

DATE: Tuesday 07 December 2021

TIME: 12:30 – 14:00

LOCATION: via MS Teams

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present:

Ceire	Wincott (CW)	FoNS Postgraduate Research Academic & Welfare Officer, Chair
Paul	French (PF)	Vice-Dean (Research)
John	Seddon (JS)	Faculty Senior Tutor
Rebecca	Middleton (RM)	Faculty Education Manager, FoNS
Graeme	Rae	Faculty Operations Officer, FoNS
Matt	Horsfield (MH)	Education Support Coordinator (Secretary), FoNS
Ben	Sauer	Director of Postgraduate Studies, Physics
Ryan	Barnett	Director of Postgraduate Studies, Mathematics
James	Wilton-Ely	Director of Postgraduate Studies, Chemistry
Magdalena	Jara	Head of Pedagogy and GTA Programme Leader, Graduate School
Aileen	Cooney	Department PGR Rep, Chemistry
Vanessa	Ho (VH)	Department PGR Rep, Chemistry
Xu	Zhang (XZ)	Department PGR Rep (South Kensington), Life Sciences
Georgie	Massen (GM)	Department PGR Rep (Silwood Park), Life Sciences
Kamilla	Rekvenyi (KR)	Department PGR Rep, Mathematics
Amy	Smith (AS)	Department PGR Rep, Physics

In Attendance:

Paul	Seldon (PS)	Senior Teaching Fellow, Graduate School
Olga	Kuzmina (OK)	Faculty Safety Manager, FoNS
Anna	Goodwin (AG)	Student Wellbeing Adviser, FoNS
Ella	Robson (ER)	Student Wellbeing Adviser, FoNS

Apologies:

Richard	Thompson (RT)	Vice-Dean (Education), Co-Chair
Niki	Gounaris	Director of Postgraduate Studies, Life Sciences
Jem	Woods	Director of Postgraduate Studies, CEP
Daniel	Lo	ICU Deputy President - Education
Yurong	Yu (YY)	Department PGR Rep, CEP
Tatiana	Rizou (TR)	Department PGR Rep, Crick
Hui	Gong (HG)	Department PGR Rep, Crick
Alex	Auyang	Department PGR Rep (Silwood Park), Life Sciences
Hanbo	Yang	Department PGR Rep, Physics

2. Faculty of Natural Sciences Student Staff Committee - Terms of Reference and Membership 2021/22

The committee noted the terms of reference and membership for 2021/22.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting held on 05 May 2021.

4. Matters arising from the minutes and review of action tracker

The action tracker was reviewed, and actions were marked as complete. RM discussed the final action from the previous meeting.

- Action 6 - RM confirmed that this can be marked as completed as students had been informed about applying for an extension.

5. Reports from Department Student Representatives:

5.1 CEP

The detailed report document was noted by the committee. YY was not present at the meeting.

5.2 Chemistry

No detailed report document was received. VH presented a verbal report of the key matters arising in the Department.

- The first Department SSC will be held week so any issues will be raised at this committee first. No items to report at the Faculty SSC.
- VH noted there have been a few social events at the White City campus, which included some community events, BBQs, and drinks.

5.3 Crick

No detailed report document was received. TR and HG were not present at the meeting.

5.4 Life Sciences

No detailed report document was received. GM presented a verbal report of the key matters arising in the Department at Silwood Park.

- GM explained to the committee that students at the Silwood Park campus have organised small social events to keep in contact as the campus is much quieter than the central campuses. The students have organised a coffee meet up every Wednesday to watch seminars together and to socialise.
- GM noted that the Masters students were enjoying the social events organised at Silwood Park.

No detailed report document was received. XZ presented a verbal report of the key matters arising in the Department at South Kensington.

- XZ queried if the Department were going to organise a Christmas party for the PhD students. CW noted that the Department had organised a social event for new students in October but hadn't heard any plans for a Christmas Party. The committee discussed that it might be difficult to arrange a social event at Christmas with new Covid-19 restrictions.

