MEETING: Staff Student Liaison Committee
PLACE: EB 0.15
DATE: Wednesday 20th November 2013, 14:15

PRESENT:
Dr Philip Rogers
Dr Paul De Bank
Ms Linda Humphreys
Dr Ian Eggleston
Ms Claudia Brown (MPharm 1)
Ms Lydia Fraser (MPharm 1)
Ms Kirsty Lewis (Pharmacology 1)
Ms Madeline O'Hare (MPharm 2)
Ms Yoana Petrova (MPharm 2)
Ms Lizzie Mann (MPharmacology Final Year)
Ms Lucy Kerr (MPharm 3) (Chair)
Mr Simon Underwood (MPharm 3)
Mr Sean Forster (MPharm 4)
Dr Julie Letchford
Mr Pascal Loizeau
Dr Sarah Bailey
Ms Jo Davis, UG Administrative Assistant (Minutes)

1718. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
The minutes of the meeting held on the 17th October 2013 were agreed upon.

1719. MATTERS ARISING
There were no matters arising.

1720. LIBRARY MATTERS

28 Day Loans: Ms Linda Humphreys wished to raise that there had already been requests by students for the 28 day loans for the Christmas period. She wished to encourage the students to be aware of this fact and to retrieve the books they wanted sooner rather than later.

Library Space: Ms Humphreys wished to ask the students about their library habits and, specifically, which areas of the library they used for study. The majority of the students communicated that they usually used the quiet study areas on level 4, either because they preferred the quiet or because they found
the group areas filled up quickly. The issue was also raised that the quiet area had no place to charge laptops and therefore it was sometimes necessary to move to the group area to do so, which was inconvenient when you wanted to study quietly.

Any other issues: The students were asked if there were any other library issues they wished to raise. It was raised that there had been an increase in people ‘reserving’ chairs and tables in the library with their bags and coats, something that was more often seen during the exam periods. It wasn’t certain that these people were definitely reserving places instead of just leaving their things somewhere for a few minutes but it was recognised that this was a common practise. Ms Humphreys replied that the library did have a process for this during the exam period but was not aware that it was already occurring and would investigate.

1721. CHAIRS BUSINESS

Athena SWAN Awards: The chair invited Dr Sarah Bailey to talk about the Athena SWAN awards. She introduced the award and described how it was designed to explore gender inequality in the work place, with its focus being the promotion of women within the departments of science, technology, engineering, medicine and maths. Dr Bailey explained that the P&P would be applying for a departmental bronze award and wished to inform the student representatives that they may be surveyed before it goes live. This would occur in the next couple of weeks or so. She asked that if anybody had any thoughts on this to contact her.

On the same topic, it was also raised that the department was thinking of extending the Equality and Diversity training that the staff already do to the students. It was theorised that this could help the students in their future professional lives and also could help first year students who were experiencing their first large multicultural environment. The students were informed that an e-certificate was awarded at the end of the training. The students agreed that this would be a benefit, particularly if they could add it to their CVs but requested that it would be rolled out on an optional basis. It was agreed that this would be investigated.

1722. TEACHING ISSUES

Pharmacy Admission
Dr Philip Rogers informed the committee of the department’s proposal on the future of Pharmacy admissions. He communicated that the department had recommended remaining with the mass market approach, as it had been decided that this was the lowest risk option for the university. He informed the committee that the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the GPhC had favoured the second option, that of the national enforced cap, but the Vice Chancellor and the department did not have the confidence in HEFCE to deliver the cap effectively. The students would be updated on any future developments.

Christmas Open Meeting
Dr Rogers wished to remind everyone that the next meeting would be the Christmas Open Meeting. He requested that the student reps do their best to spread the message to their peers to ensure a good turnout. He also asked that they have a think about anyone else they would like to come as an independent advisor. Any suggestions should be directed towards him. He advised Ms Lucy Kerr to begin to liaise with Ms Jo Davis regarding the catering.

NSS Open Meeting
Dr Rogers introduced this meeting as a chance to direct questions and concerns
to Heads of Departments from other departments. Mrs Helen Thame would be
organising this and a date would be circulated once it had been decided.

**Netball**

In line with concerns raised about the clashing of sports and lectures on a
Wednesday afternoon, Dr Rogers communicated that he’d contacted the
Student Union Sports representative and that they had agreed to disagree
regarding priority.

**1723 IT ISSUES**

**Moodle**

Mr Pascal Loizeau communicated that the IT department was aiming to make
Moodle and the Pharm Intranet more user friendly, particularly in terms of
general access. He informed the students that there were a number of apps for
university websites in current development, and that he would circulate the
details for them when they were fully usable.

**1724 FEEDBACK TO AND FROM STUDENTS**

**MPharm1 – Answers to Chemistry Workshops and Tutorials**

It was raised by Ms Claudia Brown and Ms Lydia Fraser that there had been
queries about answers being provided on Moodle for the chemistry workshops
and tutorials. Dr Ian Eggleston responded that this had never been the case and
encouraged the students to either seek out their tutor or the unit convener if
unsure about any of the answers.

**Timetabling**

It was raised that some students had had to attend a full day of teaching without
a lunch break. The students understood that this was the case for a group or
two, but were concerned that it had affected a higher number of groups then
they were expecting. Dr Rogers responded that timetabling was increasingly
complicated due to a number of factors, but wished that the students’ concern be
formally registered and communicated that the department’s response was
recognition of the issue and that there was continued effort to avoid this
situation.

