

Master's Quality Committee Medicine, Life Sciences and School of Professional Development

18 November 2014
Confirmed Minutes

Present

Professor Sue Gibson (Chair)
Mr Mike Asavarut (Academic and Welfare Officer – Medicine)
Dr Christine Franey (School of Public Health)
Professor Steve Gentleman (Department of Medicine) *[for Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson]*
Dr Niki Gounaris (Department of Life Sciences)
Professor Kate Hardy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)
Professor Debra Humphris (Vice Provost, Education)
Mr Pascal Loose (ICU Deputy President, Education)
Professor Andrew Parry (College Consul, Faculty of Natural Sciences)
Dr Duncan Rogers (NHLI)
Ms Rachel Vaux (Academic and Welfare Officer – Life Sciences)

In Attendance

Ms Sally Baker (Senior Assistant Registrar, Senate and Academic Review)
Mr Richard Monk (Assistant Registrar, Senate and Academic Review – Secretary)
Professor Xiadong Zhang (Department of Medicine) – for item 6.1

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the newly appointed student representatives for the 2014-15 academic year to the meeting: Mr Pascal Loose (ICU Deputy President, Education), Ms Nida Mahmud (GSU President), Mr Mike Asavarut (Academic and Welfare Officer – Medicine) and Ms Rachel Vaux (Academic and Welfare Officer – Life Sciences). The Chair also welcomed Professor Steve Gentleman, representing Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson. Apologies, as listed below, were noted

2. Apologies for absence

Dr Mick Jones (College Tutor)
Dr Martyn Kingsbury (School of Professional Development)
Ms Nida Mahmud (GSU President)
Professor Myra McClure (College Consul (non-clinical), Faculty of Medicine)
Dr David McPhail (Graduate School Deputy Director & Deputy Chair)
Mr Dean Pateman (Academic Registrar)
Professor Denis Wright (Director of Student Support)

3. Terms of Reference and Membership

- 3.1 The Committee received the updated terms and reference and membership of the Master's Quality Committee [Medicine, Life Sciences and School of Professional Development] for the 2014-15 academic session.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/01

- 3.1.1 The terms of reference and membership were agreed as presented.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2014 were approved.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/02

5. Matters arising

- 5.1 The Committee received and noted an action list detailing matters arising from the previous meeting and containing updates on progress in completing the required action.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/03

5.1.1 **Minute 4.1.4 – College Policy on Hepatitis B vaccinations for Master's students**

It was noted that the Director of Student Support had brought the matter to the attention of the Medical and Dental Services Advisory Committee, as agreed at the previous meeting. The matter had since been addressed in the procedure presented by the Director of Occupational Health at the Health, Safety and Environment Committee meeting of 28 October 2014.

5.1.2 **Minute 5.1.10 – New Programme Proposal – PG Cert, PG Dip, MSc in Surgery**

It was noted that this action was ongoing and that the Programme Team had been working to address the issues raised by the Committee with a view to submitting a revised version of the proposal to Registry in mid-November 2014. It was intended that the revised proposal would then be submitted to the January 2015 meeting for further consideration.

ACTION: Programme Team [Department of Surgery and Cancer]

5.1.3 **Minute 9.1.2 – Summary of External Examiner Reports on Master's Level Programmes in 2012-13**

It was noted that this action was ongoing. The Chair advised the Committee that the items for further consideration (common themes) outlined in the report would be communicated to Programme Organisers at the next scheduled meeting of the Postgraduate Staff Forum on 11 March 2015.

ACTION: Director of the Graduate School

5.1.4 **Minute 12.2 – Department of Life Sciences – collaborative programmes [Natural History Museum]**

It was noted that the Director of the Graduate School and Director of Postgraduate Studies [Life Sciences] had met with representatives of the Natural History Museum in early November 2014 to discuss the collaborative agreement and other matters relating to the partnership, including the scheduling of Joint Management Committee meetings. A draft version of the revised collaborative agreement had subsequently been submitted to the Department of Life Sciences and was currently being reviewed by the Head of Department. It was anticipated that the agreement would be returned to the Director of Postgraduate Studies in the immediate future before being sent to the Academic Registrar and then to the College's legal department. Discussions had also taken place regarding the future scheduling of Joint Management Committee meetings for the partnership, which would, from the 2014-15 academic year onwards, take place every six months.

