

Our Ref: GSCC16-17/M5/11.05.2017

## GRADUATE STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday 11 May 2017, 2.00 pm, Bragg Committee Room

**Present:** Professor Haniff (Chair), Alice Allen (TCM), Sean Cormier (NP), Tejas Guruswamy (QS), Arthur Henderson (SMF), Kamrad Javid (AP), Jieyi Liu (TFM), Claire Malone (HEP), Konrad Viebahn (AMOP), Bruno Villa (SP), Leah Weiss (OE), Simon Wilkinson (CSC), Professor Parker (HoD), Ms Dann (Graduate Office), Ms Khan (Secretary)

**Apologies:** Adrien Amiguez (QM), Christopher Ashcroft (SD), Carmen Palacios Berraquero (NanoDTC), Evelyn Hamilton (BSS), Dr Gripaios

### 1. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2017 were confirmed.

### 2. Matters arising

- i) Information for current graduate students – the chair reported that a Moodle site would be used as to host the graduate student information, and that staff were being trained on creating Moodle sites.
- ii) Alumni Industry Day update – the organiser reported that the event had been a great success, with six Cavendish alumni attending as speakers, and approximately 45 attendees. It was noted that feedback had been received from 25 attendees who had provided overall ratings of 4.4 – 5.0. Feedback indicated that there had been a good choice of speakers, but more female speakers would be welcome, and also speakers who were actual scientists, NGO workers etc. Konrad Viebahn, Tejas Guruswamy, Simon Wilkinson, Arthur Henderson and Susan Gatell were all thanked for their time and valued contribution. The organiser confirmed that a google spreadsheet would be created for the next organiser to help with planning, and that they would need a team of 2-3 volunteers. Members were reminded about costs for catering, and that there were detailed caps and budgeting in place for the researcher development programme that needed to be adhered to.
- iii) First year report update – members were informed that there were several students who hadn't yet received completed assessor reports, with only two that had long-term issues.
- iv) Researcher development programme – the chair reported that the researcher development booklet and log were still under development.

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- v) Athena Swan – the chair reported that the self-assessment team needed to collate more information about the graduate student experience and protected characteristics in order to derive metrics on how people were being treated. It was noted that this data would be collected via an annual survey and would be anonymised.
- vi) Researchfish data collection period – members were informed that the School of Physical Sciences had achieved a 100% return for PIs/students assigned response code 1, and therefore there would be no penalty incurred.

### 3. Chairman's business

- i) First year report 2017 – the chair reported that 30 students in total attended both Q&A events, which was approximately 38% of the entire 1<sup>st</sup> year report cohort. Members were reminded that it was important for 1<sup>st</sup> year report students to engage with the advice and guidance being distributed by the Deputy Head and Graduate Office as other academic staff might not have the most up-to-date information.

**ACTION: Chair to arrange for copies of Q&A event slides to be distributed to all 1<sup>st</sup> year report students.**

- ii) PRES survey 2017 – members were reminded that the survey was currently live, and ending on the 18 May.
- iii) PTES survey 2017– members were reminded that the survey was currently live, and ending on the 16 June. The School of Physical Sciences had set a target of an 80% response rate for each programme of study.

### 4. Research Group Administration Review Outcome

Mrs Gillian Weale, Departmental Administrator, had been invited to to update members on the outcome of the departmental review of Research Group Administration. Members were informed that the support services within the Department were being reviewed to ensure that they met staff/student needs and were the best they could possibly be. As part of this review, a review panel had been convened to look specifically at Research Group Administration, as the manner in which administrative roles and groups had developed over time had created unbalance and it had become most pressing for groups to articulate and address their planning and support needs. It was reported that current job descriptions were not clear, that roles in each group were different and had become dysfunctional, dependent on whatever a group wanted or demanded in a responsive mode.

It was noted that the review panel had now concluded its business and produced a report, approved by the Cavendish Board, where it had proposed a shared administrative Hub model that provided enhanced services. It was reported that the department was currently entering the formal consultation phase with staff, and that the following aspects of the new administrative infrastructure to note were that:

- a. the current administrative arrangements would be merged into three Hubs over the Summer, to be completed early Autumn;
- b. each Hub would consist of a Hub administrator, Finance administrator, HR administrator and an admin assistant;
- c. two Hubs would consist of the 4 members of staff described above and the third would consist of 6 members of staff, with an extra HR post and admin post due to the size and function of groups covered;
- d. currently there were 10 research group administrators, and in the new Hub structure there

- would be a total of 14 (4+4+6);
- e. groups had been allocated to Hubs according to location, shared activity and needs;
  - f. lots of staff feedback had already been received and as a result the third Hub had increased in staff numbers;
  - g. the new Hub structure was not to save money, but to look at what worked well across all groups and to remove bottlenecks and duplication, and that performance and speed would not be compromised;
  - h. the new Hub roles had been created to be more specialised, easier to recruit to and to have clear career progression;
  - i. all existing group administrative activities would be carried out by the Hubs, except for graduate education which would be dealt with by the Graduate Office;
  - j. during the interim phase, a group of administrative temps would be recruited to shadow existing staff in post;
  - k. office space had been identified for the new Hubs that would be geographically relevant, but not as yet approved, as consultation with groups was required.

## 5. Graduate Student Matters

- i) Departmental website – it was noted that the sections of the departmental website were out of date, and that this was affecting graduate students. Members were informed that the technology was out of date and hard to update, and that a new content management system was required.

## 6. Any other business

- i) Strategic Research Review Panel – members were informed that the full panel would be visiting the Department for three days during the week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> May, and that an element of their schedule would include a session with graduate students. The panel was scheduled to meet graduate students on the afternoon of Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, and that GSCC student members would be invited by email to volunteer and attend. It was noted that GSCC student members were best placed and informed with regards to their groups and the department as a whole due to their role on the GSCC.
- ii) Cavendish Happy Hour – members were informed that Adrian Ionescu would be sending out a doodle poll to recruit volunteers.
- iii) Cavendish III – the chair reported that a member of the consultation team would be invited to update members on the student experience and the teaching aspects of the future Cavendish III design.

**ACTION: Secretary to invite John Richer to attend GSCC.**

## 7. Date of the next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the GSCC was on 22 June 2017.