

Teaching Committee Minutes

Wednesday 13th September, 2pm, Room 5.42

Present: Alan Smaill (Convenor)
Stuart Anderson (Director of Teaching)
Sharon Goldwater
Kenneth Heafield
Guido Sanguinetti
Pavlos Andreadis
Christophe Dubache
Ian Simpson
Iain Murray
Alex Lascarides

In Attendance: Gregor Hall (administrator)

18.01 Apologies for Absence: Paul Anderson
Gillian Bell
Paolo Guagliardo

18.02 Minutes of Previous Meetings – approved

18.03 Matters Arising

(Extraordinary TC 29th June 2017; Item 2) - Late Submission of Coursework.
Committee members expressed concern about the implementation of the new policy. The DoT reassured the Committee that he would produce a document detailing the new late penalties process.

ACTION: DoT to inform teaching staff of late penalties process.

(TC 10th May 2017, Matters Arising 3.2) - Revised Exam Scrutiny Process.
Alan Smaill introduced the new Scrutiny Tracking document. The BoE Convenors present stressed the importance that this become “everyone’s job”.
ACTION: Convenors to collaborate on progressing the new scrutiny process. (Teaching Committee policy pages still to be created and this item to be added - ITO / Communication Team - OUTSTANDING.)

(TC 10th May 2017, Matter Arising 6.2) - Coursework Deadlines. – COMPLETE

(TC May 10th, Item 4) - Proposal to Remove Elevated Hurdles for Progression to Honours - B. Franke.

ACTION: DoT to contact other schools regarding Joint programmes.

(TC March 2017, Item 9) - Appointment of Academic Outreach and Public Engagement Officer, H.Pain – COMPLETE

18.04 Moderating IPP Marks - G. Sanguinetti

The proposer took the Committee through the proposal and comments were invited. A good deal of discussion ensued, covering such areas as

- Experience and general attitudes of PhD students as moderators
- The quality of Proposal planning, and how this can affect the final dissertation mark
- The effectiveness of moderators who are not familiar with the proposal
- The possibility of a two-part submission

As a mark must be assigned in IPP, it was generally agreed that a lightweight solution was required, perhaps having the PhDs report directly to the IPP Co-ordinator. It was suggested that the marks given could be grades – A, B, C and so on, although this the opinion of one member that the Course Co-ordinator would not agree with this. Another member proposed a numerical mark that was the equivalent of a grade – e.g. 95 (A1), 85 (A2), 75 (A3), 65 (B). A further option was that the tutors could provide the ranking of a student within their tutorial group. The possibility of holding writing clinics to improve the quality of work was raised.

ACTION: G. Sanguinetti to contact Course Organiser to collaborate and produce a formal proposal, including a marking scheme and present at a future board.

18.05 TSPL (INFR11114) - change in exam diet

The proposal was introduced by the DoT and discussed by the Committee. It was agreed that the TSPL exam would be moved from both December and May diets to December only.

ACTION: ITO to incorporate this change into exam planning; contact Vicky MacTaggart and Examinations Team.

18.06 Director of Teaching's Report

The first item was the appointment of three University Teachers.

The second item concerned actions taken to improve first year programming. Firstly a budget for the Programming Club has been obtained. Second is the raising of InfPALS profile. The third is the locating of Infbase in Appleton Tower 7.03. The possibility of using online tutorials was mentioned.

The third item was the structure of Teaching Committee, and its coverage of the areas of support, curriculum, recruitment and assessment. The lack of communication between academics was raised – one opinion was that structured opportunities for discussion like the recently-held Teaching Day were valuable but rare.

A Committee member suggested a meeting between the Year Organisers after the External Examiners report have been submitted. Another member advanced the idea of providing the course co-ordinators feedback from InfPALS and InfBase.

The failure rate of those who enter the University through Widening Participation was posed. The support available to such students is limited – one member mentioned the fact that InfPALS fills up very quickly. The DoT alluded to the Widening Participation document and how it focuses on admissions and less about continuing support. Suggestions included tutorials for WP students only, and for WP students to be identified to Personal Tutors.

18.07 Recruitment Committee Report

The Committee examined the report and discussion was invited. The exceptional size of the MSc AI programme intake for 2017/18 was noted, and it was suggested that this programme should be capped. Caps in general were discussed, the DoT being of the opinion that 100 per programme would be an appropriate number. One member raised the point that recruitment did not account for supervision, and the DoT said that he intended to revamp the allocation of Tutorials.

18.07 AOCB

18.07-1 Change in Granting Extensions for Coursework - Gregor Hall for Gillian Bell. The Committee agreed that ITO should be able to grant full seven day extensions for coursework.

ACTION: ITO to handle all such requests from now on – request to be forwarded to Katey Lee, Gregor Hall and Vicky Swann.

18.07-2 Coursework deadlines – the setting of coursework deadlines was discussed. The current guideline for Semester 2 – 16:00 on the Thursday of week 10 was questioned for certain courses. It was agreed by Committee to extend this to the Monday of the Revision week.

ACTION: update of Infweb page on coursework deadlines.

Next Teaching Committee meeting – Wednesday October 11th, 2017.