

## **COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE NATURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS**

Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Committee of Management for the Natural Sciences Tripos held at 2:15 pm on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in the Greaves Dixon Room, Department of Pathology, Tennis Court Road.

Present: Dr David Summers (in the Chair), Professor Deborah Longbottom, Dr Tim Weil, Dr Nick Butterfield, Dr Daniel Margocsy, Professor James Elliott, Professor John Richer, Dr Dee Scadden, Professor Harvey Reall, Ms Victoria Chris, Mr Jacob Rowlands and Jane Clare (Secretary). Professor Alan Blackwell of the Department of Computer Science and Technology attended for item 1.

Apologies were received from Dr Nicholas Holmes, Dr Sandra Fulton, Dr Kate Plaisted-Grant, Dr Bill Nolan and Dr Nik Cunniffe.

### **971) Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were approved.

### **972) Membership**

The Chair welcomed Jacob Rowland the School of Physical Sciences student representative. Jacob is a IB student taking Chemistry A, Chemistry B and Physics A.

### **973) Matters Arising not elsewhere on the Agenda**

The Committee noted the following:

- i. IB Subjects Fair, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 12-4pm.  
The Committee heard that the IB Subjects Fair was again well attended and feedback from students indicate that they find it very useful. Physical subjects were somewhat under-represented and were encouraged to attend next year.

The Committee extended its thanks to Claire Michel (Faculty of Biology) and Tamara Hug (HPS) for their work.

- ii. It had been confirmed that the Cockroft Lecture Theatre will be in use for the 2019-2020 academic year.

### **974) Reported and Straightforward Business**

The following were noted:

- i. Minutes of the meeting of the Biological Sciences Committee held 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
- ii. Part II Subject update – the CamSiS system closed for the first round of choices on 6 May but as some students had missed the deadline it was too early to assess student numbers for each department. Dr Holmes is making progress with an amended version of the IB markbook which will produce ranking for NST and Medic/Vet students going into Part II.
- iii. 2019-20 Committee meeting dates, all to be held on Tuesdays at 2.15pm were confirmed as:

15 October 2019  
26 November 2019  
28 January 2020  
25 February 2020  
5 May 2020  
7 July 2020

### **975) Provision of Computer Science at IA**

Professor Alan Blackwell of the Department of Computer Science and Technology attended for this item.

There was a discussion about the introduction of a new computing course for IA students and what form it should take.

It was agreed that a working group should be convened to consider the following questions:

- i. Would NST IA students derive the greatest benefit from a stand-alone computing course or modules that would 'plug-in' to existing courses?
- ii. What is being taught in schools and how best can the course complement and follow on from that?
- iii. What skills do students need whilst studying NST, and what skills will they need post-graduation?
- iv. How should the course be presented? What teaching space(s) will be required?
- v. What demand might there be for this course? Taking student views into account: conduct a survey? Use data from existing course feedback?

Ideally the group will meet during the summer and bring an interim report to the Management Committee before the end of Michaelmas Term.

Suggested membership:

James Elliott, Mats Science - Chair

Alwyn Scally, Genetics

Ulrich Schneider, Physics

Bill Broadhurst, Biochemistry

Sue Colwell, DAMTP

John Rudge, Earth Sciences

A representative from Chemistry to be nominated by Dr Longbottom

Andy Jardine, Physics and Emilio Artacho, Physics currently run the Scientific Computing element of the Maths course and may be able to contribute.

**Action: Professor Elliott and the Secretary to arrange a Working Group meeting.**

### **976) Student Representation**

A consultation document from the Education, Quality and Policy Office on proposals for a restructuring of the student representation system was noted. The current arrangements are that students are listed on Faculty Board electoral rolls. Under the new proposal students will be split into Biological and Physical Sciences electoral rolls, enabling them to vote in elections outside of their own Faculty Board.

There was a discussion about the role of student representatives and student engagement in general. The Committee's student representatives encouraged

Departments to publish the actions taken as a result of student suggestions in order to promote engagement. Several NST departments already do this. They also pointed out that a clearer definition of the student representative role and clarification of the differences between Faculty Board and Teaching Committee representatives would be welcomed.

The Committee approved the proposal.

**Action: The Secretary to respond to EQPO.**

**977) Suggested Prospectus Entry for 2021**

The proposed prospectus entry for 2021 was noted. It had been streamlined to allow minor course changes to be implemented without a 3 year lead in.

The Committee agreed that the prospectus entry should be less descriptive but felt that the proposed entry required further amendment.

**Action: the Secretary to liaise with the Directors of Undergraduate Education for Physical and Biological Sciences.**

**978) Open Days**

The Committee noted that the University Open Days will be held on 4 and 5 July this year. All departments are encouraged to get involved. This year the main site will be the Student Services Centre on the New Museums site.

**979) Any Other Business**

There was a proposal from Physics that the language used in the IA Scientific Computing course be changed from MATLAB to Python.

**Action: This proposal to be considered by the new computing course working group.**

**980) Date of next meeting**

The Committee noted that the next meeting will take place at 2:15 pm on Tuesday 9th July 2019 in the Greaves Dixon Room, Department of Pathology, Tennis Court Road.

**Please note that this date has been changed from 2<sup>nd</sup> July.**