

## Faculty Education Committee (FEC) Faculty of Medicine

25 September 2017  
Confirmed minutes

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### Present

Mr Nick Burstow, Professor Dan Elson, Ms Rebekah Fletcher (Secretary), Professor Steve Gentleman, Mr Gerry Greyling, Ms Jo Horsburgh, Professor Des Johnston (Chair), Mr Martin Lupton, Mr Luke McCrone, Dr Sophie Rutschmann, Professor Sue Smith, Mr Richard Viner, Professor Helen Ward, Ms Sophie White.

### Apologies

Dr Laki Buluwela, Ms Giskin Day, Ms Susan English, Mr Chris Harris, Dr Jo Harris, Dr Jeremy Levy, Professor Myra McClure, Professor Alison McGregor, Professor Jeremy Nicholson (Professor Dan Elson deputising)

#### 1 Welcome and Apologies

The chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies, as above, were noted.

#### 2 Faculty Education Committee Terms of Reference, constitution and membership for 2017-18 [MEC2017-01]

The committee noted the Terms of Reference, constitution and membership list for the next academic year with amendments to the membership to reflect new staff.

#### 3 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2017 [MEC2017-02]

Update to item 5.1: The harmonisation process for the School of Public Health has been approved since the last meeting.

Update to item 5.2: The Clinical Research and Innovation module has been approved by Programmes Committee and will commence in 2017/18

Update to items 8.2 and 8.3; the issue of outstanding external examiner appointments and reports has been resolved.

The committee approved the minutes of the last meeting.

#### 4 Matters arising

##### 4.1 Progression Arrangements [MEC2017-2a]

The committee noted the Chair's action on advance standing/ progression arrangements. The process for setting up specific Progression/Articulation Arrangements has been approved by QAEC, but each individual arrangement will be pursued separately and go through this three-stage approval process.

### ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

#### 5 Reports from Subordinate Committees

##### 5.1 Undergraduate Education Board [MEC2017-03]

The committee considered the report from the Undergraduate Education Board. It was noted that no conclusion appears to have been drawn on whether improvements need to be made to the Graduate Medicine course, although potential areas for improvement have been articulated, particularly in the areas of overall strategy and perceived lack of strong academic leadership.

The committee requests a paper from the Undergraduate Education Board to lay out options for the Graduate Medicine Course.

**Action: Head of Undergraduate School**

The committee discussed the latest NSS results, particularly the comments from graduating students. It was noted that some guidance for students would be beneficial, on how to fill in the

NSS to best articulate areas for improvement and areas of excellence, in a format which the School can use to develop the programmes. It was further highlighted that the Student Union could work with the College to make students aware of the different ways in which they may receive feedback, and how best to give feedback. The Head of the School Secretariat and the ICU Deputy President (Education) will liaise with other faculties to determine a co-ordinated approach to the NSS.

**Action: Head of School Secretariat  
ICU Deputy President (Education)**

#### 5.2 **Postgraduate Education Board [MEC2017-04]**

The committee noted that a number of new short courses and major modifications had been approved since the last meeting. The committee further noted that the new academic feedback policy had been discussed at the Board and that action was being undertaken to determine the fairest possible implementation for staff and students.

A query was raised as to the number of projects requiring a Hepatitis B vaccine, since there is an ongoing nationwide shortage. The Academic Lead for Postgraduate Education will review the current situation to ensure no students are required to obtain an unavailable vaccine.

**Action: Academic Lead for Postgraduate Education**

#### 5.3 **Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine [MEC2017-05]**

The committee noted that a number of minor changes had been approved by Chair's action for implementation in 2017/18. These changes all arose from feedback at the second-stage review and are therefore welcomed by the College.

#### 6 **PG SOLE Lecturer/Module Spring Results [MEC2017-06]**

The committee acknowledged the improved SOLE results for the School of Public Health, but noted that this improvement is relative only to the previous years' fall in SOLE results after some investment in infrastructure. Considerable concern was raised that despite the substantial fees raised in the School of Public Health, students had no access to dedicated catering facilities or postgraduate social space at St Mary's Hospital. Despite good feedback for teaching, student satisfaction continues to be negatively impacted by the lack of investment in student facilities.

