

Faculty Education Committee (FEC)

Faculty of Natural Sciences

Wednesday 27 September 2017

12:00 – 14:00

Billiard Room, 58 Princes Gate

Confirmed Minutes

Minutes #6

1 Welcome and Apologies

Present

Prof Emma McCoy	vice-Dean (Education) FoNS (Chair)
Dr Donald Craig	DUGS Chemistry
Dr Huw Williams	DUGS Life Sciences
Dr David Evans	DUGS Mathematics
Dr Robert Forsyth	DUGS Physics
Dr James Wilton-Ely	Chemistry Representative
Dr Niki Gounaris	Life Sciences PGT Representative
Prof Stefan Maier	Physics PGT Representative
Dr Mike Tennant	CEP Representative
Mr Michael Edwards	RCSU President - covering for RCSU Academic Affairs Officer
Mr Luke McCrone	GSU President
Mr Nicholas Burstow	Deputy President (Education), IC Student Union
Ms Moira Sarsfield	Senior Learning Technologist
Prof Jonathan Mestel	College Consul, Mathematics
Ms Kate Ippolito	Educational Development Unit (EDU) Representative
Dr Anita Hall	Faculty Senior Tutor
Ms Nazia Hirjee	Faculty Operations Officer
Ms Men-Yeut Wong	Registry Representative

Mr Will Bennett Information and Communication Technologies

Dr Felicitas Starr-Egger	CLCC representation
Ms Rebecca Middleton	Faculty Education Manager
Prof Richard Thompson	Professor of Experimental Physics
Mr Andrew Keenan	Head of Student Voice and Communications, Student Union
Mr John Crook	Head of Central Timetabling Support unit

Apologies

Prof Martin Siegert	Grantham Institute Representative
Mr Abhijay Sood	RCSU Academic Affairs Officer
Prof Lesley Cohen	College Consul, Physics
Mr Stefan Hoyle	Faculty Safety Representative

In attendance:

Ms Kasia Kmieckowiak	Administrative Assistant, FoNS
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2 **Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership 2017/18 [NSEC.2017.01]**

The committee noted the terms of reference, constitution and membership including representation on senate and QAEC for the committee as approved by Senate for 2017-18.

3 **Examination Timetabling Policy [NSEC.2017.02]**

John Crook, Head of Timetabling, presented an overview of the Examination Timetabling Policy which is part of a bigger project that also includes planned changes to the Academic Timetabling and Room Booking Policy. The rationale for proposed improvements is to address the comments and complaints made by students in the NSS for a number of years. It was agreed that the committee will send their comments about the proposed policy to RM.

ACTION: ALL to send their comments about the proposed Examination Timetabling Policy to RM.

4 **“Wellbeing Representation Network”**

Andrew Keenan (AK), Head of Student Voice and Communications at the Student Union, presented an overview of the “Wellbeing Representation Network” which is being launched for the 2017/18 academic year. Its aims are:

- To raise the status of students’ welfare
- To address the issues raised by students in the NSS
- To build a new network structure i.e. to increase number of Wellbeing Representatives. He explained that a higher number of Wellbeing Representatives are needed to deal better with students’ health and financial concerns as well as with relationship, equality, diversity and personal safety issues. The key role of the Wellbeing Representatives is to raise awareness of the issues listed above as well as signposting, promoting positive conversations, early interventions and creating more visible representation. The plan is to launch the Network in a few weeks.

NH asked whether there will be an appetite for students to become Wellbeing Representatives. In response to that, AK said that it might be difficult to allocate volunteers in later years, but that this should not be an issue for Year 1 and Year 2 students.”

AH pointed that there should be an appropriate selection process of the Wellbeing Representatives as some might be vulnerable themselves and therefore not suitable to fulfil such a role. She also questioned confidentiality and disclosure issues. AK confirmed that these had been already looked at. KI added that it would be really useful if the Wellbeing Representatives could interact with Personal Tutors.

5 **Migrating Blackboard to the cloud**

Richard Thompson, Professor of Experimental Physics, presented the overview of Blackboard Migration to the Cloud Project. He reported that Blackboard is currently hosted by ICT, but there have been a number of reliability issues recently. In addition, ICT is only able to provide limited support outside working hours. Therefore, the College has decided to move Blackboard to the Cloud. This should improve the response time, provide support much faster and pick up any problems earlier. He highlighted that the College will retain control over implementation and timing of future upgrades to the service. The date of the migration has been set for 23rd March 2017 and it should take approximately 4-5 days to complete. Anyone who requires more information about the migration and the downtime during that period, should contact Moira Sarsfield.

6 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The committee reviewed the minutes from the FoNS Education Committee (NSEC) held on Wednesday 17th May 2017 [NSEC.2016.90] Wednesday 27th May 2017 [NSEC.2017.03] and the Committee Action Tracker [NSEC.2017.04]. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and the action tracker document was updated.

7 **Matters arising from the Minutes**

Action 32 - RM reported that this action had been completed and she will circulate a response from Sophie White regarding the summary of the UG Annual Monitoring Reports.

