISSUES QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Sub-committee received an update from the Convener on discussions that had taken place with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) regarding strategic issues surrounding e-learning at the University. The Convener reported that some of these issues were complex and involved considerations that could not be captured effectively through a questionnaire approach.

**Noted:** that the main issues surrounding the development of an effective e-learning strategy included:
• The lack of resolution on some issues despite them being discussed at length at sub-committee meetings;

• The tension between a school-led needs assessment and a central system for delivery and support;

• Academic and strategic needs not being met due to unclear operational responsibilities

• A perception that there is a lack of policy direction and joined up thinking

• A perception that budget considerations were overriding strategic needs and that learning and teaching issues were not being funded through central provision or given a high enough priority at an institutional level.

• The proliferation of different systems and solutions, a lack of support and poor communication hindered a strategic approach to delivering required functionality and the best student experience in an e-learning context.

The Convener argued that a realistic, articulate and principled approach from the academic community was needed – perhaps outside of the formal committee structure, as this was not providing the necessary drivers for development.

A wider, needs gathering, exercise was needed as a way of ensuring buy-in from the Schools and from senior management.

Resolved: to arrange a meeting during the summer to enable a more comprehensive examination of needs, gaps in provision and proposed solutions for ongoing problems with both operations and strategy.

4. DRAFT POLICY ON RECORDING LECTURES

The Sub-committee considered a draft policy and guidelines document on recording lectures. Dr Walsh explained that this issue was complex and that further work and clarification on some issues was needed.

Dr Frame responded on behalf of CASS and made a number of detailed points:

1) that a clear distinction needs to be made between lectures and small group teaching activities;
2) that clarification is needed on how this relates to reasonable adjustments;
3) that in the humanities note taking is encouraged as a normal and expected activity – as an active intellectual process - not just passive recording;
4) advice on how to manage the process for gathering student permissions in a group context is needed – so that it is not unduly cumbersome or disruptive.

Noted: that consultation and feedback were needed from across the University prior to implementation and that Sub-committee members should forward any further comments to Dr Walsh as part of this process.

5. AOB

No other business.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 21 September 2012 at 2pm in River Room 3.

Mr S Cross
Convener