

The University of Manchester

School of Chemistry

Teaching Committee

Minutes of Friday 1 April 2011

Present: Garry Procter (Chair), Peter Gorry, Joe McDouall, Andrew Regan, Tim Wallace, Eric McInnes, David Procter, Andrew Horn, Frank Mair, Karen Charters (Secretary)

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Steve Yeates, Paul Popelier, Jim Thomas

2) Minutes of the meeting of 11 February 2011

The minutes were approved with one minor correction.

3) Matters arising

a) *Curriculum Review Group – RECEIVED – feedback from teaching sections regarding development of year 2 curriculum*

(i) Core Chemistry

Reorganised into 6 core units, teaching allocated and course units ready for approval. Semester one Molecular Spectroscopy, Group Theory, Organic Synthesis. Semester two Physical Organic Chemistry, Core Inorganic Chemistry and Core Physical Chemistry.

(ii) CHEM20710

It was noted that this course unit was a historical problem, as content needs to be stimulating but not core material leading into level 3 or 4, as students on the 'with' programmes cannot take. It was proposed that 20710 be replaced by two semester long course units focusing on 'contemporary themes in Chemistry'. Students would then be given the option to take one or both courses, or follow the Manchester Leadership Programme in either semester (but not in both). One course unit had already been proposed, covering themes of sustainability, energy and health care. A proposal for the other part was put forward by members of the committee, including environmental, green and industrial chemistry.

(iii) Communicating Chemistry

A small group would be getting together to discuss the new content of this course, with views from student representatives and others to come from the Students as Partners focus group, taking place on Thursday 7 April.

AGREED: seek Management Team approval for new structure, HoTS to further discuss the second 'themes' course, development work to start on Communicating Chemistry before end of semester two.

Action: GP/HoTS

4) E-learning

- a) Blackboard 9 – it was reported that all CHEM course units had been activated in Blackboard 9 for the 2010-11 academic year, and that the e-Learning team had moved content over into the new pages. It was noted that most colleagues found the workshops provided by eLearning to be poorly prepared and not very useful. Extensive testing now needs to be done on course materials, quizzes, learning modules etc. A School template for new pages has been created.

5) Laboratories

Received: draft of lab safety action plan. This was approved by the Committee.

6) Examinations

Received: draft of new University regulations for taught degrees. It was agreed that the Senior Education Officer, Exams Officer and Director of UG Studies would add comments to the text before sending round to all academic colleagues. A School response would then be forwarded to Faculty.

Action: KC/AKB/ACR

7) Outreach

The following was reported: Science week had taken place and had been another busy and successful year. Summer visits by year 10-13 students had been booked in. An RSC teacher fellow would soon be based in the School.

8) Admissions and recruitment

It was reported that UCAS visit days had now finished for the year and that 46% of decisions had been made by students. Under present figures the projected intake would be 205. The target for 1 December 2011 was reported as 195 for UG home.

9) Quality assurance and student feedback

- a) *RECEIVED: Staff-Student Liaison Committee minutes from 16 March 2011.*
b) *Academic Malpractice cases - it was reported that 14 second year and 2 first year communicating chemistry essays had been investigated for suspected plagiarism.*

10) Attendance

It was reported that the Director of Undergraduate Studies had been seeing over 10 students per week about attendance in labs and tutorials. Four students, one first, two second and one third, had been withdrawn due to non-attendance during the 10-11 academic year. The tutorial attendance system would be reviewed again during the summer and ideas for improvements sought.

Action: KC

11) Sectional issues

Some concerns were expressed regarding the workload of staff in the Organic teaching section, particularly regarding supervision of year 4 projects.

The next meeting would take place on Friday 13 May at 11.00 am.