Action 27 - RM reported that this action had been completed and she will circulate a response from Sophie White regarding a 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.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

8 New Programme Proposals

8.1 Department of Chemistry - a new MRes in Advanced Molecular Synthesis programme [NSEC.2017.05]

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Chemistry to develop a new MRes in *Advanced Molecular Synthesis* programme. JWE explained that this new MRes programme would address an area not currently represented by other Masters level programmes in the College. He added that the equipment to run the programme would be provided by the Department of Chemistry which recently had received an EPSRC Strategic Equipment Grant worth £2.7M. The programme would be based at the new White City campus.

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

9 Programme modifications

9.1 Department of Life Sciences – major modifications to MRes Molecular and Cellular Biosciences [NSEC.2017.06]

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to make changes to the research project rotations in the MRes *Molecular and Cellular Biosciences* programme. Currently it is comprised of three research project rotations each lasting approximately 3.5 months. However, surveys had shown that 60% students would prefer to complete two research project each lasting approximately 5 months. This would give them an opportunity to get fully involved in their project, produce more data, and increase their chance of contributing sufficiently to become an author on a publication. In addition, the Department of Life Sciences does not have enough tutors and with less projects per academic year, it would help to release the pressure which is currently put on the academic staff. The modification is planned for academic year 2018/19.

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

9.2 Department of Life Sciences – major modifications to MSc Taxonomy and Biodiversity [NSEC.2017.07]

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to change the title of the course from "*MSc in Taxonomy and Biodiversity*" to "*MSc in Taxonomy, Biodiversity, and Evolution*" to reflect better the course content. NG added that this course is one of the NHM collaborative courses and that the NHM students and alumni agree with this change.

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

10 Student exchange agreements

10.1 The committee considered a proposal from the **Department of Physics** to renew exchange partnerships with:

- Friedrich Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany [NSEC.2017.08.01]
- Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany [NSEC.2017.08.02]
- Institut polytechnique de Grenoble, France [NSEC.2017.08.03]
- Universidad de La Laguna, Tenerife, Spain [NSEC.2017.08.04]
- Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain [NSEC.2017.09.05]
- Università degli studi di Padova, Italy [NSEC.2017.08.06]
- Universitat de València, Spain [NSEC.2017.08.07]

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

It was noted that the Department of Physics tries to keep the number of incoming and outgoing students in balance. However, in the recent years the overall number of outgoing students has decreased

11 Timeliness of Academic Feedback to Students

The committee considered reports on timeliness of academic feedback to students submitted by the following departments:

- Chemistry [NSEC.2017.09.01]
- Mathematics [NSEC.2017.09.02]
- Physics [NSEC.2017.09.03]

Both the Department of Chemistry and Physics will use a system similar to the 'traffic light' system introduced by the Department of Life Sciences. . The Department of Mathematics does not consider using such a system as essential and instead will continue to closely monitor the coursework and feedback processes. The committee agreed that the quality of the feedback is a greater issue than the timeframe in which it is returned to students.

12 Surveys

12.1 UG SOLE Lecturer/Module spring results [NSEC.2017.10.01]

The committee considered the results of the undergraduate spring term 2017 SOLE lecturer and module surveys.

12.2 UG SOLE Lecturer/Module summer results [NSEC.2017.10.02]

The committee considered the results of the undergraduate summer term 2017 SOLE lecturer and module surveys.

12.3 PG SOLE Lecturer/Module summer results [NSEC.2017.10.03]

The committee considered the results of the postgraduate summer term 2017 SOLE lecturer and module surveys

It was noted that SOLE survey participation rates among FoNS students is very low hence it does not mirror the good quality of courses provided by the Faculty. The committee also questioned whether FoNS students are aware of the aim of SOLE surveys.

DE asked whether the presentation of the SOLE results could be changed as the graphs provided by the Registry are not clear and in the past a member of staff from his department had reformatted the data to make it easier to analyse.

ACTION: RM to ask the Registry to present the SOLE results in a different format.

ACTION: DE to send RM an example of the SOLE results graphs produced by the Department of Mathematics.

13 Standing items

13.1 Safety – verbal update (SH)

SH had sent his written report. He confirmed that the *Safety and Security Inductions* for the new UGs and PGs are all scheduled for the first week of term and that *Safe Lab Practice* sessions for lab based PGs and 1st year Chemistry students have also been scheduled. These had been set up with the assistance of the UG and PG Department Administrators.

13.2 LTDP – verbal update (RM)

- **LTDP** – RM reported that there are currently approximately 45 current participants registered for 2017/18
- **LTDP Refresher** – RM reported that the LTDP Refresher will start in October 2017.
- **FoNS-MAD competition** – RM reported that this 4th year of the FoNS-MAD competition was drawing to a close. The Grand Final will take place on 25th October and the top three teams will compete for prizes of up to £6,000.