- 5.1.5 The Committee was satisfied that sufficient progress had been made towards addressing the matters that had been reported at the previous meeting and that the action had therefore been completed.
- 5.1.6 **Minute 6.2.5 (March 2014) – Foundation Programme for applicants from Allied Health Professions**
It was noted that this action remained ongoing and that the representative of the Department of Surgery and Cancer would seek to discuss the possibility of a Foundation Programme with the Manager of the Graduate School at an appropriate point. It was agreed that it was no longer necessary for the Committee to monitor progress with regard to this particular action as it was a matter for discussion between the Department and the Graduate School.
- 5.1.7 The Committee agreed that the remaining matters arising were either ongoing or that appropriate action had been taken since the last meeting.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. Programme Modifications

6.1 MRes in Biomedical Research [Molecular Basis of Human Disease] (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

- 6.1.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to introduce a new stream [Molecular Basis of Human Disease] within the MRes in Biomedical Research programme, with effect from October 2015. The new stream will be offered on a full-time (1 calendar year) basis.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/04

The Committee welcomed Professor Xiadong Zhang (Proposed Stream Director) who had been invited to present the proposal for the new stream.

- 6.1.2 The Committee noted that the Department of Medicine had recently established the Section of Structural Biology to support structural biology research within the Department and Faculty of Medicine. The new stream was intended to address an urgent need to integrate structural biology into biomedical research at the College. As outlined the proposal, structural biology was already well established at the College in the Department of Life Sciences. The Committee was assured that there would be no conflict between the new stream and the existing structural biology programme in Life Sciences. The stream would be managed by the Department of Medicine but would form part of the MRes in Biomedical Research programme managed by the Department of Surgery and Cancer. It was envisaged that the new stream would fill a gap in the postgraduate education portfolio of the Faculty and College and would complement the other streams within the MRes in Biomedical Research. It was further noted that the proposed stream in Molecular Basis of Human Disease would be identical to the existing streams of the MRes in Biomedical Research in terms of structure, timetabling, organisation, contact hours, scheme of assessment and ECTS and participation in the Graduate School's transferable skills programme. In all of the activities undertaken by students there would be an emphasis on molecular basis of diseases, which would distinguish this stream from others of the MRes programme. The degree title of MRes in Biomedical Research [Molecular Basis of Human Disease] would be awarded to students who successfully completed the new stream.
- 6.1.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed new stream and award title **MRes in Biomedical Research [Molecular Basis of Human Disease]** be approved by the Senate, with effect from October 2015.

6.2 MSc in Applied Biosciences and Biotechnology (Department of Life Sciences)

- 6.2.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to modify the MSc in Applied Biosciences and Biotechnology, retrospectively with effect from October 2014.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/05

- 6.2.2 The Committee noted that the proposed modification involved the introduction of an additional re-sit period in November/December of each academic year, commencing in November/December 2014. This was intended to allow students the opportunity, should they wish, to re-sit examinations at an earlier stage, as opposed to waiting until the next scheduled examination periods in January and April to complete any necessary re-sits.

- 6.2.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed modification to the programme be approved by the Senate, retrospectively with effect from October 2014, on the basis that the one existing student who was currently awaiting a re-sit had agreed to the proposed change.

6.3 MSc in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation (Department of Life Sciences)

- 6.3.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to modify the MSc in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation, retrospectively with effect from October 2014.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/06

- 6.3.2 The Committee noted that the proposed modification involved the introduction of an additional re-sit period in November/December of each academic year, commencing in November/December 2014. This was intended to allow students the opportunity, should they wish, to re-sit examinations at an earlier stage, as opposed to waiting until the next scheduled examination periods in January and April to complete any necessary re-sits.

- 6.3.3 The Committee enquired as to whether the programme shared any examinations with the MRes in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Research and, if so, whether the proposed modification should also apply to that programme. It was agreed that the Director of Postgraduate Studies [Life Sciences] would check whether the two programmes shared any examinations.

ACTION: Director of Postgraduate Studies [Life Sciences]

Post meeting note: following the meeting it was confirmed by the Programme Organiser that the MRes in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Research did not share any examinations with the MSc programme. The modification would therefore apply to the MSc programme only.

