

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

School of Chemistry

STAFF/STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting held at 1pm Wednesday 16 March in School of Chemistry, Room 4.20

Present: Garry Procter (Chair), Andrew Regan, Ben Coe, Karen Charters

Student Representatives:

Level 2	Jordan Turner	Rebecca Ruscoe
Level 3	Sara Harrison	Naomi Hayes
Level 4	Aiden Tierney	Michaela Daubney

1. Apologies for absence

None received

2. Matters Arising

Item 2(a): the Chair confirmed that comments regarding the usefulness of recorded lecture material had been passed on to the Inorganic section, with a view to further developing DL materials for future years. It was confirmed that semester two DL material had been sent out on time.

Item 2(b): comments regarding the third year project marksheet would be passed on.

Item 2(d): location of drinking water in the building had been sent round to all students and was also on the noticeboards.

Item 2(e): comments regarding inclusion of specific material in year 2 would be fed into the ongoing curriculum review.

Item 3(a): problems with the measurements computer cluster had been resolved.

Item 4(e): comments about the suitability of the Chaplaincy had been passed on to Central Timetabling. A specific request for this theatre to not be used next year would be included in the timetable requests.

3. Careers Issues

Dr Coe was in attendance as part of his role as careers link. Some recent events had been organized, including presentations for each year. It was reported that the take up at both events had been very poor.

The representatives were asked what type of event would be useful in future. It was suggested that events aimed at final year students would be best scheduled before the Christmas break, as year 4 students in particular were working almost exclusively on their projects towards the second half of semester two.

Positive comments were received regarding the careers evening, which was helpful for year 1 or 2 students to start thinking about what career options would be available to them.

It was noted that the careers service had been sending a careers intern over each Monday lunchtime and that drop in CV and application form clinics had been well received, with a further session planned for Monday 21 March on the concourse from 3-5pm.

4. Fourth Year matters

- a) Professor Whitehead's revision lecture for CHEM30211, which was recorded and put onto Blackboard, was commended as very useful.
- b) Some students had complained about the project deadline having been set before Easter, giving less time than in previous academic years to write up. The Chair explained that late timing of the Easter vacation had necessitated the change and the issue was looked into very carefully before a decision on the deadline was made. The introduction of project milestones this year was designed to help students structure the writing up of their work.

A request was made that where a similar deadline falls in future years, the possibility of scheduling the presentations after Easter could be explored.

Action: the Chair would discuss this with the appropriate people.

Concerns had also been raised by some students working in large research groups, that their supervisor would be allocating project execution marks having had little day to day contact with the student and might not be in a position to comment on their practical ability. The Chair explained that the marking criteria for the project execution are quite detailed, that all supervisors will have met regularly with their students via the milestone meetings and that supervisors with large research groups will consult extensively with their post-docs before allocating marks.

- c) Positive comments had been received regarding the structure of CHEM40322, with problem questions being offered at the end of each 'segment' of the course and very good feedback provided.

5. Third Year matters

- a) Some students were worried about the deadline for the BSc literature review, having thought that it was due for submission after Easter. The Senior Education Officer explained that published deadlines had always shown the deadline to be 1st April. This was in line with previous years and now that laboratory work had finished three weeks with no lectures on Thursdays or Fridays was felt sufficient.
- b) A request was made that the printers in the computer cluster be labeled A and B, so that when one printer is out of paper/action then students know which machine to send their work to.

Action: the Senior Education Officer would pass this request on to IT services.

- c) It had been noted that additional material had been provided on Blackboard when requested. Thanks was passed on for this.

6. Second Year matters

- a) It was noted that some feedback for Communicating Chemistry essays had not been given back to students within the 15 day University deadline. This was important,

because the presentations which students then had to submit, were based on these essays, giving no opportunity to correct any mistakes before submission.

Action: the Chair would pass these comments on to the course convenor. It was noted that the course would be likely to be changing format from next year, and that careful attention would be made to the timing of deadlines in future.

- b) It was noted that the placement process for Chemistry with Industrial Experience had been very well organized and that this was appreciated.
- c) It was commented that the placement application process for Chemistry with North America appeared to be quite disorganized and that deadlines etc could be better advertised.
- d) There was some concern that lecturers were writing on the visualiser in G.51 and that this was making it increasingly difficult to read notes when projected.

7. First Year matters

No first year reps were in attendance.

8. Next meeting

The meetings for 2011/12 would be advertised at the start of the academic year.