



Meeting **FACULTY RESEARCH STUDENTS' COMMITTEE**
Place **Wessex House 3.36**
Date and Time **12.30 – 2.30pm, Tuesday 17th November 2015**

Present	Prof Sue Wonnacott Dr Simon Lewis Dr Jim Laird Dr Adrian Hill Dr Lorenzo Caggiano Dr Sergey Gordeev	Chair Department of Chemistry Department of Computer Science Department of Maths Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology Department of Physics
In attendance	Mr Simon Gane Miss Ceri Dibble Mr Matthew Humberstone Ms Jodi Walsh	Graduate School Manager Programmes Officer Students' Union Officer Faculty PGR Student Representative

		Action
1022	Welcome and introductions Sue Wonnacott (SW) welcomed Jodi Walsh (visiting PhD student, Physics) to the meeting in her position as Faculty PGR student representative.	
1023	MINUTES Minutes of the meeting held on 8th October 2015 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.	
1024	MATTERS ARISING 1099 – SW and Simon Gane (SG) will be attending the GW4 recruitment event in Bristol on 26 th November. Lorenzo Caggiano (LC) forwarded the information to Chris Bailey (SWBio lead). SW and SG will report back to the committee in December. SW also confirmed that Bath and its partners have been successful in securing funding from the MRC for the new Biomed DTP.. Dr Amanda Mackenzie (Pharmacy) is the Bath lead.	SW/SG
1025	CHAIR'S BUSINESS <i>URSC update:</i> SW presented the PGR Ombudsman's report for the 2014/15 academic year. Cases have increased (percentage-wise) year on year but the Faculty should be pleased that it has the least cases across the university as a whole; two new and two existing. LC informed the committee that nine new cases (across the University) had been reported to the Ombudsman since August 2015. There was discussion of whether this represents an increase in student problems or an increased awareness of the Ombudsman. SG confirmed that students are told	

	<p>during the induction process that the Ombudsman is a last resort measure after all other options (supervisor, DoS, HoD, Graduate School/Associate Dean) have been explored. Matt Humberstone (MH) agreed that the service had been advertised more over the induction period but it probably wasn't the only reason behind the increase in cases being reported.</p> <p>SW also presented the SSLC annual report with a focus on its twelve recommendations and the table detailing staff/student attendance and the number of department SSLCs held in 2014/15. Recommendation 1 noted the existence of some joint UG/PG SSLC committees. Adrian Hill (AH) and Simon Lewis (SL) confirmed that Maths and Chemistry will be holding separate PG SSLCs from now on, on a par with the other Departments in the Faculty. LC stated that Pharmacy & Pharmacology had held three SSLC meetings in 2014/5 (not two as the table indicated). The minimum number of meetings p.a. was discussed.</p> <p>Jodi Walsh (JW) told the committee that during discussions at the Academic Executive Committee, shorter, more 'informal' SSLC meetings were encouraged in which key issues were the focus. LC reported having informal conversations with the SSLC reps but that these were not recorded. SW suggested that an SSLC diary could be kept to note the dates when the DoS and the reps meet across the year and the meetings can then be noted at official SSLCs. JW will be invited to sit at an SSLC in each department in her capacity as Faculty Rep.</p> <p>SW raised Recommendation 6 in particular with the committee, regarding 'buddy' systems in departments. Jim Laird (JL) would like to improve the take up of this scheme in Computer Science. All new students were contacted but not all accepted the offer as it wasn't a formal arrangement. SW suggested that the dept follow up with the new students to see if they would like to reconsider. JW added that at Exeter there is an academic mentoring system with a focus on pastoral care. SL informed the committee that the Positive Involvement Committee in Chemistry has organised coffee mornings for PhD students where they can meet with postdocs and develop a network of contacts. Take up wasn't 100% but sessions have been fairly well-attended so far. AH confirmed that Maths have a policy of placing new PhD students in offices with students in year 3 or 4, which has worked well for providing the same function as a discrete buddy.</p> <p><u>EPSRC DTP/DTG funding and studentships</u></p> <p>A grant of £4.2m over 2 years has been awarded to the University and will be distributed between Science (72% of the grant) and Engineering (28%). SG worked out that this will cover 22 Home/EU studentships at 3.5 years each in 2016/17 and a similar number for 2017/18. The distribution of the studentships across eligible departments will be discussed on Wednesday 18th November and announced to the Faculty soon after. The process was different this year in that the University was obliged to submit a 'statement of intent' to the EPSRC which all departments must adhere to. SL asked for a copy of this document and it was agreed to provide it to all DoSs. SW also confirmed that 10% of studentships should be CASE awards.</p> <p><u>PRES</u></p> <p>The Pro Vice Chancellor for Research will be asking all departments for their action plans based on their PRES results. The next PRES will be in 2017 so the action plans will be used to help enhance the scores and feedback. DoSs were asked to present a reflection on their Departmental results to the next FRSC in December 2015. With respect to the individual comments in PRES, SL proposed to review the results and comments then summarise them in a separate report. LC took the data and open comments to the Pharmacy PG SSLC and that committee picked out the key concerns. Some of the DoS were concerned that it might be possible to identify individuals from the comments and it was agreed that the unfiltered individual comments should not be shared. AH would like the Graduate School to read and edit the comments for Departments. SG agreed that this would be done. JW suggested that the comments could be grouped into common themes or areas then they could be taken to dept SSLCs for comment.</p>	<p>SG</p> <p>SG DoS</p>
<p>1026</p>	<p>GRADUATE SCHOOL UPDATE</p> <p><u>SAMIS developments</u></p> <p>The electronic candidature form is now live. SW had some observations about the form, most of which were SAMIS-related issues due to the way the data is captured. In particular the students' grades from previous degrees don't show on the form. SG will follow up with the SAMIS team and circulate the guidance notes for completing the form.</p> <p>SL commented that some forms he had received had errors on them but there is no facility to send them back to the supervisor. SG said that the expectation is that the form remains incomplete until it is approved by FRSC. Any conversation regarding correcting</p>	<p>SG</p>