### **ITEMS TO NOTE**

#### 7 **New Policies and Procedures for 2017/18**

##### 7.1 **Academic Policy & Procedure Updates [MEC2017-07]**

The committee noted the updates to academic policy and procedures. Concerns were raised over the new academic feedback policy, specifically the traffic light system, as implementation for the high numbers of markers in Medicine – hundreds of staff undertake marking for the MBBS alone, and in excess of 11000 assessments – represents a considerable administrative burden with no apparent consideration given to the increase in FTEs that this would necessitate. Specifically, a requirement for administrators to issue reminders before a deadline has been missed was noted to be an unnecessary burden on administrators and an irritation to academics. In addition, the inaccurate but pervasive perception amongst clinical staff that educational commitments are undertaken out of goodwill renders the implementation of more stringent feedback deadlines more high risk than for other faculties; the committee felt that this regulation could lead to a substantial drop in staff willing to undertake marking responsibilities.

However, the committee did note that this policy had proven successful in other faculties; FONS has seen a 40% improvement in feedback turnaround times since implementation.

The committee agreed that improvements to feedback, both in quality and timeliness, are clearly required, but noted that current systems and processes do not support the implementation of this policy; a system which automates feedback to students would reduce the additional burden, but no investment has been made to support this.

For postgraduate courses, where the burden of assessment is smaller and academics are fewer, administrators will keep track of those who consistently miss deadlines, and address these instances individually, without publishing the data.

The committee noted that whilst public shaming of those who miss deadlines is unhelpful, it is nonetheless useful to keep track of these data for performance review purposes and to encourage timely feedback.

- 7.2 **General, Academic and Examination Regulations and Regulations for Students [MEC2017-08]**  
The committee noted a typographical error under item 4.1; “The programme of study in each subject\* shall be specified on [the] College’s Study webpages...”
- 8 **Programme Suspensions and Withdrawals [MEC2017-09]**  
The committee noted the suspended and withdrawn programmes for 2017/18.
- 9 **Outstanding External Examiner Appointments for 2017/18 [MEC1027-10]**  
See item 3 above.
- 10 **Special Cases [MEC2017-11]**  
The committee noted that decisions on special cases are now made within the departments.
- 11 **Terms of Reference and membership of Subordinate Committees**  
The committee noted that the ToR and membership of subordinate committees were unchanged except for new members of staff.
- 11.1 **Undergraduate Education Board [MEC2017-12]**  
The Undergraduate Science Board and Undergraduate Medicine Board have merged into one Undergraduate Education Board with joint membership.
- 11.2 **Postgraduate Education Board [MEC2017-13]**  
ToR and membership unchanged.
- 12 **Senate Minutes**
- 13 **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) Summary Report for Senate**
- 14 **FEC Reports**

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 15 **Dean’s Internship Awards Scheme**  
A new Postgraduate Research internship scheme is being trialled, including lab and project work. Each student will receive £4500 spread over three months whilst undertaking the internship. The scheme is being trialled in 2017/18 and will then be evaluated for possible upscaling.
- 16 **MBBS Paces Resit**  
The Year 5 finals clinical exam resit had to be rescheduled at exceedingly short notice after a serious security breach. Although resitting students were unhappy about the late cancellation, the School offered welfare support to those affected, and liaised with the students union to ensure the best possible outcome for students under the circumstances. The committee noted that the exam was rescheduled during a weekend within two weeks, and acknowledged with thanks the exceptional efforts of administrators, senior faculty and examiners to facilitate such a swift turnaround.
- 17 **Dates of Future Meetings**  
The committee noted the remaining meeting dates for 2017/18;
- 04 December 2017, Ballroom, 58 Prince’s Gate  
05 March 2018, Ballroom, 58 Prince’s Gate  
16 April 2018, Ballroom, 58 Prince’s Gate

#### **RESERVED AREA OF BUSINESS**

- 18 **Special Cases Report [MEC2017-14]**  
The committee noted the Chair’s action on an IoS extension.