

SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES

APPROVED MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 22nd SEPT AT 2PM, ZOOM

Item No.	Item	Action By	Date Due
1	Chairs Business		
	<p>Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 18th May 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p>The Chair is seeking guidance about how to implement the widened Board membership, as formally this requires approval from the Board of Governors.</p> <p>Welcomed Students Reps from Department of Chemistry, Dukula De Alwis Jayasinghe and Ruqayya Aziz. Student Reps from all Departments are invited to attend School Board meetings. It was confirmed two Undergraduate and one Postgraduate student reps from each Department should attend the meeting. It does not need to be the same representative at each meeting.</p>		
2	Update on Student Hub, North and South Campus (Wayne Keating)		
	<p>Wayne Keating provided an overview of the Student Support Hubs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hubs have been set up in two locations to resolve issues of que management in Departmental Building • The Hubs are in the Barnes Wallis 1st Floor and Booth Street East and operating 9am – 5pm • The TLSE teams are working on campus on a rota basis and working at home to provide digital support • The Hubs will be reviewed on a weekly basis with a view to move back to Departmental Support Offices in Semester 1 <p>Questions raised included</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the government advice of working from home where possible impact the student hubs? Wayne Keating confirmed this would not impact as it is a priority area. 2. Will there be issues of larger queues by having the student support hubs in two locations opposed to Department Buildings? It was confirmed that there is enough space to manage queues if required and in the Barnes Wallis there is additional space to extend if required to ensure the 2 meter distance is maintained <p>It was noted that the Hubs are for Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Students and not for Post Graduate Research (PGR) Students. There was a comment in the zoom chat confirming that there is support available for PGR students with student support and student facing activities.</p> <p>It was raised that the School should consider the need for Academic Supervisors to support all students, including UG, PGT and PGR, whilst working from home with respect to safety in labs and services required.</p>		

3	Discussion on Campus Repopulation (Chris Hardacre, Head of School)		
	<p>Due to the nature of the rapid changing external environment, it was noted that messages from the Faculty can sometimes change over a short period of time in response to the University and Government guidelines.</p> <p>Chris Hardacre gave an update on Campus Reopening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All buildings are open but not fully occupied. Communal areas are cleaned regularly, and researchers are facilitating cleaning in the laboratories • Access between buildings has been facilitated • Research days open hours are 8am – 7pm • Most buildings (except MIB, GEIC, NGI) have had entrance doors taken off swipe card access between the hours of 8am – 5pm • Face coverings are to be used whenever possible unless there are medical exceptions. There will also be some exceptions in laboratories once a risk assessment has been complete • Disposable face coverings will be available in labs and disposed every 4 hours, one hundred thousand face masks have been ordered and can be obtained from Stores. The environmental impact will be considered • To facilitate face to face teaching and self-study areas for UG and PGT students, space is being repurposed. Approximately 620 spaces are currently available for Self-Study (excluding CTS spaces). 1000 spaces in total are required and so other spaces are being considered • Researchers can go back to their own offices if social distancing guidelines are adhered to which will free up break out spaces that can be used for Self-Study • The Wellbeing and IT Survey results are being action this week and it has been agreed that for staff wishing to return for wellbeing reasons, will be able to return on a rota basis, 1 day a week • QR codes are to be used to monitor where people are on campus and the NHS app track and trace to be used across the campus • Scenario planning is taking place to ensure the Faculty can shut down if the government guidelines were to change and this involves looking at a range of levels including closure of labs, classroom teaching or essential research to ensure we can respond if needed to • Staff returning to campus need to have conversation with line manager prior to returning to check they have read the risk assessment and completed the building induction. If required, the staff member should discuss any medical conditions with GP and then have a discussion with the line manager <p>Question raised included</p> <p>Concerns over a recent picnic that had taken place on Brunswick Park of 100 individuals outside of Roscoe Building not wearing face covering. In response it was noted that we should remind people on campus to wear a face covering but cannot insist it due to exemptions. Not abiding to the 2-meter social distance rule is a disciplinary matter.</p> <p>Concern on the closure of labs again due to the impact on PhD students and if they were to shut down it should be because of specific instruction from the</p>		

