GOS ICH
STAFF STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Meeting to be held on

Tuesday, 18ᵗʰ June 2019 at 12.00noon
in Levinsky Room (30 Guilford Street)

Minutes

Present:
Dr Claire Thorne, Departmental Graduate Tutor – Research - Co-Chair
Annie Murphy, Research Degrees Administrator – (Minutes)
Stella Fusco, Senior Research Degrees Administrator
Dr Frederique Liegeois, Postgraduate Research Tutor, Developmental Neurosciences (DN)
Dr Hannah Mitchison, Postgraduate Tutor, Genetics and Genomic Medicine (GGM)

Student Representation:
Saba Manshaei, Lead Research Student Representative (RSR) – DBC, Year 2 – Chair
Remi Looi Somoye, RSR, DBC, Year 1
Chloe Santos, RSR, DBC, Year 3
Diana Rosenthal, RSR, PPP, Year 1
Haya Alrashidi, RSR, GGM, Year 2
Elisabeth Robinson, RSR, III - Year 2
Lizzy Rivers, RSR, III, Year 3
Clarissa Sorger, RSR, DN, Year 1
Melanie Koelbel, RSR, DN, Year 2/3

Apologies:
Dr Andrew Stoker, Postgraduate Tutor, Developmental Biology & Cancer (DBC)
Professor Mary Fewtrell, Postgraduate Research Tutor, Population, Policy and Practice (PPP)
Dr Mona Bajaj-Elliott, Postgraduate Research Tutor, Infection, Immunity, Inflammation (III)
Kerry-Anne Kite, RSR, III, Year 1
Emeline Rougeaux RSR, PPP, Year 1
Ivan Doykov, RSR, GGM, Year 1
Emma Butcher, RSR, PPP, Year 3
Sarah Dib, RSR, PPP - Year 2
Preetha Purushothaman, RSR, GGM - Year 3

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1	**Welcome and introductions** SM welcomed the committee to the meeting.
2	**Minutes of the previous meeting 19th March 2019** Minutes agreed and approved.
3	**Matters Arising from the minutes** **Updates raised from last action points:** **i) Impact Statements – Communication Strategy** Impact Statement guidance was provided in the Writing Up a Thesis Workshop on 4 April 2019. SF updated the committee that Impact Statements are now being received by the Research Degrees Office and would continue to be requested at the point of examination entry. It was agreed to collect 5-7 samples per programme. The repository of samples, together with UCL guidance, will be made available via FAQ's on the intranet, rather than Moodle, for easier accessibility to supervisors. **ACTION: SF/AM to create Impact Statement repository, upload UCL guidance to FAQ's on ICH intranet and add process of submission to the examination entry section on the intranet. Students will be notified once the repository and UCL guidance is available.** **ii) Applications for ethics approval** SF updated the committee that the request for clear guidelines on ethics approval applications in relation to GDPR regulations had been reported to the UCL R&D office. The team are currently working on new guidelines and flowcharts to aid students through the process; once complete this will be published on their website and a link provided on the ICH intranet and Moodle. RSR's enquired whether samples of recent applications could be made available to students for guidance. **ACTION: SF to contact UCL R&D office about the possibility of recent sample ethics applications being made accessible to students.** **iii) Student Induction and networking** It was previously raised that attendance to networking events was very low regardless of efforts to vary timings and activities. It was noted that the profile of these events must be raised in programme admin meetings. CT reported that only half of the registered students attended the smaller (mop-up) induction event held in Spring. It was reiterated that even if students are settled, this induction event provides important information, outlining expectations etc., as well as providing a valuable networking opportunity. **ACTION: CT to email Induction slides to non-attendees who registered for the Spring event.** In relation to networking SF raised that for each programme there is budget remaining to be used by the end of the current financial year (July); three programmes have not yet used their mentoring budget (£85) and the other two have around £73 remaining.

