

The University of Manchester

School of Chemistry

Teaching Committee

Minutes of Friday 20 March 2009

Present: Garry Procter (Chair), Andrew Regan, Christopher Whitehead, David Collison, Eric McInnes, Peter Gorry, Jim Thomas, Joe McDouall, Mark Whiteley, Tim Wallace, Frank Mair, Karen Charters (Secretary)

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Paul O'Brien

2) Minutes of the meeting of 13 February 2009

The minutes were approved.

3) Matters Arising

ACTUM 3 (December 2008) MChem Group Projects

- a) It was reported that 102 of 157 students had completed the online survey. The deadline is 27 March.
- b) An amended project proposal form was approved and would be circulated to HoTS.

ACTUM 5 It was confirmed that JCW would be meeting with Jonathan Agger to discuss the overhaul of measurements labs.

The chair confirmed that all concerned had been reminded of adherence to Health & Safety procedures, and that during synthesis labs safety and advice sheets were projected onto a large screen.

ACTUM 10 Examination performance would be discussed under item 8.

4) Teaching Budgets

Reported: The Chair reported that budgets in 2009/10 were likely to remain the same as the current year. Based on current levels of spending this would mean that both teaching and demonstrating budgets would be overspent.

The Chair reiterated the importance of seeking external funding for text books or graduation/induction events.

The Chair reported that, should demonstrating budgets be set at the same level next year, discussion of methods in decreasing costs would have to take place. Ideas included increasing the student :demonstrator ratio and altering lab assessment in order to decrease costs.

5) Teaching Away Day

Agreed: A teaching away day would take place during the period 18-20 May 2009, with the format following that of the last away day, ie presentations and small group discussion. The idea of inviting staff to sign up for groups which interest them was discussed as a possible improvement.

The day would be split into two group sessions, based on the themes of 'efficiencies' and 'personalised learning'

Some goals or questions would need to be set before the event in order to focus discussions.

A report would be produced following the meeting in order to give feedback on ideas and plans to take proposed changes forward.

KC to contact Faculty (Rosemary Tomkinson) to find out about possible funding, facilitators, presenters. KC and GP to draw up draft format for event and circulate.

Action: Karen Charters/Garry Procter

6) E-Learning

No business discussed under this item

7) Laboratories

No business discussed under this item

8) Examinations

No business discussed under this item

9) Outreach

Reported: 2,500 students had been contacted within the last 10 days.

10) Admissions and Recruitment

Reported: no new developments, decisions will soon start being entered by students, so an update would be available at the next meeting. A discussion took place as regards the possible penalties of over-recruitment.

11) Quality Assurance and Student Feedback

Reported: MWW having initial discussions regarding the RSC accreditation and would report at the next meeting.

The National Student Survey was ongoing, with the return rate currently standing at 50%.

12) Attendance

Reported: 9 students had received formal warnings regarding their lab attendance.

13) Sectional issues

Reported: EJT reported that organic staff had asked about the support available to support preparation of materials for distance learning. TW reported that there were many experts available at Faculty but that those involved would first need to have an

idea of what they wanted to produce. It was also reported that Organic staff would like more information about Outreach activities, in order to see whether there was anything useful which could be added to the current portfolio of activities.

Agreed: It would be useful for staff to have more information about both of these issues and perhaps presentations at the away day would be a useful way of achieving this.

14) Any other business

Reported: The Chair would be meeting soon with Steven Liem to discuss development of the School blog.

Discussions were ongoing with Pharmacy regarding the poor performance of Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry students on Pharmacy course units.

15) Date of next meeting

Friday 1 May 2009 at 11:00 am