

The University of Manchester

School of Chemistry

Teaching Committee

Minutes of Wednesday 13 July 2011

Present: Garry Procter (Chair), Peter Gorry, Jim Thomas, Andrew Regan, Tim Wallace, Eric McInnes, Karen Charters (Secretary)

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Steve Yeates, Paul Popelier, Joe McDouall, Andrew Horn, Frank Mair

2) Minutes of the meeting of 1 April 2011

The minutes were approved with one minor correction.

3) Matters arising

a) *RECEIVED* – course unit descriptions for CHEM20412, CHEM10520 and CHEM20500

It was noted that a query had been received from Organic members of staff involved in 20411 and 20412. It was suggested that those involved in teaching get together to discuss how best to order content.

Further discussion regarding workshops and tutorials would take place during the summer.

It was noted that course unit descriptions were still outstanding from some of the new course units. The Director of Teaching would chase this up.

Action: GP

b) David Berrisford was not in attendance and so discussion of involvement in MSc Biotechnology was postponed until a later date.

c) David Berrisford was not in attendance and so discussion of study abroad links was postponed until a later date.

d) Attendance – it was noted that discussion of attendance at year 2 workshops would take place at a curriculum review sub-committee meeting later in July. KC would speak to colleagues in EEE to find out about electronic card readers for assistance in attendance monitoring.

e) Projects – it was noted that further resource had been made available for the supervision of Organic projects in 2011-2012.

4) **E-learning**

- a) Blackboard 9 – it was reported that BB9 sites for 2011/12 teaching are slowly developing. Faculty are again offering one-to-one support and all staff who need to are encouraged to take advantage of this offer.

5) **Laboratories**

Blackboard 9 – it was reported that the first 'lab techniques' video had been produced and that the 'house style' for these had been established.

It was *AGREED* that lab organizers would be contacted for suggestions of key techniques which could be included in future videos.

Action: KC

6) **Examinations**

- a) It was noted that Lesley Yellowlees had agreed to act as Inorganic external examiner. The nomination process would now be undertaken.

Action: KC

- b) *Received:* update on new taught degree regulations, outlining 9 'anchor points' agreed by Senate.

There was some unease expressed at some of the points listed, especially in relation to the proposed weightings, the entry of compensated marks as 40 and the principle of requiring all marks in the final year to be compensatable. It was however noted that the proposals were still at draft stage. It was hoped that further consultation would be forthcoming and that the opinions of Schools and Faculties would be considered.

7) **Outreach**

No items discussed under this item.

8) **Admissions and recruitment**

The Head of School was in attendance for this item, and explained the implications of the government white paper on fees to recruitment and admissions of home undergraduate students. It was explained that the current plans potentially put EPS subjects at a disadvantage in terms of fee income differentials. A proposal by the Dean to raise entry grades to AAB in 2012 was discussed, as this increase would allow the Faculty to 'bid' to HEFCE for an increase in student numbers.

There was some concern expressed as to the effect such a raise would have on recruitment, especially given the effect caused by the change to tuition fees is as yet unknown. There was concern that the pool of students in the UK currently wishing to study Chemistry and likely to achieve these grades was currently not large enough to sustain current admission figures. It was however agreed that the School was in a difficult position and that there was very little choice other than to accede to the Dean's proposal.

It was therefore *AGREED* that from 2012 the entry grades for MChem programmes would rise to AAB, with BSc programmes remaining at ABB.

Action: JCW/PAG

DRAFT

It was reported that nearly all decisions had been made by applicants for 2011 entry. There were currently 266 holding firm offers.

9) Quality assurance and student feedback

- a) the annual review report would be circulated for comment at a later date.

10) Attendance

No further issues discussed under this item.

11) Sectional issues

No further issues discussed under this item.

Meeting dates for 2011/12 would be circulated shortly

Action: KC