	<p>government. Chris Hardacre highlighted that the University is working with the Government Guidelines and scenario planning is taking place so that it can respond if the University must shut down due to essential work only.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the risk for staff delivering Face to Face Teaching, issues with lack of space for Teaching and the lack of communication between SLT and Staff. This was discussed on item 5a on the agenda.</p> <p>A question was raised on whether the self-study areas for students will be zoned to disciplines? In response it was noted that it depends on the distribution of spaces.</p>		
4	Update on Staff and Student wellbeing survey (Giles Johnson, Head of EDIA for SoNS)		
	<p>Giles Johnson provided an update on the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Survey Results. It was noted that the results of the survey are fed back to the Central University level. It was acknowledged that Emma Nichols and Daniele Atkinson have contributed enormous amount of work on the analysis of data. There have been 400 responses to the survey including 140 from FSE Academic, Postgraduates and PS members of staff. The survey was not directed to UG students. One outcome from the survey has been some change of behaviour in relation to Zoom meetings such as limited length of meetings, minimising the number of meetings, and a zoom free period over Summer. Another outcome has been an increased support for line managers whilst working remotely.</p> <p>The survey remains open and all staff were encouraged to complete the survey in order to contribute: https://tinyurl.com/edicovid</p>		
5	Discussion on Shape of Teaching in Semester 1 (led by Andrew Horn)		
a	<p>Andrew Horn thanked all staff in the Faculty for the work in generating content for teaching in the next Academic Year. It was reported that blended learning has commenced, and synchronous and asynchronous content is being developed. The Teaching Academy and E-Learning team have provided support and it was noted that this is still available. Zoom, Teams and Collaborate are available for online teaching platforms. Training for GTA's and PDRA's on teaching will be available. An additional equipment requirement call will take place in Semester 1. It was reported that there are positive ratings on the preparedness of course units from the Heads of Department and Discipline Heads of Education. It was confirmed that Natural Sciences have met targets for delivering material in week one, week two and week three.</p> <p>Discussion of face to face teaching (item raised in Department Forums)</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding face to face teaching for the new academic year. Several issues were raised:</p> <p>Concern on how much notice will be given to prepare the labs for teaching. Currently do not have access to the charge codes needed to buy chemicals and consumables and it can take for them to arrive. It was confirmed that it should be assumed lab classes are going ahead and consumables should be purchased.</p>		