13.3 Learning Technology Matters – verbal update (MS)

MS reported that as a result of the feedback received from the Student Representatives on the FoNS Student-Staff Committee, changes have been made to the templates that are used for FoNS Blackboard courses, including the addition of Panopto folders within courses to improve access to lecture recordings.

The CELCAT- Panopto integration project is progressing well. Trials will be carried out in the Departments of Mathematics and Physics. The aim is to populate the recording schedules in Panopto directly from the CELCAT timetables. Updates made to the timetables will also automatically adjust the Panopto recording schedules.

The Learning Technology team are happy to attend any Departmental Teaching Committees (UG, PGT, or SSC), regularly or as required, or to receive minutes from these committees. The more information the LT team have about departmental teaching and learning requirements, and the earlier this is available, the better the support they can provide..

13.4 FOO – verbal update (NH)

NH reported that the launch of the direct admissions module of the new Student Information System scheduled for Autumn 2017 had been postponed to 2018. She will investigate the reason for this delay and update the committee.

ACTION: NH to investigate the reason for the delay in launching the new Students Management System and feedback to the committee.

13.5 Registry - (MYW, JW)

MYW and RM asked the committee to pay attention to:

- Faculty Education Committee paper deadlines- from this academic year, any papers sent after the paper deadline will not be accepted and will not be considered until the following meeting.
- New academic policies, procedures and regulations (see items 17 and 18 below).

ITEMS TO NOTE

14 Minutes of the Previous Meetings of the NSEC Sub-Committees

The committee noted the minutes from the Masters Sub-meeting 8th June 2017 [**NSEC.2017.11**]

15 *Chair's Report

The committee noted the actions taken by the Chair on behalf of the committee regarding:

- Request for extension of interruption of studies beyond 2 years
- An approved proposal from the Department of Chemistry to make a permanent change of weighting between the taught and research elements of Green Chemistry: Energy and the Environment course [**NSEC.2017.12.01**] and [**NSEC.2017.12.02**].

16 External Examiners

16.1 List of External Examiner Appointments [NSEC.2017.13]

The committee noted a list of new and due to expire external examiner appointments for the academic year 2017/18

16.2 Outstanding External Examiner Reports 2016/17 [NSEC.2017.14]

The committee noted a list of outstanding external examiner reports for the academic year 2016/17

17 New Academic Policy and Procedure Updates for 2017-18 [NSEC.17.15]

The committee noted the following new policies and procedures for 2017-18:

- Programme and Module Modification Procedure
- Academic Feedback Policy for Undergraduate and Master's Level Programmes
- Feedback Traffic Light Process – Monitoring Feedback Return Timeliness for Taught Students
- Guidance for the Issuing of Provisional Marks for Undergraduate and Master's Level Programmes
- Late Submission Policy for Undergraduate and Master's Level Programmes

RM reported that she had circulated the above new academic policies and procedures, plus the summary of regulation changes, to key UG and PG Administrative Staff so that they are aware of

any recent changes, but also requested that DUGS and DPSs distribute to staff in their respective Departments.

18 Regulation changes for the upcoming session [NSEC.2017.16]

The committee noted a summary of regulation changes for the academic year 2017/18.

19 List of suspended and withdrawn Programmes [NSEC.2017.17]

The committee noted a list of suspended programmes for the academic year 2017/18.

20 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>

21 Minutes from QAEC, Senate and the other Faculties FECs

The committee noted the latest minutes from the QAEC, Senate and the other Faculties FECs <\\icfs5g.cc.ic.ac.uk\Registry\10.Committees\smb://icfs5g.cc.ic.ac.uk/registry/10.committees/> (for Mac users)

22 Termly Report on Number of Special Cases admitted for 2018-19 [NSEC.2017.18]

The committee noted a report of the number of special cases admitted for the academic year 2017/18.

23 Any other business

- RM brought committee's attention to the document sharing website www.studocu.com. This is a site where students can upload and view content such as lecture notes. They can also receive payment for posting documents. The terms and conditions of the site imply that it is the responsibility of the uploader to ensure they have the permission to do so and are the owners of the IP. From a brief look through some of the materials here, it is clear that this is not being monitored in any way- Imperial College students have posted lecture hand-outs, exam papers, indicative answers and other materials that do not originate with them. The materials appear to be openly accessible on this site. This is of concern- in the worst case scenario, students who post documents that they did not create themselves could be sued by the originator/ author. At the very least it could be considered as unethical practice.
- ME, the RCSU President, asked whether students could be involved in the decisions regarding the use of the Chemistry Building once the research activity moves to White City. In response to that, NH said that plans to consolidate activity into Levels 1 to 3 of the building are at an early stage. Once there is a conceptual plan, the consultation stage will commence. With regard to broader campus masterplanning, discussion with Faculty Management Committees has taken place and we understand that further student consultation is planned via the ICU. A presentation to the College's Council is planned for February 2018.

24 Dates of Future Meetings

Wednesday, 29th November 2017, 12.00-14.00, Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate

Wednesday, 28th February 2018, 12.00-14.00, Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate

Wednesday, 18th April 2018, 12.00-14.00, Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate