

DATE: Wednesday 09 March 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
John	Seddon (JS)	Faculty Senior Tutor, Co-Chair
Rebecca	Middleton (RM)	Faculty Education Manager, FoNS
Matt	Horsfield (MH)	Education Support Coordinator (Secretary), FoNS
Stephen	Brickley (SB)	Senior Tutor (Biological Sciences), Life Sciences
Ingo	Mueller-Wodarg (IMW)	Senior Tutor, Physics
Amelia	Barron (AB)	Student Experience Officer, Chemistry
Inkeri	Hibbins (IH)	Undergraduate Liaison Officer, Mathematics
Sai	Yoghananthan (SY)	Student Experience Coordinator, Mathematics
Steve	Connolly (SC)	Undergraduate Liaison Officer, Life Sciences
Yasmin	Andrew (YA)	Student Liaison Officer, Physics
Kauthar	Benriassa (KB)	Department Wellbeing Rep (Biological Sciences), Life Sciences
Desmond	Lin (DL)	Department Wellbeing Rep, Mathematics

Present:

Laura	Hollister (LH)	Year One Wellbeing Rep, Physics
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Apologies:

Richard	Thompson (RT)	Vice-Dean (Education)
Tianyu	Wen (TW)	RCSU Vice President – Welfare, Chair
Stuart	Haslam	Senior Tutor (Biochemistry), Life Sciences
Robert	Law	Senior Tutor, Chemistry
Chris	Ford (CF)	Senior Tutor, Mathematics
Anna	Goodwin (AG)	Student Wellbeing Adviser, FoNS
Ella	Robson (ER)	Student Wellbeing Adviser, FoNS
Graeme	Rae	Faculty Operating Officer, FoNS
Nathalie	Podder	ICU Deputy President - Welfare
Aparna	Pillai	RCSU President
Anthea	MacIntosh-LaRocque (AML)	Department Wellbeing Rep, Physics
Chinny	Lee (ChL)	Department Wellbeing Rep, Chemistry
Pansy	Pan (PP)	Department Wellbeing Rep (Biochemistry), Life Sciences

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting held on 17 November 2021.

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

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

- Action 1 - RM confirmed this has been followed up with the library and the action is now complete.

4. Reports from Department Student Representatives:

4.1 Chemistry

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

- ChL had created a wellbeing tree in the Department which included lots of information about wellbeing support and where students could access this. AB noted that the student reps were keen to look into meditation classes.
- AB queried how the other Departments advertise pastoral support for those students who might be in crisis. YA noted that Physics send out regular emails, attend lectures and use social media to promote pastoral support. She noted that the student reps also disseminate information across the Department. DL noted that the student reps also circulate key information across the Maths Department.
- AB noted that students had praised the Department for their communication on the upcoming exams.
- Students had noted that they enjoyed the recent social events and were using the board games which had just been supplied to the common room.
- MSci Students have also reported that Covid-19 tests had improved at the White City campus.

4.2 Life Sciences – Biochemistry

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

4.3 Life Sciences – Biological Sciences

No detailed report document was received.

4.4 Mathematics

The detailed report document was noted by the committee and DL presented the key matters arising from the report.

- The Department were still working on the FoNS and Presidential Award Nominations as they needed some additional student comments.
- DL explained that the Department have communicated to all students that the summer exams have now been moved to the online timed remote assessment (TRA) format. The Department were keen to support students with this move and in particular support the final year students.
- DL noted the impact of the upcoming staff strike and how this could affect the midterm tests later in the term.
- DL noted that the strike fund allocation would be used to fund the UROP hardship fund.
- The Department were keen to integrate the FoNS Student Wellbeing Advisers in more activities in the Department and find new ways to support students.
- DL explained that the student reps have had the chance to review the assessment timeline this year and have reduced the number of clashes in the spring term. He

suggested that this should be done again next year as it's a great exercise to support student wellbeing.

- DL noted that a wellbeing event which was organised for February 2022 had to be postponed but had been re-organised for after the mid-term tests.
- DL explained that at the recent Departmental SSC, the committee had discussed TRAs, Tier four visa requirements and student feedback on social events and in person teaching.
- DL noted there were no candidates in the Department for the upcoming ICU election.

4.5 Physics

The detailed report document was noted by the committee and LH presented the key matters arising from the report.

- The student reps had sent out a survey to all students about the summer exams and they had received over 400 responses. The feedback was quite mixed and varied between each course year. LH noted there was still some uncertainty about the exams, but students had a practice event soon to experience what exam conditions were like.
- LH explained that the Department have proposed a student shapers project to respond to lack of diversity and representation of marginalised groups in teaching staff.
- LH asked the committee if students were feeling overworked and pressured about the amount of work they are given. The committee agreed this is not just an issue in Physics but all the Departments.
- LH noted that the student reps have spoken to the Department to reduce the impact of the strikes on upcoming exams.
- The student reps have been able to recruit two additional fourth year student reps.
- At the last Departmental SSC, LH explained the committee had discussed about improving the balance of modules in the third and fourth years between the autumn and spring terms, positive feedback from the recent exit interviews and how to improve student motivation. The committee noted that motivation was low if students were not attending classes on campus and that social events had also seen a low turn out this term so far.
- SC asked about the exit interviews and what they were. AB confirmed that these were first created in Chemistry, but Physics had followed their strategy. All final year students are invited to a short interview with the Department leadership team to discuss their experiences at the College. AB noted this feedback can be useful when planning for the next academic year, as NSS feedback is released in the summer. DL queried if these interviews are expensive to run. AB noted that they aren't expensive, but it does require staff to allocate time aside in their week to complete an allocated number of interviews.
- LH noted that the student reps were currently collecting feedback on the new third year lab reports and would present this at the next Departmental SSC.
- LH explained to the committee that the Department LGBTQI+ Society have established an Allies Network and would be keen to support other Departments if needed. RM noted that this was good to hear, and she was checking with the College EDI team about what Departments are required to provide as part of the LGBTQI+ commitment.
- LH asked if the Faculty were still running the Student Minds workshop. RM advised AML to contact her directly.

5. Update from Faculty Student Wellbeing Team

- RM informed the committee that the team were seeing students online and in-person and students can self-refer through the [website](#).

- RM explained that the Student Wellbeing Advisers were collecting feedback from students after their appointment but were keen to continue to develop the service.

6. Chair's business

- NBP had nothing further to raise.

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

- Minutes noted.

8. Any other business

- IMW enquired if all the Departments in the Faculty had the same exam strategy. RM noted that each Department was different. SB explained that in Life Sciences, they had organised a town hall meeting with each year group and there was a lot of anxiety reported. KB queried if the format of the resit exams had to be the same format as the summer exams. RM explained she expected this to be the case, but she will check and circulate the information.

Action 2: RM to check with the College Education Committee.

- JS noted that last week there were interviews for the new mental health intervention officer roles and three candidates had been offered the role. JS explained this role was for the most serious cases and they would be required to work with the student and other support services. IMW asked if this role would be different to the Faculty Wellbeing Advisers and JS explained they were different, and these new roles would provide clinical advice. RM suggested it would be good to design a flow chart to explain how the new systems and roles will work together with existing support systems.

9. Dates of Future Meetings

Committee	Date	Time	Teams/ Room Details	Paper Deadline
FoNS - UG Wellbeing Student Staff Committee	08/06/2022	12:30 - 14:00	SALC 10, Sheffield	01/06/2022