Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held at 2:15 pm on Tuesday 6th July 2020 via Microsoft Teams.

**Present:** Dr David Summers, Dr Bill Nolan, Dr Nick Holmes (in the Chair), Dr Julia Davies, Prof Nick Butterfield, Dr Rob Thompson, Dr Ulrich Schneider, Dr Patrick Barrie, Dr Tim Weil, Dr Sandra Fulton, Dr Deborah Longbottom, Katie MacLeod (student representative), Jasvin Kaur (student representative), Jane Clare (Secretary).

**Apologies** had been received from Prof Harvey Reall.

1017) **Minutes**
The draft minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8th April 2020 were approved.

1018) **Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda**

**Part II Allocations (Minute 1014, 8Apr20)**
The Committee heard that the allocation exercise had been completed successfully. A full report will be considered at the first meeting of Michaelmas Term. Dr Weil thanked the Chair and the Secretary for the work they had put in.

1019) **Reported and Straightforward Business**
The Committee noted the following:

i. HPS BBS Major course - the Department of HPS had withdrawn the course for 2020 because only five students had requested it;

ii. Materials Science MASt course – the Department had requested that the course be suspended for 2021-2023 for review;

iii. Part III admissions criteria had been updated;

iv. The prospective student reading list for 2020-2021 had been updated;

v. Members of the Committee and the Secretary took part in the Virtual Open Days, 2nd and 3rd July 2020. There were separate Q&A sessions for the Biological and Physical strands which were well received.

1020) **HPS Regulation Amendment**
A circulated paper detailed the proposed amendment to the regulations for Part II History & Philosophy of Science. The Committee approved the proposal.

**Action:** Secretary to arrange publication of the amendment in the *Reporter.*

1021) **Course amendments for 2020-21**
The Committee noted that requests for course amendments should be forwarded to the Education Quality & Policy Office by 10th July. Proposals will be considered by the General Board’s Education Committee on 21st July.
1022) Feedback on Assessment
Members of the Committee were invited to comment on assessment processes during Easter Term 2020.

- Pathology: Assessment went well, all 78 candidates were able to complete their assessments which is a better rate than usual. Students had the opportunity to hand draw diagrams, and it was apparent that some took more advantage of the extra time available than others. If online assessment is to be used again, the Department would want to explore the option of having a restricted time window in which students were able to work on and submit their assessments.

- Zoology: Feedback from students was that they appreciated the longer time period for completion of assessment and preferred the nature of open book examinations. However, it was apparent that a majority of students spent more than 3 hrs working, although the word limit restricted them a little. A good distribution of marks was achieved, although marks at the lower end of the scale were higher than usual because of the absence of very poor essays. Formative assessment at IA and IB also went well.

- Genetics: All students took the online assessment and the mark distribution was similar to usual although, as with Zoology, marks at the lower end of the scale were higher than usual which was to be expected (there were no 3rds). In terms of timings, most students spoken to admitted to spending more than 3 hrs working. The only downside was the incidences of plagiarism that had been noted in the BBS course.

- Physics: The Department ran only formative assessment online which was co-ordinated in-house and had been well received by students and staff alike.

- Materials Science: The subject is a mixture of mathematical and qualitative questions – the quality of responses to the maths questions were skewed upwards but the qualitative questions had a good spread. Students seemed very happy working online and the process was also well received by staff.

- Earth Sciences: Some aspects worked very well and the Department looks favourably on a combination approach, remote and face to face. Seminar papers worked particularly well presented in this way.

Several Committee members indicated that their departments would like to repeat the online assessment in future years. It was noted that a Moodle upgrade planned is for 2021 which may prevent the Moodle Team at UIS supporting online assessment. It was agreed that the University should be prepared to support online exams should it be necessary. It was hoped that the upgrade would include allowing Turnitin bulk upload, which had been an issue this year.

1023) NST 2020-21 / Part IA Allocations
The Chair led a discussion on what the IA course might look like in 2020-21 and how Part IA allocations might be achieved.
There was uncertainty about how practical sessions could be offered. Some departments would need to use their lab space for Part II and III research projects and the safety of demonstrators, technicians and other lab staff would need to be considered. PhD and postdoc students who often act as demonstrators would have their own work to catch up on which may result in a shortage of demonstrators.

Decisions would need to be made about competing claims on space and it was suggested that the central University may have a role to play.

It was noted that requests should be made to UIS if live streaming lectures for more than 100 students is planned so that the relevant licences could be obtained.

The Committee noted that all aspects of Part IA courses could be offered in some form. A hybrid model of remote and face to face teaching would be used and it was expected that all learning outcomes would be met. All assessable material would be posted online.

It was also agreed that students should be allocated to practical sessions in the usual manner via the IA allocator in order to provide structured learning. Departments would then allocate students to practicals or provide other work within these slots.

**Action:** Secretary to contact UIS to confirm that the IA allocator should be run as usual.

**1024) Any other business.**
There was none.

**1025) Meeting dates for 2020-21**
The Committee noted the meeting dates for 2020-21 as:

- 13th October 2020
- 10 November 2020
- 26 Jan 2021
- 23 Feb 2021
- 11 May 2021
- 13 July 2021

All meetings start at 2.15pm, venues to be confirmed.