

DATE: Wednesday 15 June 2022

TIME: 12:30 – 14:00

LOCATION: SALC 10, Sherfield Building

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present:

Nicolas	Barykin Pankevich (NBP)	RCSU Vice President – Education, Chair
Richard	Thompson (RT)	Vice-Dean (Education), Co-Chair
John	Seddon (JS)	Faculty Senior Tutor
Rebecca	Middleton (RM)	Faculty Education Manager, FoNS
Matt	Horsfield (MH)	Education Support Coordinator (Secretary), FoNS
Chris	Hallsworth (CH)	Director of UG Studies, Mathematics
Carl	Paterson (CP)	Director of UG Studies, Physics
Amelia	Barron (AB)	Head of Pastoral Care and the Student Experience, Chemistry
Inkeri	Hibbins (IH)	Undergraduate Liaison Officer, Mathematics
Yasmin	Andrew (YA)	Student Liaison Officer, Physics
Steve	Connolly (SC)	Undergraduate Liaison Officer, Life Sciences
Tianyu	Wen (TW)	RCSU Vice President – Welfare, Chair Department Academic Rep (Biochemistry), Life Sciences
Erica	Zhao (EZ)	Department Academic Rep (Biological Sciences), Life Sciences

In Attendance:

Helena	Schofield	Representation Coordinator, ICU
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Apologies:

Huw	Williams (HW)	Director of UG Studies, Life Sciences
Don	Craig (DC)	Director of UG Studies, Chemistry
Daniel	Lo	ICU Deputy President - Education
Aparna	Pillai	RCSU President
Graeme	Rae	Faculty Operating Officer, FoNS
Priscilla	Yip (PY)	Department Academic Rep, Mathematics
Krzysztof	Oliwa (OK)	Department Academic Rep, Chemistry
Stefano	Fiocca (SF)	Department Academic Rep, Physics

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting held on 16 March 2022.

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

The action tracker was reviewed, and actions were marked as complete with updated comments.

- Action 3 – Complete, testing has now ended.
- Action 4 – Complete, but it was noted the Departments have not received the free text comments from the MEQ survey. RT noted that Prof. Jonathan Mestel was putting together a working group to review the MEQ questions for next academic year.
- Action 5 – Complete, guidance provided to the Department of Chemistry.

Action 6: RM to follow up with the QA Department about when the MEQ results will be published for Spring and the Autumn free text comments.

4. Reports from Department Student Representatives:

4.1 Chemistry

No detailed report document was received, and OK was not present at the meeting.

4.2 Life Sciences – Biochemistry

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

- First and second year students have had their exams in person this summer and this has been very successful, and students have been happy with how they have run. Both student reps are keen for in person exams to continue moving forward.
- TW noted that the student reps are working with the Department to organise an end of year party.

4.3 Life Sciences – Biological Sciences

EZ and TW noted the report for both routes in Life Sciences was the same.

4.4 Mathematics

No detailed report document was received, and PY was not present at the meeting. CH and IH presented a verbal report of the key matters arising in the Department.

- The Department should have enough student reps for next year, as students have been elected in the recent ICU elections.
- IH explained at the last Departmental SSC, the committee talked about what has worked well this year and what hadn't worked well and could be improved. CH noted that the timed remote assessments (TRAs) had gone okay this summer, but the Department will move back to in person exams next academic year. CH also noted that the students were keen to take coursework only modules, but the Department have limited the class size in each of these modules.

4.5 Physics

No detailed report document was received, and SF was not present at the meeting. CP presented a verbal report of the key matters arising in the Department.

- The Departmental SSC is on 16 June and any issues will be raised then. The Department had received some feedback on assessment feedback and the breakdown of teaching on campus and online. Both issues will be discussed with the student reps.
- YA noted that students have preferred having exams on campus and it has been a much better experience for students and staff. CP noted there has been less MCs submitted compared to the last two years, when TRAs have run.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Curriculum Review (CR)

- **Chemistry** – no update.

- **Life Sciences** – no update as HW was not present. RT noted that the Department have had issues in the past with the ECTS credits for the Level 6 modules. SC explained that this has been discussed in the Department and there have been different opinions about how to structure the new CR modules. The committee discussed about the type of modules which could be set up and the limitations with the structured ECTS values listed in the single set of regulations. MH noted that the Department had submitted major modifications for new 15 ECTS credit modules in Level 6 which will be active in 2022/23.

- **Mathematics** – CH noted the CR process has gone well but the Department have started to notice they have too many assessments in some of their modules. This has caused some issues with engagement in the modules as students have put a lot of work into their assessments but often the assessment is only worth a small percentage of the module. CH noted this is causing students to be more stressed and the Department are looking at how to support students with better time management skills. IH noted that the student expectations have not changed since CR has been carried out and therefore, they still put the same amount of work into each assessment. Both IH and CH will be reviewing the assessments over the summer. TW noted that in the Department of Life Sciences, they had a 24-hour coursework in the past and this was not popular with the students and caused a lot of stress.

- **Physics** – CP noted that the Department are moving into the fourth and final year of the CR modules and have made some minor changes ahead of the new academic year. The Department are planning to move some modules from the autumn term to the spring term to balance out the workload in third year. CP explained there have been several examples of good changes as a result of the CR, for example the new lab reports. CP also noted that he has noticed that there might be too many assessments in the modules and agreed with CH that this needs to be reviewed. It was noted that the DUGS have a better oversight of the modules in each Department compared to the module leader, who will only look at the assessments in their module. CP noted that the Department had moved to more coursework assessments than exams over the CR and this has been successful, but this has caused students to feel more stress within the teaching terms. CP was keen for the College to look into more authentic assessments such as team-based problem solving.

5.2 Feedback on Assessment

- Nothing to be raised, discussed in earlier action points.

5.3 NSS Action Plans

- Nothing to be raised, discussed in earlier action points.
- RM noted that the College level NSS results should be released on the 06 July 2022 and the Faculty breakdown will be released soon after once it has been analysed by the College.
- RT noted these results will be included in the College TEF submission which is due later in the year. A draft submission will be sent to both RT and RM, and they will collect feedback from the Departments.

6. Chair's business

- Nothing to be raised.

7. Minutes of Departmental Student Staff Committee Meetings (to note)

- Minutes noted.

8. Any other business

- There were no issues discussed.

9. Dates of Future Meetings

Committee	Date	Time	Teams/ Room Details	Paper Deadline
FoNS - UG Academic Student Staff Committee	Wed 09/11/2022	12.30-14.00	tbc	02/11/2022