

## COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE NATURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

Minutes of a meeting of the Committee of Management for the Natural Sciences Tripos held at **2.15pm** on **Tuesday 8 March 2005** in the Meeting Room at the Centre for Research in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CRASSH).

Present: Dr J Keeler (Chairman), Professor TW Clyne, Dr R Hardie, Dr S Holden, Dr N Holmes, Dr K Johnstone, Dr P Oliver, Ms H Stagg, Mr N Tammuz, Dr I Wilson, Dr N Woodcock, Dr MG Worster and Dr MG Russell (Secretary).

Apologies: Dr W Allison, Mr A Jefferies, Dr J Russell, Dr S Schaffer and Mrs S Stobbs.

### 1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2005 were approved.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee welcomed Ms Helen Stagg (NST Part IB Cell and Developmental Biology, Pathology, Pharmacology; Pembroke) to her first meeting. Ms Stagg is serving as a junior member on the Committee until December 2005.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING

#### i. Admissions advice (minute 238 iii, 227)

The Committee noted that no response had yet been received from the Director of Admissions, regarding the provision of admission advice for the Natural Sciences Tripos on the website, at Open Days and in other places.

#### ii. Open Days (minute 238 iv, 228)

Members of the Committee were reminded to provide updates and corrections of the handouts to the Secretary.

### 4. GENERAL BOARD REVIEW OF PART III OF THE TRIPOS

The Committee received a second draft of the submission for the review of Part III of the Tripos (**CM.279**) and made the following comments:

- para. 13: the suggestion of a formal “hurdle” at Part II for entry into Part III should be strengthened: at this stage, the Committee was not able to agree on an appropriate standard to recommend;
- para. 14: the paragraph should be refocused on the proportion of students who enter Part III, and highlight the cases where places might be restricted;
- para. 16: it was noted that only some subjects could take advantage of this proposed arrangement;
- para. 19: changes suggested by the Institute of Astronomy were noted;
- para. 27-29: the positive aspects of sharing courses or modules should be highlighted: paragraph 29 should be omitted;
- para. 32: the Committee was very concerned over the lack of consistency that members reported and felt this was an urgent issue to be addressed by the Colleges: it also noted the change suggested by the Department of Biochemistry.

**The Committee agreed that the final version of the submission would be agreed by the Chairman on the Committee’s behalf.**

It also noted that the Review Committee will be meeting on Wednesday 11 May 2005 and members were asked to ensure that an appropriate member of the Department (if involved in Part III provision) be available to meet with it at times to be arranged.

#### **245. ON-LINE PART IA PRACTICAL REGISTRATIONS**

The Committee received a detailed proposal for the development of an on-line practical registration system for Part IA of the Tripos (**CM.280**), which had been developed by the Secretary in consultation with CARET.

The Committee noted that Colleges and Departments would need to be kept informed of the developments and consulted where necessary. The Committee agreed to contact the Colleges through their Senior Tutors.

Members of the Committee were invited to make any comments on the current proposal directly to the Secretary.

**The Committee agreed to take forward the project and nominated Dr Johnstone to act on behalf of the Committee if required.** It was noted that a decision would need to be made in August whether to proceed with on-line registration or not.

#### **246. COURSEWORK**

The Committee noted that the Coursework demonstrations had taken place and were well-received. It also noted that further discussions with some Departments were needed. Ms Stagg reported that students were very impressed with Coursework and welcomed its use in the Natural Sciences.

#### **247. “NATURAL SCIENCES” LEAFLET**

The Secretary reported that the “Natural Sciences” leaflet, used by the Committee and the Cambridge Admissions Office (CAO) at Open Days and HE fairs was no longer to be funded by the CAO and that alternative sources of funding would need to be identified. **The Committee agreed that the leaflet was essential for student recruitment and that its production should be continued. It further agreed to ask the Councils of the Schools of Biological Sciences and Physical Sciences for funding to continue this and other publicity.** Members of the Committee were invited to make suggestions for changes to the current version before it was reprinted: future versions of the leaflet should also be made available on the NST website.

#### **248. CHARGING FOR HANDOUTS**

Dr Holmes raised the question of whether there was a University policy for charging students for lecture handouts. The Committee noted that, although there was no official policy, it was likely that this would not be looked on favourably by the University or the Colleges.

#### **249. ITEMS OF RESERVED BUSINESS**

There were no reserved business.

#### **250. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting shall take place at **2:15 pm on Tuesday 10 May 2005** in the Meeting Room at CRASSH.