

Medical Studies Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 26 November 2014

Present: Professor Sue Smith (Chair), Dr Mike Barrett, Ms Giskin Day, Ms Susan English, Mr Jeremy Fernando, Mr Chris Harris (Secretary), Dr Jo Harris, Mr Dariush Hassanzadeh-Baboli, Mr Pascal Loose, Mr Martin Lupton, Professor Alison McGregor, Professor Mary Morrell, Dr Eryl Price-Davies, Mr Paul Ratcliffe, Dr Sarvesh Saini, Dr Mike Schachter, Miss Philippa Shallard, Dr Mark Sullivan.

In attendance: Dr Peter Clark, Dr Sonia Kumar.

Apologies: Professor Paul Aylin, Dr Carolyn Gabriel, Professor Jenny Higham, Dr Naomi Low-Beer, Dr Maria Toro-Troconis.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence	
	The Chair thanked members for attending and noted the apologies for absence.
2. Minutes	
AGREED:	That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2014 be confirmed.
3. Matters arising	
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-02: Matters arising
	Minute 8.13: modifications to placement learning policy
REPORTED:	3.1. That information is available on the registry web site and further advice was available from the Assistant Registrar (Placements)
	Minute 8.16: equality and diversity monitoring report
REPORTED:	3.2. That the Director of Admissions, Equality and Diversity was in discussion with BMAT about the gender imbalance and would report back at the next meeting when further information would be available. ACTION: Director of Admissions, Equality and Diversity
REPORTED:	3.3. That the remainder of the actions had been completed.
4. Chair's actions	
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-03: Chair's actions
NOTED:	4.1. The actions taken on behalf of the Committee by the Chair to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve amendments to the assessment weighting and ECTS contributions of Year 2 of the BSc in Biomedical Science. • Approve Professor Muntzer Mughal as an external examiner. • Approve the suspension of the BSc Part C Specialist Course in History of Medicine.
5. Items for consideration	
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-04: Terms of reference and membership
AGREED:	5.1. that minor changes to the terms of reference were required, reflecting the fact that all the students on the BSc in Pharmacology and Translational Medical Sciences had completed their studies. 5.2. That these changes should be recommended to the Senate for approval. ACTION: Secretary

CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-05-07: Annual Monitoring Reports
NOTED:	<p>5.3. That the programme specifications and other standard programme information had been updated.</p> <p>5.4. That there were only 10 fail-withdraw students from a population of 2160, which is a testament to the high quality of students and the educational offer.</p> <p>5.5. That significant work had been undertaken and is planned on improving feedback to our students.</p> <p>5.6. That SOLE participation remains low, in part due to a poor electronic platform.</p> <p>5.7. That there were several concerns from the Business School's external examiners, particularly around assessment arrangements. The Committee was pleased that the Business School is taking active steps to address these issues.</p> <p>5.8. That the Business School degree results were very encouraging and it was noted that the medical students are of a very high calibre. The Management programme also adds a welcome extra dimension to the Biomedical Science programme for those who take an additional year in the Business School.</p> <p>5.9. That 2013-14 was the inaugural year for the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine. The School was taking active steps to obtain student feedback, and the substantial work of the Assistant Dean (Course Evaluation) in this area was recognised.</p> <p>5.10. That there is substantial and innovative use of e-learning both for teaching and formative/diagnostic assessment.</p> <p>5.11. That one of the major themes in the external examiner comments was around the scalability of the programme as it goes through rapid growth. The School has acknowledged and is actively planning for this.</p> <p>5.12. That the Schools should work to share practice and resources and there is a keen focus on this area. It is important to engage staff to make use of the very high quality materials where there is synergy between the programmes.</p>
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-08: Update and papers for approval from the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine
NOTED:	<p>5.13. That Professor James Best had been appointed as the School's Dean.</p> <p>5.14. That the team is actively working on Phase 2 of the programme curriculum.</p> <p>5.15. That the majority of the changes for approval were minor and consistent with the early stages of a new programme.</p>
AGREED:	<p>5.16. That there would be a need to calibrate the level of information that the School needed to report to the Medical Studies Committee.</p> <p>5.17. That an annual report on numbers of complaints and appeals should be submitted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Deputy Director of Education Management</p> <p>5.18. That the following documents be recommended to Senate for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major curriculum changes • Revised programme specifications • Revised Admissions Policy and Procedures • Revised Examination and Assessment Strategy Phase 1 • Re-appointment of External Examiners for Phase 1 for 2014/15 <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Secretary</p>
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-09: Nomination of external examiners
NOTED:	<p>5.19. That Professor Nick Lee and Dr Elena Novelli both come from departments where the Business School already have external examiners. However, the existing external examiners are from different research groups from the new examiners and are examining for postgraduate programmes so the risk to their independence is extremely small.</p> <p>5.20. That Professor Jones was being appointed for an exceptional fifth year since this is the last year of the four-year Graduate Entry programme.</p>

