

## Faculty Education Committee (FEC)

Faculty of Natural Sciences

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017

13:00 – 15:00

Room ACEX 207, Aeronautics, ACE Extension

### Confirmed Minutes

Meeting #5

#### 1 Welcome and Apologies Present

|                          |                                    |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Prof Alan Spivey         | Vice-Dean (Education) FoNS (Chair) |
| Prof Emma McCoy          | Department of Mathematics          |
| Dr Huw Williams          | DUGS Life Sciences                 |
| Prof David Evans         | DUGS Mathematics                   |
| Dr Robert Forsyth        | DUGS Physics                       |
| Dr James Wilton-Ely      | Chemistry Representative           |
| Dr Niki Gounaris         | Life Sciences PGT Representative   |
| Dr Nick Voulvoulis       | CEP Representative                 |
| Mr Luke McCrone          | ICU Deputy President (Education)   |
| Ms Moira Sarsfield       | Senior Learning Technologist       |
| Ms Sophie White          | Senior Assistant Registrar         |
| Ms Men-Yeut Wong         | Registry Representative            |
| Dr Felicitas Starr-Egger | CLCC representation                |
| Ms Rebecca Middleton     | Faculty Education Manager          |

#### Apologies

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Dr Bridge Duncombe  | DUGS Chemistry                             |
| Prof Stefan Maier   | Physics PGT Representative                 |
| Prof Martin Siegert | Grantham Institute Representative          |
| Prof John Seddon    | College Consul, Chemistry                  |
| Prof Lesley Cohen   | College Consul, Physics                    |
| Ms Nazia Hirjee     | Faculty Operations Officer                 |
| Mr Stefan Hoyle     | Faculty Safety Representative              |
| Mr Will Bennett     | Information and Communication Technologies |

#### In attendance:

|                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Miss Kasia Kmieckowiak | Administrative Assistant, FoNS |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|

#### 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The committee reviewed the minutes from the FoNS Education Committee (NSEC) held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 [NSEC.2016.90] and the Committee Action Tracker [NSEC.2016.91]. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and the action tracker document was updated.

#### 3 Matters arising from the Minutes

- **Action 26** – RM reported that the Week Zero Working Group plans to set up Specific Interest Groups. She had not received any update since their last meeting in January. Also, the requested document outlining the process of week zero implementation had not been sent to RM.
- **Action 27** – SW will follow up with DS to find out whether he discussed with Richard Monk the possibility of introducing a system which would ensure that the College

responds to issues raised by External Examiners which lie outside the control of departments e.g. College Policy on Year Weightings.

- **Action 29** - In response to HW's question regarding the reduced number of external examiners (from four to three) in the Life Science Undergraduate Programmes, SW confirmed that the department only needs enough external examiners to cover the academic diversity of the award.
- **Action 31** – The DUGS/Masters representatives confirmed that all the missing PGT external examiners reports either had been submitted to Registry or would be shortly.
- **Action 32** – SW will investigate whether a summary of the UG Annual Monitoring Reports could be compiled by the Registry.

## **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **4 New Programme Proposals**

- 4.1 Proposal for a new MSc in CleanTech Innovation and Entrepreneurship** The anticipated presentation by Mike Tennant, CEP on this programme did not take place as the proposed date for introduction of the programme has been delayed by a year.

### **5 Modifications to Existing Programmes and Changes to Schemes for Award of Honours**

- 5.1** The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Mathematics to develop the following new elective modules for 2017-18:

- 5.1.1** Function spaces and applications [NSEC.2016.92.01]
- 5.1.2** Advanced topics in Partial Differential Equations [NSEC.2016.92.02]
- 5.1.3** Mathematical logic [NSEC.2016.92.03]
- 5.1.4** Introduction to stochastic calculus with applications to nonlinear filtering [NSEC.2016.92.04]
- 5.1.5** Stochastic differential equations [NSEC.2016.92.05]
- 5.1.6** Quantum Mechanics II [NSEC.2016.92.06]
- 5.1.7** Methods for Data Science [NSEC.2016.92.07]

Subject to Programmes Committee's approval, the committee supported the proposals.

**5.2 Chemistry – MRes in Green Chemistry course [NSEC.2016.93]**

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Chemistry to make a permanent change of weighting between the taught and research elements i.e. instead of 30% Taught Element and 70% Research Element there would be 25% Taught Element and 75% Research Element. JWE also outlined the rationale for introducing this change.

Subject to Programmes Committee's approval, the committee supported the proposal.

**5.3 Chemistry modifications [NSEC.2016.94]**

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Chemistry for major programme modifications to year 3 of all its BSc and MSci degree programmes for the 2017-18 academic year. The changes are part of a rolling implementation of measures identified in a 2013 review of Chemistry UG programmes and also in anticipation of splitsite operation once Chemistry research moves to White City in 2018.

ACS reported that the proposed changes are:

- Reducing number of lectures in both Autumn and Spring terms and making them all elective. Students will select 5/9 modules in each term. Examination timings will remain as currently – i.e. in January and May.