	iv) EDI Mentoring for Students CT explained that 2nd/3rd year monitoring forms will be updated for students to indicate whether they had participated in the mentoring scheme and a link will be provided to signpost students to further information online. Moodle will also be updated with current mentoring information. In regards to the APR's role, it was agreed that mentoring should be encouraged, rather than formalised in Terms of Reference. **<u>ACTION</u>: SF to contact Vania and Amber to find out if there is information online regarding the mentoring scheme in order to update the monitoring forms with the relevant links. SF/AM to add checkbox to 2nd/3rd year monitoring forms for student participation in mentoring scheme.**
4	**Recent developments for attention of research students** **i) Thesis Committees (TC) update** CT provided an update on TC guidelines currently in working progress. It was clarified that although TC's will not apply directly to RSR's, it will be useful for RSR's to be familiar in advance of the new intake of students for the next academic year. CT explained the aim of TC's to provide expanded, independent support and guidance to research students in the oversight of thesis development and progress and will offer a rounded and more objective measure of student performance. The proposed meeting time points were compared in relation to the e-log milestones and other administrative processes currently in place. **Thesis Committee Meetings:** 3, 9, 18, (24 *optional), 30 months **e-log entry points:** 3, 6, 12, 24, 30, 36 months **ICH Research Degrees Office:** 4 month post-registration Initial Student Questionnaire 8 month Progress Report Form (C1) 12 month Annual Monitoring Forms (A/B/C2) CT explained the benefits of TC's such as allowing students to build on valuable presentations skills and expand networks of academic contacts. CT added that TC's should help to improve timely upgrades and completion. This could in turn help resolve the issue regarding research extending beyond the 3 year funding period and could help address PRES feedback where supervisors have not been rated highly by students. TC's should provide a more uniform experience and training for students with the aid of establishing a personal development plan, offering networking opportunities for both students and supervisors, as well as improving supervisor expertise and capacity. CT reiterated that it will be the responsibility of the student to organise the TC meetings. In relation to this, the reps raised the point that the meeting points should be better aligned with the established e-log entry points. CT explained that the e-log would feed into the TC process by providing a formal record of the TC meetings; a brief report to be approved by both student and supervisor would be issued by the TC chair for upload to the e-log. CT added that changing the entry points of the e-log was not something that she was aware had been discussed as yet. It was noted that this might be considered a priority once those students who will not have TC's have completed their research. SF suggested alternatively the TC meeting points could be altered to work around the e-log entry points. CT reiterated that the 9 month TC meeting is critical for upgrade. However, SM noted this process could be considered earlier (e.g. at the 6 month e-log entry point), given that it will take time to co-ordinate attendance of the TC panel. It was reiterated that the point of upgrade is flexible dependent on individual student progress, therefore

	TC meetings should offer the same flexibility in timescales in order to maximise usefulness for the students. However, it was clarified that these meetings must be face-to-face for the purpose of presentations. The incentives for staff, in particular post-docs, to participate in the TC panel were clarified; it was reiterated that the input from post-docs would be invaluable as they have a huge amount to offer students in terms of cutting edge skills and expertise. **ii) Research Log – Recording mechanism for Teaching/Supervisory Support** The Research Log Management Board meeting on 4th June concluded that any teaching and supervision that students carry out could be recorded in the research log via the new Doctoral Skills training course called 'Teaching and Supervisory Support'. Students can now accrue up to a maximum of 5 training points depending on the length of teaching or supervisory support, by selecting the appropriate option from a drop-down list. **iii) 'Find Your Voice' Public Engagement training** Helen Craig (SLMS Public Engagement Manager) has offered the possibility of bespoke training events for the department. RSR's expressed keen interest for a public engagement workshop, which they felt would be valuable in offering students the opportunity to apply practical skills. It was agreed this could take place in December 2019, around the same time as the 3MT practice heats. **ACTION: SF/CT to contact Helen Craig to arrange training session on Public Engagement to take place around December 2019.** **iv) PRES 2019** CT thanked the committee for persistency in chasing completion of the PRES survey. UCL benchmarked a response rate of 50% and the average response rate across UCL was 43%. ICH achieved a response rate of 64% this year, in comparison to 61% in 2017 and 32% in 2015. CT confirmed results of the survey should be released in late 2019.
5	**Cohort Building** **a) Academic Events** 3MT competition update Gideon Pomeranz won the ICH and Faculty heats; the ICH heat was very well attended with standing room only (MSc students attended too) and positive feedback was received from staff on the showcasing of research. Special thanks were given to SM and DJ for organising and chairing the event. It was reiterated that the issues experienced with the programme heats were likely to be cyclical and programmes with low numbers could be grouped together in future, if required. It was noted that like previous years, two 3MT presentations would be scheduled for the Open Day. SM requested that a smaller RSR committee is recruited to help specifically with the organisation of the 3MT next year. **ACTION: New Lead RSR for 2019/20 to recruit RSR volunteers for a 3MT committee. SF/AM to invite Gideon and Manuela to present at the Open Day.**