	<p>5.21. That Dr Ian McFadzean currently holds two external examiner posts. However both of these appointments are due to end in 2015.</p> <p>5.22. That Professor Hooi Shing Chuan works for the National University Singapore (NUS), with which the College has a collaboration. However, NUS is the only other medical school in Singapore and the Committee felt it was essential to have an external examiner who could benchmark standards in the local context.</p>
AGREED:	<p>5.23. That the chairs of the Boards and Sub-boards be approved.</p> <p>5.24. That the continuing external examiners be reappointed.</p> <p>5.25. That the following new external examiners be appointed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Nick Lee (Business School) • Dr Elena Novelli (Business School) • Dr Jonathan Atkins (Business School) • Dr Petro Vourvachis (Business School) • Dr Ian McFadzean (BSc in Pharmacology) • Dr Melissa Westwood (BSc in Reproductive and Developmental Sciences) • Dr Helen Salisbury (Year 5 General Practice) <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Registry Representative</p>
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-10: 2015-16 programmes map
NOTED:	5.26. That the programmes map would be published on Monday 1 December 2014 if no further amendments were proposed.
6. Reports from committees	
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-11: Education Committee (Early Years)
NOTED:	<p>6.1. That three new assessments had been introduced into Year 1 (one formative followed by two summative assessments), which would contribute 5% of the BSc marks for students who started in 2014-15.</p> <p>6.2. That the Education Committee had approved changes to move PBL teaching into the Science and Patient theme. A detailed proposal for consequent changes to the assessments would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee, but that the changes would not be effective until 2015-16.</p> <p>6.3. That the Education Committee had approved minor changes to anatomy teaching, Science and Patient teaching and assessment, and the graduate entry cardiovascular course.</p> <p>6.4. That a group had been formulated to manage the logistics of the reformulated five-year Graduate Medicine programme.</p>
AGREED:	<p>6.5. That all items from the Education Committee be approved.</p> <p>6.6. That it would be important for changes affecting the BSc to be communicated to BSc Pathway Directors.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Chair, Education Committee (Early Years)</p>
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-12: Education Committee (BScs)
NOTED:	<p>6.7. That Chair's actions had been taken to suspend the BSc specialist course in History of Medicine and to approve minor changes to the assessment of the BSc pathway in Management.</p> <p>6.8. That discussions were underway about the potential for a BSc pathway in medical humanities, which could include aspects from the history of medicine and death, autopsy and law specialist courses.</p> <p>6.9. That work was being undertaken to explore the feasibility of withdrawing the supervisor performance mark and the viva for borderline candidates.</p> <p>6.10. That discussions were taking place regarding the future feasibility of BSc students undertaking projects at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine in Singapore.</p>

