

Faculty Education Committee (FEC) Faculty of Natural Sciences

DATE: 27 November 2019
TIME: 12:00 – 14:00
LOCATION: SALC 10

MINUTES - APPROVED

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present:

Prof Emma McCoy	vice-Dean (Education) FoNS (Chair)
Prof Donald Craig	DUGS Chemistry
Prof David Evans	DUGS Mathematics
Dr Carl Paterson	DUGS Physics
Dr Rudiger Woscholski	MRes Director of Studies in Chemistry
Prof John Seddon	Faculty Senior Tutor
Dr William Proud (WP)	Director of Postgraduate Studies, Physics
Dr Mike Tennant	CEP Representative
Ms Michaela Flegrova	RCSU Academic Affairs Officer
Mr Ashley Brooks	ICU Deputy President (Education)
Ms Moira Sarsfield	Senior Learning Technologist
Mr Mark Anderson	Educational Development Unit (EDU) Representative
Dr Vijay Tymms (VT)	FoNS Programmes Committee Rep., Physics
Mr Scott Tucker	Registry Representative - Assistant Registrar (Monitoring & Review)
Dr Felicitas Starr-Egger	CLCC representation
Ms Rebecca Middleton	Faculty Education Manager
Ms Kasia Kmiecowski	Administrative Assistant, FoNS

Apologies:

Dr Huw Williams	DUGS Life Sciences
Dr Niki Gounaris	Life Sciences PGT Representative
Ms Emma Couves	GSU Representative
Prof Jonathan Mestel	College Consul, Maths
Ms Kate Ippolito	Educational Development Unit (EDU) Representative
Ms Nazia Hirjee	Faculty Operations Officer
Mr Stefan Hoyle	Faculty Safety Representative
Mr Will Bennett	Information and Communication Technologies

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The committee reviewed the minutes from the FoNS Education Committee (NSEC) held on Wednesday 25th September 2019 [**NSEC.2019.20.01**] and the Committee Action Tracker [**NSEC.2019.20.02**]. With one minor correction as listed below, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record and the action tracker document was updated:

1. Present:

Prof David Evans

3. Matters arising from the Minutes/ Action Tracker

Actions 1, 2, and 5 – were noted as complete.

Action 3 – was noted as ongoing; committee can feedback comments to Jonathan Mestel or Ashley Brooks who are both members of the Survey Committee. EMcC added that Kate Ippolito is redesigning the peer review form. Hopefully, this will be useful for the departments.

4. Curriculum review (for recommending to Programmes Committee)

No updates had been reported.

5. Programme Withdrawals

The committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to suspend the following programmes from 2020/21 academic year:

- BSc Biochemistry with Management and a Year in Industry/Research (4yr)
- BSc Biochemistry with Management and a Year in Industry/Research (5yr)
- BSc Biotechnology with Management with a Year in Industry/Research (5yr)
- BSc Biological Sciences with Management and a Year in Industry/Research (4yr)
- BSc Biological Sciences with Management and a Year in Industry/Research (5yr)

The committee approved the withdrawal.

6. Student Exchange agreements

There were no student exchange agreements to be considered. Adrian Hawksworth (Assistant Registrar, Registry) had reported that:

- Registry will be asking relevant depts to put some renewals (Form Bs) to FEC in the Spring to assist with necessary extensions of agreements.
- Registry will be doing an Brexit-Erasmus update in January – once the outcome of the election is known - for QAEC alongside the usual data report on student exchange partnerships valid in 2019-20.

7. UG Annual Monitoring Reports

The committee considered the UG Annual Monitoring reports submitted by the following departments:

- Cover Paper
- Physics Annual Monitoring Report - CP reported that the updated version of the report only include a couple of minor changes:
 - “Physics with a year abroad” instead of “Physics with a year in Europe”
 - Under section 1: Departmental Overview and Context, it had been added that *the Department is also renovating the areas adjacent to the redeveloped lecture theatre, working with student shapers, to create optimized spaces for study and discussions.*

He added that the Department of Physics had been working on resolving various issues and implementing new initiatives before the NSS results were published. One of them included active learning seminars which had been attended by 60 Physics students. It allowed students to interact more with their peers and the tutor.

- Chemistry Annual Monitoring Report - DC reported that:
 - The new HoD, Prof Oscar Ces, has organised Town Hall style meetings for students and staff.
 - A Post-It note feedback system had been introduced by the Student Experience Officer, Amelia Barron, – during group meetings, students can write their feedback on post-it notes - one positive and one negative comment. This is shared with staff to encourage engagement with the feedback and has proven to be very effective.