	ICH Annual Poster Competition – Proposal for a Student's Choice Award
	CT raised that a similar event had taken place for a Faculty Level competition, which received exceptionally (and unfeasibly) high volumes of digital votes given the number of participants. It was agreed voting slips should be issued to help control inflow of votes and should be open to visiting students too. It was suggested RSR's should play an active role in encouraging voting on the day, which could in turn improve attendance to listen to the guest speakers at the end.
	b) ICH Postgraduate Society report - Social events
	ICH PG Society reported the following events had been organised:
	- Writing group (postponed due to low attendance, although keen interest) - Book presentation (went well, but also low attendance with only 2/3 people) - Speed networking - very well attended and students enjoyed 'A Pint of Science' event - attendance did not work well due to problems with no shows not cancelling their ticket registration - Wine and Cheese night and Summer Picnic – received a good response and hope to repeat next year
	The ICH PG Society reported that they will not be able to run ticketed events in future due to attendance issues experienced with the 'A Pint of Science' event.
	MK requested for RSR's to continue to forward on any ideas for future events.
6	**Student feedback**
	i) Formalised feedback
	Students would like more formalised (not too lengthy) feedback from supervisors at regular intervals (e.g. months 6, 12, 30). CT explained there is a comments box for supervisors to use on the e-log, although acknowledged the format and frequency of feedback will be largely dependent on individual supervisors. Some concern was expressed that formalising additional time points for feedback would inevitably lead to an expectation that students draft the response for some supervisors. It was suggested that the initial meeting proforma for new students should be reviewed with careful consideration to confidentiality. The committee agreed that arrangements for format and frequency of feedback will have to continue to be made on an individual basis.
	ACTION: SF/CT to review the initial meeting proforma for newly registered students to see if any improvements can be made to the supervisor feedback agreement.
	ii) Student-Supervisor relationship issues
	RSR's enquired about the process for resolving supervisor relationship issues and departmental contacts who can help with these circumstances. CT clarified that students should raise any supervision issues to either herself or their PG tutor and reminded the committee that this is signposted as part of student induction.
	iii) Logging completion of Masters courses
	In response to student concerns it was clarified that it is possible to record completion of Masters courses on the e-log. It was explained that options include logging either as attendance to standalone lectures or with the addition of undertaking an exam.

iv) Studentship stipend payments

Currently stipend payments are paid to students quarterly in advance. RSR's enquired whether payments could be made on a monthly basis for easier financial management. It was reiterated that staff are paid on a monthly basis and many other universities are currently able to do this for PGR students. Alternatively RSR's requested that stipend payments are made at the beginning rather than at the end of month 4, as the stretch of 3 months funding over a 4 month period creates serious financial difficulties for students. It was reiterated that payment dates are irregular, which has consequently led to cases of credit card and mortgage rejections. It was confirmed Mike Rowson is aware of this issue which was raised at an earlier Faculty meeting. SF raised the possibility that the situation may improve if PGR students are moved onto payroll through the new HR system, once this system has been rolled out.

ACTION: RSR's to feedback experiences of studentship stipend payments including dates of payment to SF by Friday 21st June.

ACTION: SF to pass on student feedback to Mike Rowson and enquire on any progress made at Faculty level.

v) Travel Grants

RSR's enquired whether there is travel funding available for students to study elsewhere (as supposed to attending a specific course or conference). CT suggested that it is possible the UCL R&D team could advise if any opportunities are available. It was agreed that the department should be flexible in considering such funding requests in the same way as for the ICH Travel Award, if the study is strongly related to the PhD and endorsed by the supervisor. CT reiterated that the funding would have to be in line with the current ICH Travel Award bands (e.g. £150 in UK, £250 in Europe, £450 Overseas).

It was agreed that for any students in this situation, a case could be put forward to be considered by SF, CT and HM, who would determine departmental approval on a case by case basis.

vi) Master course – streamlined access

RSR's raised that PhD students are usually allowed to attend the Masters courses but they do not have access to Moodle pages or course schedules. SF updated the committee that this is a Faculty-wide issue and therefore has been taken forward with Mike Rowson. It was explained that a UCL-wide module catalogue is due to be completed by April 2020 and departments should be notified once this is complete.

vii) The tutor-RSR-APR Relationship – How the APR's have been used this year and feedback on success of role

CT requested feedback on the success of the APR role in its second year. SM reported some confusion over expectations of the role, particularly in relation to the organisation of the 3MT event. CT clarified that the APR should have an active role in judging and marketing the 3MT event and outlined the more general responsibilities of the APR in linking between students and the PG tutor, cascading relevant information to students and facilitating networking.