- 6.3.4 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed modification to the programme be approved by the Senate, retrospectively with effect from October 2014, on the basis that the one existing student who was currently awaiting re-sits had agreed to the proposed change.

6.4 MRes Grand Challenges in Ecosystems and the Environment (Department of Life Sciences)

- 6.4.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Life Sciences to change the award title of the MRes in Grand Challenges in Ecosystems and the Environment to **MRes in Ecosystem and Environmental Change** with effect from October 2015.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/07

- 6.4.2 The Committee noted that the programme had been approved during the 2013-14 academic year to commence in October 2014 but had not attracted a sufficient number of students to launch in October 2014 as had originally been intended. The current title and its use of the term "Grand Challenges" was perceived to be confusing to prospective students. The

proposed new title was considered to better reflect the aims and content of the programme whilst continuing to link with the “Grand Challenges” initiative.

- 6.4.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that the new award title **MRes in Ecosystem and Environmental Change** be approved by the Senate with effect from October 2015.

7. Programme Suspensions and Withdrawals (and re-opening of currently suspended programmes)

7.1 PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Philanthropy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

- 7.1.1 The Committee considered a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to withdraw the currently suspended PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Philanthropy with effect from entry in October 2015.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/08

- 7.1.2 The Committee noted that the programme had been approved during the 2013-14 academic year to commence in October 2014 but had subsequently been suspended for entry in October 2014. It was further noted that the proposed Programme Leader had moved to a different post outside the Department and that it was therefore no longer viable to offer the programme.

- 7.1.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that Senate approve the withdrawal of the PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Philanthropy with effect from entry in October 2015, on the basis that there were no students currently registered on the programme and no students holding offers of places.

7.2 MSc in Surgical Science (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

- 7.2.1 The Committee considered a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to withdraw the full-time mode of study of the MSc in Surgical Science with effect from entry in October 2015.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/09

- 7.2.2 The Committee noted that the part-time mode of study of the MSc in Surgical Science had been formally withdrawn with effect from October 2013. There were nine students registered on the full-time MSc in Surgical Science in 2014-15 and one student who had deferred from the previous cohort. The Committee noted the Department’s assurances that existing students would be appropriately supported to complete the programme in the event that any were required to re-sit assessments. The student holding an offer of a place had been advised of the intention to withdraw the programme and had agreed to transfer to a suitable alternative programme.

- 7.2.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that Senate approve the withdrawal of the full-time mode of study of the MSc in Surgical Science with effect from entry in October 2015, on the basis that the Department would continue to support existing students through to completion and that the student holding an offer of a place had agreed to transfer to a suitable alternative programme.

7.3 MRes in Experimental Physiology and Drug Discovery (Department of Medicine)

- 7.3.1 The Committee considered a request from the Department of Medicine to withdraw the currently suspended MRes in Experimental Physiology and Drug Discovery with effect from entry in October 2015.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/10

- 7.3.2 The Committee noted that the programme had been suspended since entry in October 2012. According to the procedures for the suspension and withdrawal of Master’s level programmes, a programme can be suspended for a maximum of 3 years only, after which time it must

either be permanently withdrawn or re-introduced. The programme had been suspended for 3 years and the Department had therefore requested that it be permanently withdrawn.

- 7.3.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that Senate approve the withdrawal of the MRes in Experimental Physiology and Drug Discovery with effect from entry in October 2015, on the basis that there were no students currently registered on the programme and no students holding offers of places.

7.4 Department of Life Sciences Programmes

- 7.4.1 The Committee considered a request from the Department of Life Sciences to withdraw the currently suspended programmes listed below, with effect from entry in October 2015.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/11

- MSc Conservation and Forest Protection
- MSc Entomology
- MRes Entomology
- MSc Integrated Pest Management
- MRes Integrated Crop Pest and Disease Management

- 7.4.2 The Committee noted that the programmes had been suspended since entry in October 2012. According to the procedures for the suspension and withdrawal of Master's level programmes, a programme can be suspended for a maximum of 3 years only, after which time it must either be permanently withdrawn or re-introduced. The programmes had been suspended for 3 years and the Department had therefore requested that they be permanently withdrawn.

- 7.4.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that Senate approve the withdrawal of the five programmes listed above with effect from entry in October 2015, on the basis that there were no students currently registered on the programmes and no students holding offers of places.