- Changing the timetable such that lectures/workshops/small group problem classes take place during full days in alternating weeks against lab weeks running all day. The change is necessitated in anticipation of split site operation in 2018-19.

KI noted that the *Advanced Spectroscopy* Module Outline document is missing the *Learning Outcomes*. ACS will check that and circulate a more updated version of the paper to the committee.

**ACTION: ACS to circulate to the committee a more updated version of the *Advanced Spectroscopy Module Outline that includes Learning Outcomes*.**

Subject to Programmes Committee's approval, the committee supported the proposal.

#### **5.4 Life Sciences - Second Year proposed change to Horizons-BPES [NSEC.2016.95]**

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to make Year 2 Horizons and BPES module optional for LS UG programmes. HW noted that the Department of Life Sciences is the only department in FoNS where taking a Horizons/BPES course for Degree Credit is compulsory. The department felt that this change is needed due to the structure of the course. This would allow students to utilise their time in the way they want by participating in other activities such as electives, competitions etc. This would also reduce the exam load and stress that students currently experience. The Department will still encourage their students to enrol for the Horizons and BPES courses and although they will not receive a Degree Credit although they could be taken for extra credit. In order to encourage students not to drop out of courses once enrolled, it was suggested that fails be recorded on their transcripts as well as pass marks. HW added that students had been consulted on the proposed change and out of 96% who responded, 88% supported this change.

In response, FSE commented that the Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication had not been given enough notice regarding the planned changes. She noted that some students had already enrolled for Horizons courses starting in academic year 2017/18. She also queried how this change had been pitched to students during the consultation and what exactly they had been offered. She added that such change might considerably reduce the number of students completing Horizons courses, once they are made optional. Others on the committee noted possible complications associated with recording fails on transcripts as a method of incentive to minimise withdrawals. EMC noted that in Maths a note recording failings put on file for tutors when writing references and this acted as an effective deterrent. HW conceded that this perhaps required further consideration and indicated that he would discuss this option with the BS.

Subject to re-visiting the matter of recording fails, the committee supported the proposals, which will now pass to the Programmes Committee for their consideration,

#### **6 Exchange Partnerships [NSEC.2016.96]**

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to develop an exchange partnership with University of Melbourne. HW noted that the Department has a strong relationship with that university and as an English speaking institution, it is very popular among Life Sciences students.

#### **7 External Examiners**

**7.1 Summary of External Examiner Reports for PGT Programmes [NSEC.2016.97]** The committee considered a summary of external examiners reports for Master's level programmes from 2015/16. Members noted that the comments provided by the external examiners vary which is probably connected to the practices used at their universities. JEW asked whether the positive comments could be published on the website to encourage new students to join the College. In response to that, SW said that the comments can be published, but in their unchanged version.

## 7.2 List of Outstanding External Examiner Appointments for 2016/17 [NSEC.2016.98]

The committee considered a list of outstanding external examiner appointments for 2016/17 and agree further action. The committee asked the Department of Life Sciences and the Centre for Environmental Policy to submit their nominations to fill the vacancies as a matter of urgency to: [external.examiner@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:external.examiner@imperial.ac.uk)

**ACTION: Department of Life Sciences and the Centre for Environmental Policy to submit their nominations to fill the External Examiners vacancies as a matter of urgency to: [external.examiner@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:external.examiner@imperial.ac.uk)**

## 8 Master's Annual Monitoring Reports [NSEC.2016.99]

The committee considered Annual Monitoring Reports from 2016/17. Members agreed that the data should be presented in a more user friendly way by Registry i.e. to show some benchmarks etc. In addition, the committee suggested collating all the Master's Annual Monitoring data in Autumn term so the major changes can be submitted by end of March and minor changes end of July. This will enable implementing all the approved changes in the following academic year.

## 9 UG Annual Monitoring Reports [NSEC.2016.100]

The committee considered Annual Monitoring Reports from 2016/17 submitted by the Departments of Chemistry and Physics.

Following the Good Practice from the Department of Mathematics, a Student Experience Officer is being appointed by the Department of Chemistry, in particular to oversee their personal tutorial system (via Starfish) and the improve staff-student communication and relations.

Following the 2016 NSS survey, Department of Physics had been reviewing assessment and feedback processes in the laboratories as part of the lab review being undertaken in 2016-17. RF, added that the Student Liaison Officer is also being recruited.

## 10 Status Updates

**10.1 Safety Officer – verbal update (SH) SH**  
not present.

**10.2 Education Manager – verbal update (RM)**

- **LTDP** - 9 participants had completed the LTDP this academic year to date: Chemistry - 2; Life Sciences – 4; Mathematics – 1; Physics – 2. Current participants are as follow: Chemistry – 6; CEP- 3; Life Sciences – 21; Mathematics - 16; Physics – 3.

RM will complete another audit over the summer to ensure any EDU courses are registered and she will follow up queries with DUGS and DPSs. The HR normally informs her of any new members of staff joining in new academic year, but she asked DUGS and DPSs to let her know of anyone they are aware of.