RSR's raised that although meetings with APR's are helpful, post docs do not always engage in termly programme level meetings. It was noted that APR's are currently only invited to the first SSCC meeting of the academic year. CT suggested that APR's could be invited to attend SSCC meetings more frequently until they are grounded in the role, which may in turn facilitate engagement at programme level. It was agreed that the APR's should meet as a group to feedback on the role and SF reminded the committee

	that there is budget available to hold a coffee meeting before the end of the financial year (July). It was suggested APR's should be invited each term to attend the SSCC meeting and this should be added to their Terms of Reference, although it was agreed consideration must be made to their job roles not becoming too onerous. CT suggested that a pre-SSCC meeting could be beneficial for APR's to meet as a group if programme level meetings are not working. **ACTION: CT to contact APR's to suggest they arrange to hold a group meeting.**
7	**2019/20 RSR Recruitment** SM thanked the RSR's for their contribution this year and CT added that it is hoped that the current 1st and 2nd year RSR's will continue their roles into the next academic year. It was clarified that all current RSR's are eligible to take on the role of Lead RSR and noted that it would be preferable for RSR's to volunteer themselves for the role, rather than pulling names out of hat. DR and RL volunteered expressions of interest in the 2019/20 Lead RSR role. **ACTION: AM to email 1st and 2nd year RSR's to request any additional expressions of interest for the Lead RSR role by <u>Friday 28th June</u>.**

CONCLUDING BUSINESS

8	**Any Other Business** **i) Programming Social Group** Claire Smith has expressed interest in running a weekly programming event to include talks and discussion on programming and an optional social to follow. RSR's agreed there would be keen interest, although they felt it would be preferable to run monthly at most and perhaps termly. It was suggested that PGR students could accrue training points in reward for participating in the presentations on programming. **ACTION: CT to enquire about the possibility of training points to be awarded for student participation in the programming presentations.** **ii) IRIS profile** CT reported that the Doctoral School are planning to introduce IRIS profiles for PGR students. These are currently being piloted by the Institute of Education and will soon become a requirement for ICH students. **iii) Student Teaching Experience** MK raised that some students are keen to gain teaching experience. FL noted that Programme Leads will be looking to recruit in the coming months for speakers/teaching support for the next academic year. SM reported that DBC students have already been approached for teaching experience via email. **ACTION: SM to discuss with Owen and Paola regarding circulating teaching request to DN and other programmes.**

Summary of Action Points: Date of Meeting	Item	Action	By Whom	Status
19/03/2019	3	**Teaching opportunities** AS to report any update on the database/website for teaching opportunities.	**AS**	**O**
19/03/2019	3	**EDI - Wellbeing/multi faith room** ID to provide update on online survey for student proposal suggestions for the wellbeing/multi faith room.	**ID**	**O**
18/06/2019	3	**Impact Statement guidance** Impact Statement repository to be created with link to UCL guidance via FAQ's on ICH intranet. Impact Statements to be requested at the point of examination entry and this process will be added to the examination entry section on the intranet. Students to be notified once the repository is available**.**	**SF/AM**	**O**
18/06/2019	3	**Ethics approval application guidance** Students to be notified once ethics approval application guidance has been released by the UCL R&D office. SF to contact the R&D office about the possibility of making sample ethics applications accessible to students.	**SF/AM** **SF**	**O** **O**
18/06/2019	3	**Spring Induction** CT to email slides to registered attendees who did not attend Spring event.	**CT**	**O**
19/03/2019	3	**EDI Mentoring for students** SF/AM to contact Vania and Amber to find out if there is information online regarding the mentoring scheme and update Moodle and the monitoring forms with the relevant information. Checkbox to be added to 2nd/3rd year monitoring forms for student participation in mentoring scheme.	**SF/AM** **SF/AM**	**O** **O**
18/06/2019	4	**'Finding Your Voice' Public Engagement Training** SF/CT to contact Helen Craig about bespoke training session on public engagement.	**SF/CT**	**O**
18/06/2019	5	**3MT Competition** New Lead RSR for 2019/20 to recruit RSR volunteers for a 3MT committee.	**Lead RSR 2019/20**	**O**

18/06/2019	6	**Supervisor feedback agreement** SF/CT to review the initial meeting proforma for newly registered students to see if any improvements can be made to the supervisor feedback agreement.	**SF/CT**	**O**
18/06/2019	6	**Studentship stipend payments** RSR's to feedback difficulties experienced with studentship stipend payments to include dates of payment to SF by Friday 21st June. SF to pass on student feedback to MR and enquire on any progress made at Faculty level.	**RSRs** **SF**	**C** **O**
18/06/2019	6	**PG Tutor – APR – RSR Relationship** CT to contact APR's to suggest they arrange to hold a group meeting.	**CT**	**O**
18/06/2019	7	**RSR Recruitment** AM to email 1st and 2nd year RSR's to request any additional expressions of interest for the Lead RSR role by Friday 28th June.	**AM**	**C**
18/06/2019	8	**Programming Social Group** CT to enquire about the possibility of training points to be awarded for student participation in the programming presentations.	**CT**	**O**
18/06/2019	8	**Student Teaching Experience** SM to discuss with Owen and Paola regarding circulating teaching requests to students in DN and other programmes.	**SM**	**O**