7.5 MSc Cardiorespiratory Nursing (National Heart and Lung Institute)

- 7.5.1 The Committee considered a request from the National Heart and Lung Institute (NHLI) to re-open the currently suspended MSc in Cardiorespiratory Nursing programme for entry in October 2015

MLSPD/MQC/2014/12

- 7.5.2 The Committee noted that the MSc in Cardiorespiratory Nursing had been suspended since entry October 2014. The programme had previously formed an important part of NHLI's relationship with the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust and was delivered almost exclusively by Trust staff primarily in Trust space. Demand for the programme had fallen considerably following an increase in the fees, which were higher than comparable programmes at competitor institutions. The previous Programme Leader had also moved on and the nominated successor was unable to take over the programme in 2014-15. These issues had led to the decision to suspend the programme for entry in October 2014.

- 7.5.3 The Committee learned that since the suspension had been approved other competitor programmes had raised their fees to an equivalent level and the new Programme Leader was now able to take over the programme. The NHLI was confident that demand for the programme would be sufficient for it to be re-opened for recruitment.

- 7.5.4 The Committee agreed to recommend that Senate approve the request to re-open the currently suspended programme for entry in October 2015.

8. Appointment of External Examiners for 2014-15

8.1 The Committee received the nominations for Chairs of Boards of Examiners and the nominations and re-appointments of external examiners to be considered for the Boards of Examiners in the 2014-15 session.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/13

8.1.1 The Committee approved the nominations for Chairs of Boards of Examiners as presented in paper 13.

8.1.2 The Committee approved the re-appointment of all continuing external examiners as presented in paper 13 [see appendix 1 to the minutes] and was satisfied that all continuing external examiners thus approved had submitted a report in respect of the 2012-13 academic session.

8.1.3 The Committee approved the appointment of the new external examiners as presented in paper 13 [see appendix 1]. The Committee was satisfied that all new external examiners thus approved had sufficient postgraduate teaching experience and sufficient external examining experience. Where an external examiner did not have sufficient external examining experience the Committee was satisfied that the Department had proposed suitable mentoring and training arrangements to support the examiners concerned.

8.1.4 Following a detailed discussion the Committee approved the appointment of one new external examiner on an exceptional basis as the individual was from the same Department of the same institution as another external examiner already appointed by the College. The Department had provided a detailed rationale in support of the appointment, noting that the two individuals were based within separate groups within a very large Department and that the existing external examiner would complete the final year of his appointment in 2014-15. During the discussion, Committee members commented that it would be helpful for Departmental staff to be provided with access to a complete list of external examiner appointments for their Department prior to identifying and approaching new external examiners. It was agreed that the Quality Assurance team within the Registry would identify the most suitable method for sharing this information with Departments, prior to the next round of nominations.

ACTION: Registry [Quality Assurance]

9. Surveys

9.1 Master's Level Surveys 2014-15

9.1.1 The Committee noted that the PG SOLE lecturer/module evaluation survey would be run in the academic year 2014-15 for all Departments, except the Business School.

9.1.2 The Committee noted that PG SOLE lecturer/module evaluation questions would remain the same as those asked in the academic year 2013-14 to enable comparison of the results.

9.1.3 The Committee noted that the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) would not run in the academic year 2014-15.

9.2 PTES 2014 Results

9.2.1 Committee members were provided with online access to the results of the 2014 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) in advance of the meeting.

9.2.2 It was noted that the College results were within (+ or -) 1-2% of the sector average in six of the eight categories within the survey. The overall satisfaction score of 80% was 3% below the sector average and 5% below the sector top quartile. The College had scored 87% for its 'resources and services' which was 5% higher than the sector average and 3% higher than

the sector top quartile. It was, however, noted that the College had received a score of 58% for 'assessment and feedback' which was 14% below the sector average and 18% below the sector top quartile.

- 9.2.3 A discussion took place regarding the PTES results, in particular the score for assessment and feedback. It was recognised that some progress had been made in relation to assessment and feedback and this was borne out by some improvement in the results of other surveys. It was, however, acknowledged that this progress had not occurred in all areas and as quickly as had been hoped. Departmental PTES results showed evidence of good practice in certain areas and some high scores in relation to assessment and feedback and it was further acknowledged that better sharing of good practice would benefit the College in this area.