AGREED:	6.11. That all items from the Education Committee be approved.
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-13: Education Committee (Years 3, 5 and 6)
NOTED:	<p>6.12. That major changes to the Year 3 Background to Clinical Specialties course had been approved in the light of significant negative student feedback. The new, Doctor, Patient and Disease course would be more closely aligned to the Year 3 learning objectives.</p> <p>6.13. That an agreement had been reached to pilot online examinations in a formative environment in January 2016 with the intention of rolling out to the summative environment by summer 2016. Major logistical preparation would be needed, so the lead-in time for planning would be essential.</p> <p>6.14. That the introduction of Very Short Answer (VSA) questions was predicated on online summative examinations. The Committee also took the view that VSAs would need to be viewed as educationally sound, and this would require the publication of formative data.</p> <p>6.15. That formative clinical assessments for Year 3 students had been rolled out to all hospital sites.</p>
AGREED:	6.16. That the new Doctor, Patient and Disease course be approved.
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-14: Student Services Committee
NOTED:	<p>6.17. That the Committee had approved minor changes to the School safety policy.</p> <p>6.18. That there were outstanding issues to be resolved with the Fitness to Practise Medicine policy changes relating to the Medical Schools Council's excluded student database and that the policy would be brought back to next meeting.</p> <p>6.19. That 60 school pupils had been recruited to the Sutton Trust sponsored Widening Participation 'Pathways to Medicine' scheme.</p>
AGREED:	6.20. That, with exception to the changes to the Fitness to Practise Medicine policy, all items from the Student Services Committee be approved.
7. Quality assurance and enhancement	
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-15: SOLE
NOTED:	<p>7.1. That response rates remain highly variable and in some cases are too low to be reliable.</p> <p>7.2. That the School had undertaken a pilot of a candidate replacement system for SOLE, which had nearly trebled participation rates.</p>
AGREED:	<p>7.3. That further expansion of this pilot would be desirable.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Quality and Educational Development Manager</p>
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-16: National Student Survey results
NOTED:	<p>7.4. That the results for Medicine were very encouraging, with a 7% jump in overall satisfaction to 90%.</p> <p>7.5. That the School plans to focus on feedback and reduce the variability of experience across sites, which were key themes in the comments.</p> <p>7.6. That the Biomedical Science results were in contrast very disappointing.</p> <p>7.7. That the School had been undertaking a period of actively listening to students and teachers and had also commissioned two independent reviews to consider exactly where improvements to the programme should be made.</p>
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-17: Good practice highlighted in 2013-14 Periodic Reviews
CONSIDERED:	MSC1415-18: External Examiner Summary report 2012-13
AGREED:	<p>7.8. That these papers should be disseminated to the subordinate committees for further discussion.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Secretary</p>

8. Any other business	
	Roles and responsibilities documents
REPORTED:	8.1. That several roles and responsibilities documents had been updated and were available on the registry web site .
	A Level requirements
REPORTED:	<p>8.2. That the School's standard offer for Medicine and Biomedical Science is AAA + B at AS Level.</p> <p>8.3. That there would be changes to the A Level system starting in October 2015 to uncouple the A Level from the AS Level qualification. This would be introduced in a phased way but starting with all three Sciences in 2015 and subsequently Mathematics in 2016.</p> <p>8.4. That as a consequence, the University Admissions Committee had asked for feedback on our admissions requirement.</p> <p>8.5. That some schools had indicated they would no longer offer AS Level qualifications and students are not able to sit four A Levels and that this could create a risk of narrowing participation.</p> <p>8.6. That some of our competitors have already announced that they would continue to require an AS Level or a fourth A Level.</p> <p>8.7. That documentation from OFQUAL states that A level and AS level curricula can be designed to allow for co-teaching if exam boards choose, which would effectively allow state schools to continue offering subjects at AS.</p>
AGREED:	<p>8.8. That the Committee felt the breadth offered by a fourth subject was important.</p> <p>8.9. That at present the case to change the standard offer was not sufficiently compelling and that this should be reported to the University Admissions Committee.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Director of Admissions, Equality and Diversity</p>
9. Date of the next meeting	
REPORTED:	<p>11 February 2015</p> <p>10 June 2015</p> <p>(2:30-4:30, Drawing Room, 170 Queen's Gate, South Kensington campus)</p>