	<p>Staff can be added to the Procurement Register for this or can be purchased through the TOM or SSAs.</p> <p>How can we justify face to face teaching when the country is at level 4? Department for Education guidance is being updated and waiting for announcement from government.</p> <p>Who will decide if it is safe to do Teaching in the Labs? In response it was confirmed that labs are being risk assessed so that teaching can take place.</p> <p>Has consideration been made to staff who are vulnerable and returning to campus to deliver face to face teaching? It was confirmed that there should be a conversation between the line manager and member of staff and if required a recommendation from the GP before returning to campus.</p> <p>Some staff noted that face to face teaching is a good idea and that staff who want to return to work should not be prevented.</p> <p>How many face masks will be given to each staff member per week given that the mask should be changed every 4 hours and that washable masks have a specific number of washes before losing efficacy? In response it was noted that this depends on how many labs require masks to be worn following the completion of risk assessments on face coverings for each lab.</p> <p>In case of a shut down, what would happen to the RSC accreditations for undergraduate degrees (Chemistry) and such degrees where accreditation is required for that accreditation? Andrew Horn confirmed that the RSC would expect to see programme level learning outcomes but are flexible in relation to the government guidelines.</p> <p>It was noted that there have been issues with Manchester Video/Video Portal of video material failing and restricting files sizes. Andrew Horn confirmed that a video subtitle system from Google has recently been added which should improve the issues. The Teaching Academy have advised to compress files. It was noted .MOV files from Mac Quick time do not upload successfully unless converted to MP4.</p> <p>Concern on the delays of the teaching timetable including the synchronous sessions for academic staff. Chris Hardacre confirmed that the reason for the delay in the full timetable including face to face teaching is due to the delays in planning the repurposing of spaces and availability in programme information.</p> <p>Will IT Support be given to students that do not have a suitable computer and/or internet access? Students with Widening Participation access provision will be provided with laptops in the next week.</p> <p>It was noted that considerations should be made to windowed masks as a DASS allowance for students that are hard of hearing.</p> <p>Concern raised on whether staff have been asked whether they are willing to deliver face to face teaching. There was a spectrum of views expressed on whether staff are willing to deliver face to face teaching. A comment was raised that the Senior Leadership team has made a promise to students that</p>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>they have not checked with staff they can deliver. Chris Hardacre confirmed that all staff who are due to come on to campus including academics, PS, GTA etc should have a discussion with line manager concerning whether they are able to come back on to campus which should be informed by a GP letter if there are health concerns.</p> <p>As no motion had previously been submitted, a formal vote on a motion was not possible. However, in response to demand for a vote from the meeting, and indicative poll on two motions was conducted.</p> <p>A straw vote on the motion, “do you feel safe to return to face to face teaching under the current circumstances”, was 33 yes, 54 no and do you support the view that only practice based, and practical teaching should be carried out face to face? 63 yes, 8 no.</p> <p>It was noted that colleagues with concerns about these issues should consider signing the Online “Notinourname” Teaching Petition. [Note added in minutes after meeting: this petition has now been submitted to the university SLT sand a response has been received].</p>		
6	Update on Technical Review Cohort 1 (led by Kevin Jackson/Chris Muryn)		
	<p>Kevin Jackson gave an overview of the vision of the Technical Review and outlined the objectives and strategic approach for the future of technical services. A summary is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The restructure is organised into 6 specific areas of key practice including Teaching; Research; Teaching/Research; Infrastructure and Faculties; Workshop and Computing. • Cohort 1 is the managerial structure. The next step is Cohort 2 will involve consultation with staff • In the new structure the Technical Operation Manager will have a focus on expertise in specific key areas noting that Research will also be supported by three Head of Research Infrastructure and Facilities. <p>Questions raised included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the restructure lead to redundancies/restructure? It was noted that due to the VS scheme some areas will need to be looked at for a recruitment process due to lost capability. 2. Will we see IT come back inhouse in some of this restructure? Chris Muryn confirmed local assistance for IT issues is being considered. 		
7	Head of School Update on other matters (Chris Hardacre)		
	<p>Staff that are required to do Procurement on R codes can be added to the Procurement register by sending a Research Register form to natsci-ops@manchester.ac.uk regardless of whether they are on campus or not. Procurement on baseline codes and P codes will need to go through the SLT approval process.</p>		
8	Issues from the Departments (led by Chairs of Department For a)		
a	Discussion on Crisis Justice Manchester Motion		

	<p>The Crisis Justice Manchester Motion was passed at the Earth Sciences Departmental Forum meeting. It has been passed to Senate by other School Board. Website Link for the Crisis Justice Manchester to be circulated and staff are encouraged to read outside of the meeting.</p> <p>https://manchester.web.ucl.ac.uk/files/2020/06/Crisis-Justice-Manchester-manifesto.pdf</p>	PB	
9	Update from Head of Research (led by Chris Hardacre on behalf of Kevin Taylor)		
	<p>Staff are to speak to Safety Advisors about the procedure for Travel Risk Assessments.</p> <p>Faculty Research Committee and Business Engagement leads are discussing overarching research themes that link to government UKRI priorities and staff engagement will take place with opportunities to get involved in the discussion.</p> <p>A report expected this week on PGR and PDRA updates and development from Doctoral College and Faculty Committee.</p> <p>The Manchester Doctoral College have stated that meetings with new PhD students should be online where possible unless specific reasons needing to do face to face student.</p>		
11	AOB		
	No items raised		