9.3 PTES 2014 Departmental Action Plans

- 9.3.1 The Committee received and considered the following Departmental action plans:

MLSPD/MQC/2014/14

- Centre for Co-Curricular Studies
- Department of Medicine
- School of Public Health
- Department of Surgery and Cancer

- 9.3.2 The Committee discussed each action plan in turn, noting the specific issues identified and the proposed actions to address those issues. The Committee agreed that the individual action plans were satisfactory and had proposed appropriate action to address the issues identified.

- 9.3.3 The Committee noted that an action plan was still required from the Department of Life Sciences. It was agreed that this should be submitted at the earliest opportunity.

ACTION: Director of Postgraduate Studies [Life Sciences]

10. New programme progress reports [new in October 2013]

Members were reminded that the Committee had received a verbal report at the July 2014 meeting on one programme new in October 2013. Following the completion of the first cohort, the Committee received entry and exit qualification data in respect of this programme.

10.1 MPH Master in Public Health (Global Health) [new in October 2013]

- 10.1 The Committee received a data report showing the entry and exit qualification data in respect of the 2013-14 intake.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/15

- 10.1.1 The School of Public Health representative reported that 12 students had been admitted to the Global Health stream of the MPH programme in its first year. One student had taken an interruption of studies for health reasons with the remaining 11 students all undertaking the three assessment elements of the programme in 2013-14. The number of students who had failed assessment elements had been slightly higher than the number for the main MPH programme (3:11 to 3:28). The classification profile of the remaining students was broadly in line with the MPH programme with 2 distinctions, 3 merits and 3 passes awarded to successful students. The three students who had failed elements of the programme had all achieved upper second class degree qualifications from UK institutions. The programme team had however noted that those qualifications may perhaps have contained a less quantitative emphasis. The programme team were confident that at least two of the three students who were due to re-sit elements of the programme would successfully complete. In assessing applications for 2014-15, and in future, the programme team would be looking for evidence of

a quantitative component within the applicants degree programme. Incoming students would also be expected to complete a mathematical test in week one of their induction.

11. Reports from Departmental Representatives

- 11.1 The Committee did not receive any further reports from Departmental Representatives not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND/OR DISSEMINATION

12. Action taken on behalf of the Committee

- 12.1 It was noted that no action had been taken by the Chair on behalf of the Committee since the previous meeting in July 2014.

13. Programme Reviews

13.1 Programme Review Schedule 2014-15

- 13.1.1 The Committee noted the programmes due for review during the 2014-15 academic year, as follows:

- PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc Paediatrics and Child Health (Department of Medicine)
- MSc Health Policy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)
- MSc Medical Robotics and Image Guided Intervention (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

14. Good Practice highlighted in Periodic Reviews reported to Senate during 2013-14

- 14.1 The Committee received and noted a report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Senate and Academic Review) on good practice highlighted during periodic reviews conducted in the academic year 2012-13 and reported to Senate during 2013-14.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/16

15. Reports from key College Committees

- 15.1 **Senate:** Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the Senate were available [here](#).
- 15.2 **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee:** Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the QAEC were available [here](#).

16. Any Other Business

- 16.1 No other items of business were noted.

17. Dates of meetings in 2014 – 2015

Meeting Date	Deadline for submission of papers
Tuesday 27 th January 2015 – 2pm – 5pm	<i>Tuesday 13th January 2015</i>
Tuesday 17 th March 2015 – 2pm – 5pm	<i>Tuesday 3rd March 2015</i>
Tuesday 9 th June 2015 – 10am – 1pm	<i>Tuesday 26th May 2015</i>
Tuesday 14 th July 2015 – 2pm – 5pm	<i>Tuesday 30th June 2015</i>
All meetings will take place in the Ballroom at 58 Prince's Gate , South Kensington Campus	

Committee members were advised that the 9 June 2015 meeting would be the last meeting of the year at which any proposals requiring Senate approval for the 2015-16 year could be considered.

18. Reserved Business (not circulated to student members)

18.1 Special Cases Panel 2014-15

18.1.1 The Committee received the updated membership of the special cases panel for Master's programmes for the 2014-15 session.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/17

18.1.2 The Senior Assistant Registrar (Senate and Academic Review) provided an explanation to Committee members of the process for consideration of special cases for admission, including how special cases were allocated to members of the Special Cases Panel and how decisions were made.