

SSLC Meeting
Friday 16th June 2017
Informatics Forum IF 5.02

Present:

Bob Fisher – Deputy Head of the Graduate School
Amanda MacKenzie – Graduate School Manager
Patrick Hudson – IGS On-course Student Support Administrator
Francisco Quesada Real – CISA representative
Pavlos Andreadis – IPAB representative
Kobby Nuamah – CISA representative
Martin Ruefenacht – PPAR representative
Wolfgang Merkt – RAS representative

Meeting was conducted as an open forum and representatives were asked in advance to bring any issues or discussion points with them to be raised with other students in attendance or IGS staff.

1. Feedback from Student reps

- a) Kobby Nuamah wanted to raise concerns that were brought up at his last institute meeting. These were relating to server capacity and computer resources. Bob suggested that he speak with the Informatics Computing Services to see if they have any help for him.
- b) Francisco Quesada Real raised the issue of office desk space being used on a temporary basis by visiting students or students involved in the current Wolfson Wing decant. Students using these desk spaces are often not keeping the spaces as tidy as they should be.

Action – Reminder to be sent to students about using temporary desk space and to make sure they look after this

2. Desk Allocations

- a) The new procedure for students who are beyond their 48 months PhD limit was discussed. Students who go beyond 48 months of PhD research will lose their permanent desk space and then use hot desk space alongside other students in same situation.
- b) SSLC members were sent information about this change prior to the meeting and no concerns were raised.

3. Informatics Forum office key deposits

- a) Due to many students not returning their office keys to the IGS office a key deposit will be taken for any new keys issued as of September.
- b) Students who currently have a key will not have to pay a deposit.
- c) It has been decided a deposit of £20 will be taken when the key is issued and returned when the key is returned at the end of studies. It is hoped that payment can be arranged via ePay but this has still to be confirmed.

4. New procedure for short term Leave of Absence

- a) Students raised concerns regarding the leave of absence procedure at the last SSLC meeting.
- b) Since then IGS has looked at the procedure and has come up with a new procedure for short term leave of absence. The new procedure will include an online form submitted by the student.
- c) Students will need to discuss their leave with their supervisors first before submitting the form. Supervisors and IGS will be notified once form is submitted
- d) No major concerns raised regarding the new leave policy. It was agreed that it may still continue to be difficult to implement as many students at the moment do not submit LOA forms.
- e) It should also be made clear to students when a LOA form is required.

5. PhD and MScR FAQ handout

- a) It was suggested at the last meeting that a FAQ reference sheet for research students would be very helpful. A FAQ with web links will be sent out to all students and supervisors in PDF form so they have a quick reference guide for any questions or problems they might have.
- b) Concerns were raised about support available for Masters Students (taught) who are currently submitting their dissertations. Support available to these students was explained and how the majority of the support listed on the FAQ for PGR students relates to all students.

Action – Complete FAQ PDF and send this to students and supervisors

6. Athena SWAN Action Points

- a) Two action points from the current Athena SWAN action plan were discussed.
- b) The first, reviewing language and promotional material to broaden appeal to applicants was discussed. It was suggested a focus group could be created to review specific promotional material and website content. Website links could be sent to focus group for them to review and add comments to.
- c) The second action point related to developing a strategy and toolkit to address 'laddish' and other non- inclusive behaviours.
- d) The main concern students had with this was the vagueness surrounding the term 'laddish', which does not only fail to define unacceptable behaviour but is needlessly gendered.
- e) It was discussed that the School should not attempt to define "acceptable behaviour" but rather make clear what constitutes unacceptable behaviour. It was further pointed out that many broadly acceptable actions, e.g. gender-specific events, are by definition not-inclusive, and that "inclusive" might therefore be too vague a metric. Lastly it was discussed that in the spirit of academic freedom, the possibility of someone taking offense is not enough grounds to disallow speech.

Action – Relay feedback to Neil Heatley who is dealing with the above Athena SWAN action points

7. Student Families/ IGS Event

- a) Details of another Student Families event were given to the SSLC to see if they had any suggestions. The event will also be inclusive for students who do not want to take part in the Student Families initiative. It will take place on the 12th July in The Informatics Forum. Details have not yet been finalised.

Date for next meeting: TBA