



Meeting **FACULTY RESEARCH STUDENTS' COMMITTEE**  
Place **Wessex House Council Chamber**  
Date and Time **12.30 – 2.45pm, Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

Present	Prof Sue Wonnacott Dr James Doughty Dr Simon Lewis Dr Jim Laird Dr Adrian Hill Dr Lorenzo Caggiano Dr Sergey Gordeev	Chair Department of Biology and Biochemistry 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

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1036</b>	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>	
<b>1037</b>	<b>MINUTES</b> Minutes of the meeting held on 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2015 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.	
<b>1038</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b> No matters arising as they will be discussed under Chair's Business	
<b>1039</b>	<b>CHAIR'S BUSINESS</b> <u>GW4 Showcase</u> : The main focus of the showcase was on CDTs and DTPs but the Graduate School also had a general recruitment presence at the event. Overall the showcase was well organised but the attendance was poor. Over 180 students had registered interest but only around 40 attended. GW4 will discuss whether it is worth holding such an event again. The showcase was proposed and put together quite late in the year and they only had around 7 weeks to prepare for it so there were issues with timing, location and advertising the event. It was also possibly affected by the University of Bristol having their own open day just two weeks prior to the showcase.  <u>Faculty SSLC</u> : This was held on the 30 <sup>th</sup> November and was the most successful Faculty SSLC to date. Student representatives from 4 departments attended with the exception of Chemistry and Physics. The students were mainly PGR students and a wide-ranging discussion was had. Sue Wonnacott (SW) and Simon Gane (SG) were pleased that the attendance was good and has improved each year.	

	<p><u>WISE CDT meeting:</u> SW and SG held a meeting of Science and Engineering Graduate School managers with the WISE CDT leaders. There are no WISE students registered in Science currently but there is scope for this in the future. Nothing pressing to report but all teething problems from the first year of the CDT appear to have been resolved.</p>	
1040	<p><b>ANNUAL MONITORING REPORTS</b></p> <p>SW thanked all Directors of Studies for submitting their reports on time. The reports will be considered at the URSC meeting in January where SW will present an overview of the key points.</p> <p>SW discussed each department's report in turn, highlighting key issues with the committee. A common theme was the lack of space and funding for PGR students:</p> <p><u>Computer Science</u></p> <p>Funding is the bottleneck for recruitment. Overseas funding (Excellence scholarships) should be reinstated, Jim Laird (JL) mentioned that part time student withdrawal rates were not mentioned in the data that was distributed but these are a cause of concern as the dropout rate is high. SW agreed that this was worth looking into. Space in 1 West is an issue, the department have recruited more students but upon moving back to 1 West from the East Building it was apparent that there was insufficient space. Part time students often have to 'hot desk'.</p> <p><u>Mathematical Sciences</u></p> <p>It was noted that a number of students in the department are suspending due to mental health issues. Adrian Hill (AH) believes that numbers are increasing but to date it hasn't hampered PhD submissions. Space was also an issue for students in Maths.</p> <p><u>Chemistry</u></p> <p>Funding was also highlighted as a problem, compared to competitor institutions Bath is missing out on good students due to the way that studentships are allocated. Simon Lewis (SL) noted a lack of integration between Chemistry and SCT PhD students,.</p> <p><u>Physics</u></p> <p>It was highlighted in the report by Sergey Gordeev (SG) that for some Physics students it seems that 4 years is not sufficient time to complete a PhD. SW suggested that this was a worrying observation considering the time limit of a PhD registration and suggested it might reflect poor time management. SG also commented that progress reports are still getting stuck at various stages and that they are not a particularly useful tool when it comes to poorly performing students as they will just ignore the form. The form may pose a barrier to adverse student feedback on their supervision as the comments will go back to the supervisor before the form reaches the DoS. JL suggested that some of the questions in the student section could be reworded to encourage honest feedback. James Doughty (JD) wondered if it would be possible to include a confidential section that would go straight from the student to the DoS. SW commented that students should speak to the DoS in the first instance if there are any problems.</p> <p><u>Pharmacy &amp; Pharmacology</u></p> <p>SW commended Lorenzo Caggiano (LC) for the department plans for the coming year and commented that there were a lot of student achievements and awards in 14/15.</p> <p><u>Biology &amp; Biochemistry</u></p> <p>PhD applications increased again last year but the funding issue meant that the department lost out on good students to competitor universities. The number of extension requests were a cause for concern – possibly due to language or cultural issues for overseas students.</p> <p>SW will draft a summary report for URSC in January and will circulate it to the board once complete. SW extended her thanks for all DoS for their input.</p>	
1041	<p><b>PRES ACTION PLANS</b></p> <p>AS it was unclear what is required for the Departmental action plans, SW discussed this with Jonathan Knight, who indicated that he will send out a request for action plans by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December for consideration in March 2016. A template will be sent out with advice on how to engage staff and students in drawing up the action plan. PRES discussion planned for today's meeting was postponed until February FRSC.</p>	
1042	<p><b>SAMIS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE</b></p> <p>SG has passed all feedback on the candidature process and SAMIS alarms onto the SAMIS team and a change request will be submitted based on this.</p>	
1043	<p><b>GRADUATE SCHOOL UPDATE</b></p>	

	<p>CDT/DTP operations group feedback: SG chaired the CDT/DTC operations group on 10<sup>th</sup> December. The group looked at the possibility of collating skills training across partner universities and centres to reduce duplication. The group discussed the new MRC DTP which will be led at Bath by Dr Amanda Mackenzie from Pharmacy and Pharmacology. In total 118 projects have been put forward from all partner universities. Bath will receive one studentship. Induction for CDT/DTP students was also discussed and suggestions for improvements were welcomed.</p> <p><u>Confirmation reports on Moodle:</u>  CD to contact all DoS to obtain details of how each department currently wants their students to submit their confirmation reports. SW will draft a set of guidelines with the aim of improving the consistency of the outcomes of the confirmation process</p>	<b>CD</b>
<b>1044</b>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>  The next FRSC will be on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2015 in Wessex House 3.36</p>	