**ACTION: DUGS and DPSs to let RM know of any new members of staff joining in new academic year.**

- **LTDP Refresher** - RM reported that LTDP Refresher will be available from October 2017. More details will follow.
- **Faculty Prizes for Excellence/ President's Awards** - 41 members of staff have received FoNS awards this year. Full details can be found on the website. Prizes will be presented at an event on 7<sup>th</sup> June at 170 Queens Gate.
- **FoNS-MAD 2017** - RM reported that 8 teams at Stage Two will present full proposal to judging panel on 26 May 2017. Students from all FoNS Departments

as well as Departments of Materials, Mechanical Engineering and Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Four teams will be chosen to go through to the final stage/lab placement. Malcolm Weir and Allan Samuel as well as alumni from the Department of Chemistry, are acting as external mentors.

**10.3 Senior Learning Technologist - verbal update (MS)** MS reported that:

- Very useful feedback has been obtained from student representatives on the FoNS UG Student Staff Committee on the set-up of Blackboard courses and accessing Blackboard via mobile apps. As a result of this feedback we are making changes to the templates that are used for FoNS Blackboard courses, so that new courses for next year will include improvements. ICT are also investigating whether it is better to use a responsive design so that the full version of Blackboard can be used on mobile devices, rather than using either of the current apps. Once we have more information on this, we will consult again with the FoNS UG Student Staff Committee.
- There will be upgrades to Panopto, Turnitin, Blackboard and Maple TA over the summer.
- As reported at the last meeting, ICT are taking action to address the serious ongoing reliability problems with Blackboard. Will and I are working closely with the e-learning team and the Education Service Line Manager on this, and constantly monitoring problems. Can all departments please keep us informed of specific problems that arise, for example issues with timed online tests, so that we can keep the pressure on ICT to address these issues.
- A project has now been approved to migrate Blackboard to the cloud. The migration date is likely to be during the Easter holiday period next year. Prof Richard Thompson is the FoNS Academic Sponsor for this project. He will be invited to present more details on the project to the committee at the next meeting.

**ACTION: KK to invite Richard Thompson to the committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.**

**10.4 FOO – verbal update (NH)** FOO not present.

**10.5 Registry Representative - verbal update (SW)**

There were no major issues to report. SW reminded the committee that the new *Learning and Teaching Strategy* will be discussed at the Senate meeting scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> May at 3pm.

**ITEMS TO NOTE**

**11 Minutes of the Previous Meetings of the NSEC Sub-Committees** The committee noted the minutes from:

- UG Sub-meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 [NSEC.2016.101.01]
- UG Sub-meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 [NSEC.2016.101.02]

**12 Chair's Report [NSEC.2016.102]**

ACS had received a request from the Department of Mathematics regarding a student with an autistic disorder who requested extending his interruption of studies beyond two years. This is normally not allowed, but due to exceptional circumstances the Department Mathematics had supported this application. The committee discussed this case and the request for an extended interruption of studies for the student was supported.

- 13 List of Suspended and Withdrawn Programmes [NSEC.2016.103]** The committee noted a List of Suspended and Withdrawn Programmes
- 14 Senate Minutes**  
The committee noted the latest Senate minutes.  
<\\icfs5g.cc.ic.ac.uk\Registry\10.Committees\Senate>
- 15 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) Summary Report for Senate**  
The committee noted the latest summary report from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.  
<\\icfs5g.cc.ic.ac.uk\Registry\10.Committees\QAEC>
- 16 FEC Reports**  
The committee noted the latest reports from the other FECs as reported to the last QAEC.  
<\\icfs5g.cc.ic.ac.uk\Registry\10.Committees\FEC>
- 17 Minutes of the Postgraduate Professional Development Committee (PPDC)**  
The committee noted the latest minutes from the Graduate School's Postgraduate Professional Development Committee  
<\\icfs5g.cc.ic.ac.uk\Registry\10.Committees\PPDC>
- 18 Special Cases Report [NSEC.2016.104]**  
The committee noted the latest special cases report for admission.
- 19 Any other business**
- The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Physics for minor programme modifications to Year 1 *Lab and Computing* module. RF outlined the rationale for introducing this change and the committee supported this proposal. As this is only a minor change, SW approved it on behalf of the Programmes Committee.
  - The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Physics to develop a new elective module titled *Entrepreneurship for Physicists* for all MSci Physics programmes. RF outlined the rationale for introducing this new module and the committee supported this proposal. As this is only a minor change, SW approved it on behalf of the Programmes Committee.
- 20 Dates of Future Meetings**  
Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> September 12.00-14.00, Billard Room, 58 Prince's Gate  
Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> November 12.00-14.00, Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate  
Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 12.00-14.00, Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate  
Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> April 12.00-14.00, Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate

---

Apologies for absence may be telephoned to extension **X 41934** or emailed to [k.kmieckowiak@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:k.kmieckowiak@imperial.ac.uk)

Papers marked with an asterisk [\*] will be circulated separately or tabled at the meeting