**Powerpoints**

The issue was raised of lecturers uploading presentations from lectures onto
Moodle in a PDF format, which a few of the students did not like as it meant they
could not manipulate the presentation to match their revision. Dr Paul De Bank
responded that he would often upload presentations in the two formats and that,
though Mac users may find it slightly more effort to do this, it was largely not
difficult to do Dr Rogers responded that he would feed this back to the
academics.

**Pharmacology 1 – Nothing to report**

**MPharm2 – Evidence Based Medicine**

It was communicated that the students felt there had been a lack of
communication regarding presentations required for the module on Evidence
Based Medicine, resulting in many students being unprepared for the session.
Dr Rogers responded that he believed this was a result of Dr Anita McGrogan
being currently on maternity leave and that this resulted in a few people
convening the unit and consequently communication was not as it should. He
noted it for next year as an issue.

**Pharmacology 2 – No representative.**
MPharm 3 –
It was raised by Ms Kerr and Mr Underwood that it would be beneficial for students applying for the semester abroad to find out sooner to enable them to plan for their accommodation at home in case they were unsuccessful in their application. Dr Rogers noted this issue and also raised the issue of a larger cohort of students applying for the semester abroad than normal. His concern was the issue of disappointing students who were unsuccessful. He promised that the issues would be looked into.

Dispensing
It was felt by a few of the students that the amount of work that was put into dispensing was not fairly reflected by the weighting of the marks. Although it was understood that this was largely an issue outside of the department’s hands, they wished for it to be registered. Dr Rogers responded that it was a complex issue involving calculations of percentages that was also reliant on the need to keep the pass rate at 40% as opposed to higher. He also asked whether the students were now finding dispensing less stressful, as had been raised in the previous meeting, and was reassured that they were.

Pharmacology Placement Year – No representative.

MPharm 4 –
IPL
Mr Sean Forster raised that the fourth year students recognised that the IPLs were beneficial but shared that his own experience of them had been poor. Dr Rogers responded that these workshops were successful but did depend on the facilitator – from the example given, he believed that the facilitator had been the problem, especially as they had bypassed the ice breaking sessions which were integral to enabling a proper professional discussion. He shared that the department was currently looking at developing a session on cardiovascular therapeutics with medical students from Exeter over Moodle, as well as developing first year sessions on dementia awareness with psychology students next semester.

Prescribing
It was raised that some of the students felt that the prescribing sessions were unrealistic and were unhappy with the last minute deadlines, which they believed did not reflect real life. Dr Rogers responded that this unit did have design issues, as it had to cater to both the students here and those on abroad placements; however it was designed to produce issues that students would find in their professional lives. Though the students may think the deadlines were unrealistic, he reassured them that they were in fact a reflection of the life of a pharmacist.

Comparison with Other Pharmacy Schools
It was raised that some students had started to ask how other pharmacy schools differed in their teaching, in response to the debates on pharmacy numbers, with the example of Durham university using cadavers given. It was suggested by Dr Rogers that students investigate the Facebook page of the Tomorrow’s Pharmacist Blog, which would give a good view to the students on the differing techniques when learning pharmacy and also information on future advances in the discipline.

SSLC Box
Mr Foster queried the box labelled ‘SSLC’ by the pigeon holes in the Pharmacy and Pharmacology department. He wondered whether it could be used for anonymous suggestions by students. It was agreed that this was a good idea and that it had been previously used as such. Dr Rogers suggested that the student reps design a form that could be downloaded and filled out from the SSLC page on Moodle for students to fill in and submit. He also suggested that a
forum be created to allow further discussion. He asked that Mr Kunal Tewari be also made aware of this for postgraduate students. Ms Jo Davis was asked to investigate opening the box and being the one to empty it and log the issues before each meeting. This was agreed.

Pharmacology Final Year – Viva
Ms Lizzie Mann raised the issue that the students returning from placement were concerned about how late their vivas were, particularly as the semester started slowly and then all of the assessments and work appeared to culminate at the same time. They were also concerned that there appeared to be a very informal procedure for organising the vivas, meaning that the announcement of the date and the date itself had been very close together, given little time for preparation. It was registered that this was not a change that could be done now but the students wished for it to be registered for next year. Dr Rogers responded that he also believed things could happen quickly, though he warned that the hand in would have to remain in October.

It was also raised by Ms Kirsty Lewis that during placement many of the students felt that they received communications from the university either very little or too late for their academic development. An example was given of a checklist being emailed to a student after the deadline for it to be submitted. There was also the issue that this student had been moved from the Masters to the BSc at the end of the second year but the communication sent to them during placement had not reflected this change, therefore there was irrelevant information included. Furthermore, disappointed was expressed at the weighting of the placement year on the BSc compared to the Masters in regard to the work put in, as it was felt that similar work was done on both, however on the BSc it was a simple pass/fail mark as opposed to the Masters percentage weighting. Dr Rogers recognised that this was disappointing but explained that the weighting was something out of his control. However, he was keen to discuss the issue of the lack of communication and two options – the issue could be raised anonymously to the placement tutor or a meeting could be set up between the student, Dr Rogers and the admissions tutor to discuss. The student opted for the latter. Dr Rogers communicated that he would organise this.

Postgraduate Research Students – Research Afternoon
The research afternoon was confirmed to be taking place on the 16th December by Dr Ian Eggleston and the students were encouraged to attend if they wished. It was agreed that the information would be forwarded to final year pharmacy and pharmacology students as well as natural science students. Ms Mann raised that many of the pharmacology students may be attending another meeting that day but those that remained may be interested.

Natural Science – A representative would be elected soon.

1724. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
There was no other business

1725. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING
Tuesday 10th December 16:15-19:05 SW 2.3