- With regards to social events, students and staff arranged a bowling session together at the start of term, which was greatly enjoyed. Such events aim at building a better community among students and staff.
 - A new module had been developed. It includes various interactive activities and sessions that focuses on a transition from school to university life.
 - Chemistry Culinary Kitchen course organised for Y1 Chemistry students is proving very successful. This will may be extended to Y2 students.
 - Department of Chemistry is aiming to reduce stress levels by providing therapy dog sessions for students around exam periods, as well as at the start of term.
 - Department still needs to work on building a community among UG students at White City Campus.
- Mathematics Annual Monitoring Report - DE reported that:
 - Inkeri Hibbins (Undergraduate Liaison Officer, Maths) had organised several events for Maths students such as Welfare Event.
 - Out-duction – these sessions had been organised for final year students in the Departments of Maths and Physics. They went well and generated further ideas and how they could be improved in this academic year.
 - The section on the College’s website: [Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service](#) section states that the current waiting time is 4-8 weeks due to high demand for consultations. He said that this webpage needs reviewing. He also added that more counsellors should be employed. It was agreed that the issues with counselling waiting times were well known and that work had been undertaken to employ additional staff and relocate to more suitable premises, but that comments from NSEC would be fed back to the Director of Student Services.
 WP observed that the waiting time for counselling consultations is shorter in the Department of Physics, but that this might be due to staff referring students direct. RM noted that this might also be due to the collaboration the department established with an external charity that provides counselling services.
 JS added that the North West London Club Drug clinic is able to help students who have drug-related issues. It is local and students can self-refer to the clinic.

EMcC reported that she had compiled information from departments on improvements for students and various successful activities that had been implemented following the comments from students received via NSS and Action Plans. These will be sent to Professor Simone Buitendijk. EMcC added that feedback and consistency of marking are the major issues raised by students.

- Life Sciences UG Annual Monitoring Report will be submitted by the end of term.
ACTION 7: HW to submit Life Sciences UG Annual Monitoring Report.

AB queried how the Annual Monitoring Reports are compiled. In response to that the DUGS said:

- Mathematics – the Annual Monitoring Report had been released late as the staff wanted to discuss it at the Department Teaching meeting and then with the Year Reps. DE added that the department also follows the ICU Report recommendations when formulating the Annual Monitoring Report.
- Chemistry – The Dep Rep consults student reps on various issues to ensure all are included; DC suggested that Dep Reps should filter the comments reported by students to assess the severity of the problem.

- Physics - CP reported that he had had a discussion with student reps which provided comprehensive feedback from the Physics students.

CP reported that it is very difficult to use/read the External Examiners Reports in the current excel format. ST received similar comments from other staff members. Perhaps certain sections have to be simplified or two versions of the document would need to be created: one with all the details and another one with the key data only.

Faculty Annual Monitoring template

The committee noted the Faculty Annual Monitoring template which needs to be completed and submitted by midday on 22 January 2020.

8. Schemes for Award of Honours' (UG) and 'Marking Schemes' (PGT)

The Schemes for Awards of Honours (SfAH) had been reviewed and approved by the UG Sub-committee, except the Life Sciences SfAH document.

HW had sent his update stating that there had been some problems with the appropriate weighting for the department's 3 years with management degree, which does not seem to have a year weighting in the new regulations discussion. Nevertheless, the department is working to resolve this.

ACTION 8: HW to submit the Life Sciences Schemes for Award of Honours document.

It was noted that the Marking Schemes for Masters Programmes will be reviewed at the Masters Sub-committee in March 2020.

ACTION 9: EMcC to forward the Schemes for Award of Honours' (UG) and 'Marking Schemes' (PGT) documents to Registry.

9. Standing Items:

9.1 Learning Technology Matters – MS reported the following matters:

- 60 modules have gone through curriculum review for 2019-20; of these 45 have been/will be transformed by the EdTech team.
- The impact of changes on learning, student experience, etc will be evaluated by teaching staff and revisions/changes for future iterations will be recorded. The work of the EdTech team will also be evaluated.
- The EdTech team will be supporting the new I-Explore STEM modules and workshops for staff on developing these modules have been organised.
- Curriculum review implementation for Y2 modules will happen over the coming months, ready for delivery from October 2019.
- ABC learning design workshops can be arranged for these modules as required and also for any curriculum reviewed PGT modules, e.g. for Life Sciences.
- Further workshops are being developed focusing on different teaching approaches. Please contact the FoNS EdTech team if you would like to arrange any workshops or discuss options.

EMcC added that she and MS will be attending a Digital Strategy Away Day.

DE reported that the staff in the Department of Mathematics had been told not to use Slack software. MS explained that this is related to the requirements of GDPR, as the data is stored externally. Similar issues have been identified with EventBrite and ICT have issued general guidance that in-house tools should be used for all academic activities. EMcC advised DW to contact Will Bennett, FoNS Digital Partner, and Amanda Hamilton, FoNS Data Protection Officer, for more information.