5.5 Mathematics

No detailed report document was received. KR presented a verbal report of the key matters arising in the Department.

- Students had recently attended the Departmental research SSC and the committee had discussed the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES).

- KR noted there have been a few social events for students and the Christmas party would take place tomorrow.

5.6 Physics

No detailed report document was received. AS presented a verbal report of the key matters arising in the Department.

- The Department recently had their first Research SSC and there were no concerns raised by the students. The committee had discussed the restrictions with office capacities and some students and staff were frustrated that they could not work in their office on campus. AS noted that it has been difficult to get other students to come into campus for meetings and social events.
- CW explained that with the Covid-19 restrictions, rooms in each Department would have different capacity sizes and ventilation restrictions but it was good to hear some social events had been organised.

6. Membership Accreditation and Recognition Scheme (MARS)

- PS presented to the committee about the Imperial Membership Accreditation and Recognition Scheme (MARS). Students can find out more information from the [webpage](#) which includes subject specific information.
- PS explained that the scheme allows students to develop the required skills over their PhD programme and then apply for chartered status. PS noted that students would be expected to collect evidence during their programme and then apply once they complete their PhD. The training students receive during their time at the College is recognised as evidence.
- PS explained the timeline to the committee: students could apply during their Masters course to be a registered scientist and once they have started their PhD, they can join as a member to the professional body. Then, during their PhD the student would collect evidence through the MARS programme.
- PS noted that the scheme allows the students to obtain external accreditation, professional body recognition and progression and the opportunity for students to network with other members. Previous participants in the scheme, have been able obtain positions in academia or industry.
- OK suggested that she could attend the Chemistry research SSC next week to present the scheme to students in the Department.
- PS noted that students would have to apply through the [webpage](#).

7. Update from Faculty Student Wellbeing Team

- AG informed the committee that the Faculty Student Wellbeing Advisers were now seeing students either in person or online. Students can book an appointment via the Faculty wellbeing [webpage](#).
- The Faculty were keen to develop small bitesize training to support personal tutors when providing support to students.
- ER explained that both advisers were part of the College-level sexual consent working group to acquire a training provider for the whole College.
- ER noted that some recurring support themes had been picked up so far from what the students had reported, and this would help the service develop and improve. The committee discussed that it wasn't just mental health issues being reported, and there have been conversations about general wellbeing, belonging and relationships.
- Both ER and AG noted that they were keen to get feedback from students to improve the service and raise its profile across the Faculty.
- PF queried if staff should be directing students to the service or the central support services. RM explained that it would depend on the student and what support they require. If the

student required further support beyond the Faculty wellbeing service, the advisers could refer the student to the central College support services. RM noted that they were looking to improve the signposting on the Faculty website and to include some case study examples to help both staff and students. AG explained that the service has been designed to complement the current services at the College and to improve wellbeing support across the Faculty.

- CW reminded the committee that this new service was a non-academic service, and this would be greatly appreciated by the PhD students who might not feel comfortable speaking about wellbeing-related matters to their supervisor.
- JS explained that the Faculty were still reviewing the allocation of personal tutors and supervisors across the Faculty as often the provision can vary between postgraduate courses. The new wellbeing service will be able to compliment any changes made across the postgraduate courses.

8. Chair’s business

- Nothing to be raised.

9. Minutes of the PhD Departmental Student Staff Committee Meetings (to note)

Minutes noted.

10. Any other business

- RM informed the committee there is a new member of staff in the Faculty Education team, Crystal Vincent - Faculty EDI Coordinator. Crystal will work with the Departments on student facing EDI initiatives.

11. Dates of Future Meetings

Committee	Date	Time	Teams/ Room Details	Paper Deadline
FoNS - Research Academic Student Staff Committee	16/02/2022	13:00 - 14:30	SALC 10, Sherfield	09/02/2022
FoNS - Research Academic Student Staff Committee	04/05/2022	12:30 - 14:00	SALC 10, Sherfield	27/04/2022