



Departmental Meeting

Monday 10 October 2016 – Minutes

Present:

Orazio Attanasio (Chair); Stephen Smith; Antonio Cabrales; Beatriz Armendariz; Marcos Vera-Hernandez; Andrew Chesher; Lars Nesheim; Dennis Kristensen; Malcolm Pemberton; Konrad Mierendorff; Nikita Roketskiy; Suehyun Kwon; Pedro Carneiro; Tina Fowler; Balli Sarkaria; Frank Witte; Teodora Boneva; Parama Chaudhry; Imran Rasul; Hugh Goodacre; Ilze Kalmina; Gabriella Conti; Serena Trucchi; Michela Tincani; Fabien Postel-Vinay; Ian Preston; Abhijeet Singh; Daniel Wilhelm; Snjezana Voloscuk; Valerie Lechene; Eric French; Tatiana Surovtseva; Alice Kuegler; Antonio Guarino; Martin Weidner; Christian Spielmann; Liam Graham; Attila Lindner; Malte Sandner; Vincent Sterk; Martin Cripps; Toru Kitagawa; Paula Moore; Imogen Clarke; Jane Cleeve; Viv Crockford; Wei Cui; Cloda Jenkins.

Apologies:

Fatima Cetin; Richard Blundell; Wendy Carlin; Morten Ravn; Amarjeet Sagoo; Daniella Harper; Mariacristina De Nardi; Julie Everett; Eric French; Kylie Groves Steffen Huck; Terri Kneeland; Maria Lambrianidou; Ralph Luetticke; Aureo de Paula Suphanit Piyapromdee; Vasiliki Skreta; Ran Spiegler; Nirusha Vigji; Sebastian Otten.

1. Apologies for absence

OA opened the meeting; apologies received.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3. Brief reports

Orazio Attanasio, Head of Department

OA reported that work was in progress to try to resolve the current issues with Estates and secure adequate rooms, facilities and equipment for teaching.

Difficulties included the large size of the undergraduate cohort and key locations (such as the Christopher-Ingold Auditorium) not being available to the department.

OA confirmed he would be meeting with the Director and the Vice Provost Estates. OA added it would be important to have the issues well documented – this year & next – and suggested that staff send any messages to him for collation.

OA mentioned that work was going on to address issues raised in the recent NSS and the Department would announce its response in the coming weeks

OA announced that the Departmental Manager would start in post, 14 November.

Frank Witte, Departmental Tutor

FW reported that the hiring process for PGTAs (Term 2) was still ongoing. Recruitment for Term 1 had been successful. However due to a large backlog of work in HR, some PGTA's were without contracts. Employees in this position could collect a letter from Reception which would enable them to gain access to buildings and key systems.

FW reminded all UG course leaders and lecturers of the need for clear criteria regarding 'Feedback and Assessment'. BA expressed concern over possible conflicts arising between students and PGTA's over predicted grades. Discussion followed. It was agreed that students' feedback on their own performance was desirable and FW confirmed that students could be referred to him if disagreements arose.

Malcolm Pemberton, UG Admissions Tutor

MP gave a summary analysis of the application figures. He noted that the number of applications to the PPE programme had increased and that applications to the Phil/Econ & Econ/Geog programmes had decreased, pointing to a case for rationalisation.

MP expressed deep concern over the failure to meet the target for overseas students. He estimated this would have significant, negative financial impact for the department (around £ -1.3 million) and he would continue dialogue with Admissions to address this.

Cloda Jenkins, BSc Programme Director

CJ summarised the departmental results of the recent NSS survey. Whilst the response rate was the highest ever (68%), the department had received low scores in many areas – particularly: Assessment & Feedback, Personal Development and Academic Support. As a result, the department would be subject to an ASER- intensive process. CJ confirmed the issues would be discussed at the next meeting of the DTC and there were also implications for the TEF. OA added that a special taskforce was also looking at the issues.

Konrad Mierendorff, Affiliate Tutor

KM reported that Affiliate enrolments were down from 82 to 74 this year. He thanked MV-H (former Affiliate Tutor) and the Affiliate Administrators for their help in the handover of duties.

Marcos Vera-Hernandez, Study Abroad Tutor

M V-H reported that the students were settling in well at their host institutions.

Martin Cripps, Examinations Chair

MC mentioned the call for exam papers would go out soon. He reminded lecturing staff of the requirement for clear communication regarding 'Feedback and Assessment'; staff must give a 10 min talk on assessment explaining any differences between the tutorial assessment and the final exam. He suggested lecturers might consider what alternative modes of assessment - for example, mid-terms - could be introduced in the future.

MC encouraged staff to meet with their PGTA's to discuss tutorial delivery, feedback and grading.

Antonio Cabrales, MPhil/PhD Programme Director

AC requested that academic staff attend the job market seminars - especially if their expertise was outside the topic field as this dynamic often provided the most useful feedback.

AC reported that a total of 25 students had enrolled on the MRes programme this session (up from 11 last session) and it was his intention to make offers earlier in the cycle to applicants following the Department's MSc, by using mid-term results to inform selection.

AC reminded staff of the approaching marking deadline (dissertations).

Antonio Guarino, MSc Programme Admissions Tutor

AG reported that applications to the MSc programme were fewer than last year (falling from 1100 to 925) and consequently enrolment numbers were also lower than last year. It was noted that there had been a rise in tuition fees which could have impacted on application numbers however further data from Admissions had been requested for analysis.

Liam Graham, MSc Programme Director

LG reported that results of a PG survey had been returned. In summary, the response rate was low and the feedback, negative. A working group had been established to investigate the issues and special measures from the Faculty Office had been imposed. It was noted that fewer issues with facilities were expected this year, due to the smaller cohort.

LG encouraged staff to attend the MSc Welcome Party.

Ian Preston, Graduate Tutor

IP reported that there had been two recent occasions where the department had neglected to follow correct PhD Examination guidelines. Owing to the seriousness of the situation he would be preparing a report for the Graduate School and also sending out an email to academic staff to remind them of the correct procedure. IP outlined the processes verbally, in brief. He stressed that supervisors must comply with procedures and communicate with him and the Graduate Administrator (DH) on completing the necessary steps.

4. Any other business

CS confirmed a date of 01 March 2017 for the next Explore Econ (UG research conference). He suggested that Personal Tutors may want to encourage some of their tutees to submit a proposal. More info is available on the [CTALE](#) webpage.

FW introduced new Teaching Fellow, Dunli Li, whose office is located on the ground floor Drayton (North Side).

Meeting closed.