FSE raised an issue with the functionality of Blackboard. MS advised that there will be significant changes to Blackboard in the future, and that ICT are proposing a VLE review at that point, to decide whether it is best to move to the new Ultra version of Blackboard or to move to a different VLE.

9.2 FoNS eLearning Implementation Group (ELIG) – to consider ToR

The committee considered and approved the FoNS eLearning Implementation Group (ELIG) Terms of Reference.

9.3 Safety – there were no updates to report by SH.

9.4 Education – RM reported that:

- The invitations to submit nominations for the Prizes for Excellence had been sent and the online nomination form is now open.
- The FoNS-MAD competition will be launched in January 2020.
- The deadline to register teams for the Schools Science Competition is 3rd of December. The teams which had already registered are from: the UK, Mexico, Brazil, Africa, and China.
- The recent Active Bystander Training for students had received very good feedback. 50 students attended. It is hoped to offer more sessions this academic year. This is subject to funding as the sessions are delivered by an external provider. A half day, in which between 2-3 sessions could take place costs £800.

9.5 Faculty Senior Tutor

JS reported that two UG and two PG FMOP meetings have taken place so far this academic year. The panel is using a template to collate MC data across all departments. The template will be amended for future meetings so that the panel knows exactly what information needs to be provided and also to reduce the workload when collating the data. He added that the FMOP meetings will be taking place twice per academic year.

JS also informed the committee that:

- College had been looking into adopting a scheme where a named person chosen by a given student could be contacted where the College had serious concerns about the student's mental wellbeing. Students would have the opportunity to opt-in and opt-out at any point. The scheme is likely to be ready for implementation in the 2020/21 academic year.
- Following the Grenfell disaster, an FMOP member had raised concerns related to the students' accommodation external cladding. Sean Fanning, the Head of Fire Safety, confirmed that all buildings owned by the College had been reviewed and that Woodward Hall had aluminium cladding covering 10% of the building, which would need to be replaced. The Fire Safety Team have reviewed the fire safety strategy for Woodward and can confirm that the controls and systems in place to protect occupants in the event of fire are robust and adequate.

9.6 FOO – there were no updates to report.

9.7 Registry

ST reported on behalf of QAEC that the membership for the new Study Abroad Placements Task and Finish Group need to be confirmed.

ACTION 10: RM to request nominees for the new Study Abroad Placements Task and Finish Group from DUGS.

10. Report of Master’s programmes who applied for dispensation from anonymity at Exam Boards and the outcomes

EMcC reported that MSc Applied Mathematics had been granted exemption for the 2018/19 academic year only.

11. Minutes of the Previous Meetings of the NSEC Sub-Committees

The committee noted the latest, confirmed minutes from the UG/Masters Sub-Committee meetings: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/natural-sciences/education-and-teaching/fons-education-committee/>

12. Chair’s Report

The committee noted action taken by the Chair on behalf of the committee

12.1 Dispensation from Exam Board Anonymity – EMcC had agreed the request submitted by the Programme Director of the MSc in Applied Mathematics for dispensation from the anonymity requirement at Master’s level Board of Examiners meetings. This was agreed for the 2018/19 exam board only.

The assumption is that all boards should be anonymous unless there is a strong reason for them not to be.

12.2 Minor Modification- MSci Physics, MSci Physics with Theoretical Physics – EMcC had agreed the request from the Department of Physics for a Minor modification to the MSci Physics, MSci Physics with Theoretical Physics programmes.

13. SOLE survey results for FoNS

The committee noted the SOLE survey results for FoNS.

14. External Examiners reports 2018-19

The committee noted External Examiners reports 2018-19

15. Minutes of the Postgraduate Professional Development Committee (PPDC)

The committee noted the latest minutes from the Graduate School’s [Postgraduate Professional Development Committee](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school/postgraduate-professional-development-committee/): [\\icfs5g.cc.ic.ac.uk\Registry\10.Committees\PPDC](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/graduate-school/postgraduate-professional-development-committee/)

16. Minutes from QAEC, Senate and the other Faculties’ Education Committees

The committee noted the latest minutes from the [QAEC](#), [Senate](#) and the other [Faculty Education Committees](#)

17. Any other business

18. Dates of Future Meetings (2019/20 Committee Schedule)

Committee	Date	Time
UG Sub-Committee of NSEC	Weds 04/12/19	12.30-14.00
UG Sub-Committee of NSEC	Weds 29/01/20	12.30-14.00
NSEC	Weds 26/02/20	12.00-16.00
Masters Sub-Committee of NSEC	Weds 04/03/20	12.30-14.00
UG Sub-Committee of NSEC	Tues 17/03/20	12.30-14.00
NSEC	Weds 29/04/20	12.00-14.00
UG Sub-Committee of NSEC	Weds 27/05/20	12.30-14.00
Masters Sub-Committee of NSEC	Weds 03/06/20	12.30-14.00