

Strategy Committee Minutes

26th October 2016 at 2pm, Turing Room

Attendees: Johanna Moore (Chair), Murray Cole, Kousha Eteessami, Björn Franke, Michael Fourman, Vashti Galpin, Nigel Goddard, Michael Rovatsos, Perdita Stevens, Nigel Topham, Kami Vaniea, Martin Wright, Anda Nicolson (Secretary)

Apologies: Stuart Anderson, Keith Edwards, Jane Hillston, Barbara Webb

	Summary	ACTION
	<p>Erasmus Exchanges Hiroshi Shimodaira presented Paper A, relating to Erasmus exchanges. The committee noted that we have a number of Erasmus agreements but that these are generally not with the top universities, meaning that our students are less interested in attending these universities but that we see a lot of interest from their students in attending Edinburgh. It was felt that we have a strategic opportunity to build links with strong universities through Erasmus links. Action: Working group to be formed, with BF assisting.</p>	BF
1.	<p>Approval of previous minutes Minutes from the previous meeting were approved, with a correction to point 7 (text to be provided by NT)</p>	NT
2.	<p>Matters arising from previous meeting: No actions outstanding.</p>	
	<p>Research business</p>	
3.	<p>Report from Director of Research JH provided a written report, which will be added to the committee webpage.</p> <p>College Impact Committee MF provided an update from this committee. College will be undertaking a REF preparedness exercise in April 2017. They will be looking at PURE and what we are doing to prepare our Impact cases in PURE. Action: MF/MJW to meet to discuss.</p> <p>The outputs from the Stern Review indicated that we are likely to be able to submit Impact cases which are cross-disciplinary. Action: Further discussion of Impact work required should be undertaken at Research Committee.</p>	AN MJW MF
	<p>Teaching business</p>	
4.	<p>Report from Director of Teaching There is an ongoing shortage of tutors. We need to look at this in the future if we want to increase the support provided to honours students. The ITO is still experiencing bottlenecks due to a shortage of staff. There is a new post being advertised for the ITO and recruitment is ongoing.</p> <p>Students are experiencing some issues with accessing computers in the Drill Hall as this is being booked for labs, meaning students are being moved when they have</p>	

<p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p>	<p>coursework to do. Level 3 of Appleton Tower is available, with WiFi as opposed to DICE machines. We are going to be increasing computing desks in Appleton Tower by 40% when we return fully.</p> <p>EvaSys Course Evaluation The evaluation was released late, but the course survey is now online. We have received generally positive feedback. Next year this task will not be given to the ITO, but to a PhD student or similar.</p> <p>NSS BF and SA are looking at working groups for the NSS and the format that these will take. They want a lightweight approach which produces some easily implemented actions, not additional committees and excessive paperwork.</p> <p>Concerns were noted by the committee that trialling new initiatives is a good idea in theory, but that other factors need to be taken into account, such as the ongoing programme of decants. It would be best to run any suggested trial past appropriate committees (such as the Executive Group or this committee) before trialling new initiatives.</p> <p>Edinburgh Teaching Award and HEA Fellowships BF discussed paper B, which is looking at increasing the percentage of staff we have with formal teaching qualifications. This will be part of the TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework) and would be a relatively light-touch way to increase the qualifications held within the School.</p> <p>It was suggested that an incentive to staff to complete this might be beneficial. Action: MJW to look at possible incentives.</p> <p>Teaching duties for RAs MJW referred to point 1.2 in the Allocation of Duties process online: “Contract Research Staff on projects held within the School will be encouraged (subject to the agreement of the PI and any funding body constraints) to make small contributions to teaching, commensurate with their abilities and background, in areas such as tutorial provision, project supervision and guest lecturing.” He also highlighted that existing RAs should be encouraged to undertake teaching duties as it would be a positive thing in terms of their CV and personal development.</p> <p>VG noted that there was no record of the decision to change the contracts of RAs and that any changes should therefore be retracted. She also pointed out that not all the teaching duties given to RAs were felt to be positive steps in their development – marking papers, giving tutorials. The feedback from RAs was that they would like to give lectures but that this option isn’t available to them.</p> <p>BF suggested that one step that could be taken would be to not count project supervision undertaken by RAs as part of their PI’s teaching duties, as is the case currently. VG suggested that a workshop take place in November to look at MSc project proposals and that research staff be involved in this.</p>	<p>MJW</p>
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	<p>It was noted that there were similar issues in English due to large incoming student numbers. Action: JM to meet with the Head of English Literature to understand how they dealt with high tutor demand.</p> <p>Action: BF and VG to meet regarding the wording about teaching duties for RAs in the Allocation of Duties policy.</p> <p>Action: JM to send email apologising for the confusion to all affected staff.</p> <p>Some of the teaching duties could also be taken on if the School decides to implement Teaching Fellows. They would be on a temporary contract, not managed by a PI but by the Director of Teaching. Their duties could include lecturing and tutorials, enabling us to provide a better service to our student population.</p> <p>A special meeting of this committee will be held in November to look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Teaching proposal (MJW and BF writing & circulating) • Teaching Fellows • Academic hiring plans • School Plan <p>Action: AN to schedule</p>	<p>JM/AN</p> <p>BF/VG</p> <p>JM</p> <p>MJW/BF</p> <p>AN</p>
9.	<p>Report from the Director of the Graduate School</p> <p>Scholarships and studentships We are underspent on our EPSRC studentships this year.</p> <p>We have nominated two students for IBM PhD Fellowships and have selected two students, of six nominations, for Google awards. NT noted that there was no gender balance in our selections and that this needs to be addressed. The next call will mention this specifically.</p> <p>The new Edinburgh Enlightenment Scholarships scheme is awaiting CMG approval. Adverts will be placed in December for a September 2017 start. Each scholarship will have a cost to the School of £61,000 over four years, so they are more expensive than current schemes but will have an element of teaching in them which will help the School. Members of this scheme would be trained prior to beginning teaching related duties and their PhD would be a four year PhD with integrated study.</p> <p>Tier 4 monitoring The new engagement policy for Tier 4 students has been rolled out and there is now a mandatory policy of one engagement point in the first week of each month. There is a UKVI audit taking place in November. Our policy is robust but the escalation process is too slow – this is being reviewed. NT circulated a paper relating to this. This will be uploaded to the committee webpage. Action: AN to upload.</p>	<p>AN</p>
	Commercialisation Business	
10.	<p>Report on behalf of Commercialisation The replacement for Colin Adams as Director of Commercialisation has been approved and this is with College HR.</p>	
	Strategy and planning	
11.	<p>Academic hiring priorities This committee will meet in two weeks to review this and the item around the School strategy and Plan.</p>	

	Any other business	
	Professional Services organisational changes Paper E, relating to changes in the former KM team, was noted by the committee.	
	Date of the next meeting 2pm, 14 th December 2016.	