

## COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE NATURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

Unconfirmed minutes of a meeting of the Committee of Management for the Natural Sciences Tripos held at **2.00 pm on Tuesday 7 March 2006** in the Seminar B Room, 17 Mill Lane.

Present: Dr J Keeler (Chairman), Dr K. Plaisted, Professor TW Clyne, Dr S Holden, Dr N Holmes (present up to item 309), Dr K Johnstone, Mrs S Stobbs, Dr N Woodcock, Professor MG Worster, Professor D Ward, Tom Whyntie (present up to item 309), Amish Lakhani (present up to item 309) and Mrs K Allen (Secretary).

Apologies: Dr I Wilson, Mr A Jefferies, Dr J Little.

### **303. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2006 were approved.

### **304. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Faculty Board of Physics and Chemistry have nominated **Dr W.P. Nolan** for appointment by the Strategic Committee as a member of the Committee of Management for Easter Term 2006 and Easter Term 2007 inclusive.

### **305. MATTERS ARISING**

#### **i. Payment of Supervisors of Part III projects (minute 284)**

Senior Tutors met last Friday, awaiting their response. The Secretary will report next time.

#### **ii. Late submission of work (minute 298)**

The outcome of the Board of Examiners meeting on 14 March is awaited. The Secretary will report at the next meeting.

#### **iii. Irregular combinations of Papers in Part IB (minute 286; 295ii).**

The Committee noted the responses from the Education Committee and the Senior Tutors Committee; it was felt there was some ambiguity over the responses. There is a notable difference between cases of *incuria* and Colleges deliberately entering students for combinations which are known to be forbidden.

It was agreed that further information was needed as to whether or not the permitted combinations were simply advisory or whether they were set down in Ordinances. In either case, the wording in the *Guide to Courses* needed to be reviewed.

**The secretary agreed to pursue the issue and report at the next meeting.**

#### **iv. Diversity of Examinations at Part IB (minute 267; 278; 295vi)**

The Committee noted the further work done to paper CM.348 by adding detail relating to continuously assessed practicals and whether or not notebooks were taken into account by the Examiners. The considerable diversity of practice was noted.

**The secretary will prepare a response to the General Board who have shown an interest in this issue.**

**v. Part II allocations** (minute 300)

An email was received from Professor M Stanley (**CM.349**) expressing her concern over the proposed reduction in number of Experimental Psychology students, accepted onto Part II of the Tripos. Dr K Plaisted confirmed that this was a redistribution of students and the small reduction was within the single subject of Psychology only. Students not accepted onto the single subject (research project) would be accepted onto BBS and would produce a dissertation. The criterion for being accepted for a research project was successful completion of the project at Part IB. This decision to redistribute the numbers was taken by the department, based on increasing cost implications of supporting research projects. The Committee was informed that, at present, there were rather few BBS minor options which are compatible with the timetable for BBS Psychology; this was thought to be unsatisfactory. It was agreed to ask the BBS Course Organiser to continue to work with the Psychology Department in order to facilitate a larger number of suitable options being open to BBS students. It was also noted that the selection criteria for Part II Psychology would need to be updated in line with the new policy.

**306. MATTERS ARISING NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA**

The Secretary reported that the NST website has been revised and is now accessible.

**307. CHAIRS REPORT**

The Chairman reported that the Strategic Committee has set up a small working party to look into Part III interdisciplinarity. So far there had been one meeting, which revealed the considerable difficulties involved in this scheme. Further work was in hand.

The Chairman also reported that the student representatives on the Faculty Board of Physics & Chemistry were setting up a system to share information with student representatives on cognate Faculty Boards and Consultative Committees. An EMAIL list and web site was being set up.

**308. REPORTED AND STRAIGHTFORWARD BUSINESS**

The Committee received a summary of reported business (**CM.350**). **It included:**

**i. Minutes from the Strategic Committee for the NST (CM.351)**

**ii. Part II allocation leaflet for students (CM.352,353)**

The Committee received a copy of the leaflet which is about to be distributed, and noted that the timeline for this process is on the NST website.

It was also noted that students will enter their own choices, after consultation with their Director of Studies, using CamSIS. Amendments needed after the deadline will need the written confirmation from the student's Tutor/DoS to [natsci@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:natsci@admin.cam.ac.uk) (i.e. Kim Allen), who will action the changes and notify all parties concerned.

**iii. Open Days (CM.354)**

The Committee asked for the promotional posters to be posted on the NST website as PDF files. Members were asked to let the Secretary have any amendments needed.

### **309. TRANSCRIPT DETAILS**

It was reported that CamSIS will be producing transcripts for all graduating students, and that it falls to the Committee to formally decide what level of marks details is to be displayed. The Committee recommended that the information supplied should match the current mark books i.e. a mark for each paper, and a mark for continually assessed/project work. There should also be an aggregated mark for each subject. After discussion, it was agreed that the overall rank should not be put onto the transcript as the interpretation of this piece of data was not straightforward.

### **310. ITEMS OF RESERVED BUSINESS**

Appointment of Chairman

### **311. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting shall take place at **2:00 pm** on **Tuesday 9 May 2006** in Seminar B Room at 17 Mill Lane.

Final meeting for this academical year will be on:

Tuesday 13 June, in Seminar B Room, 17 Mill Lane.