	<p>mistakes/adding information should take place outside of SAMIS then the supervisor can go back in and edit the form, either before FRSC as directed by the DoS or after FRSC if the committee needs further information/corrections. JL thought that it would be useful for there to be a status tab to tell the DoS exactly which stage the form is at as even though they have submitted the form, it is still visible.</p> <p>SG informed the committee that so far, 101 electronic candidature forms have been started and 27 had been submitted. 74 were still at various stages.</p> <p><u>Overdue Business</u></p> <p>SG provided an update on the progress report figures that were presented to FRSC in October. The number of progress reports 'stuck' in SAMIS has almost halved from 501 to 260, with 99 going through this month's committee. LC and AH would like reminders to be sent every two weeks to inform DoS of overdue reports. SG will speak to the SAMIS team.</p> <p><u>Moodle Submission of Confirmation Reports</u></p> <p>The Graduate School is looking to trial Moodle submission of confirmation reports in March 2016. This would be in addition to hard copy submission and would mainly act as a data-gathering exercise to ensure that reports can be logged on SAMIS in a timely manner. All DoS and the student reps were happy for this to go ahead.</p>	SG
1027	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>SW informed the committee that the Annual Monitoring Reports are expected at the next URSC in January 2016, after first being considered at the December FRSC. SG will send the forms and data to all DoS, as well as some additional information for Sergey Gordeev as a new DoS. As the AMR should also include data for CDTs/DTPs, it had been agreed at the recent CDT/DTP subcommittee that annual reports to Research Councils could be appended to cover this aspect. SG will locate the CDT/DTP annual reports. Completed AMR should be submitted to the GS by December 9th. The forms will be shared with MH and JW once completed. SW emphasised that this should not be an onerous task and DoS should not spend too long doing it (1 hour was suggested).</p> <p>In addition, a short Faculty summary is requested for URSC. In response to the comments raised by FRSC last year, Caroline McMurray would also welcome specific comments on improving the report forms, as part of the QA7 revision. DoS should bring their suggestions to the next FRSC.</p> <p>The next FRSC will be on Monday 14th December at 12.30pm in WH 3.36</p>	SG SG DoS SW DoS