

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences

Teaching and Learning Committee

Minutes of the meeting of 25 March 2021

Present: Dr B van Dongen (BvD) Chair; Dr S Boulton (SB), Dr R Brunt (RB), Mr B Bukenya (BB), Prof M Burton (MB), Dr P Connolly (PC), Dr S Covey-Crump (SCC), Mrs M Edwards (ME) (part), Dr L Garcia-Carreras (LGC), Dr T Gilman (TG), Dr M Hartley (MH), Dr G Holland (GH), Dr R Jerrett (RJ), Prof D Johnson (DJ), Dr R Jones (R Jones), Dr K Joy (KJ), Ms S Kewley (SK), Dr A Lowe (AL) (part), Mr D Lukacs (DL), Ms G McCabe (GM), Dr J Mecklenburgh (JM), Dr N Mitchell (NM), Dr B O'Driscoll (BoD), Dr A Pawley (AP), Dr J Pittman (JP), Dr R Sansom (RS), Dr S Schroeder (SS), Dr C Walton (CW), Mr M Turner (MT) (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence

None received.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 16 December 2020

2.1 Noted: These were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Updates from Departmental Officers

4.1 Noted: BvD reported there will be no individual meetings with students to discuss their exam scripts from semester 1. Cohort feedback would be published instead, and students will be able to view their scripts online soon through Sharepoint.

4.2 Noted: BvD is investigating what activities could be delivered on campus in April if allowed. Second year Geoscience students may have to return.

4.3 **Action**: Communication to students regarding exam feedback – JM / MT

4.4 Noted: There is an opportunity to offer a remote study option for semester 1 2021/22, although the expectation is the department will not offer this. If offered, this means double teaching load for remote and on campus deliveries.

DJ asked whether the materials already produced and used this year can be used. BvD confirmed it would be likely for the "lecture" part of the unit.

PC suggested a remote option, but live from the classroom, although this brings challenges.

4.5 **Agreed**: The Committee agreed not to offer remote teaching option, by 12 votes to 4 (vote administered by MT).

4.6 Noted: The department has submitted a number of amendments to Faculty. The NPP1 for the new Sustainable Geoscience has been approved for 2021/22.

4.7 Noted: The impact on teaching delivery of field courses needs to be reviewed, with unintended impacts on other cohorts. Also to consider students who work during the holiday periods, and

indeed some students who work *during* term time. SCC commented the two week Geoscience field course would have to be re written.

4.8 Noted: Update from Prof D Johnson, Appeals, Complains and Misconduct. DJ commented the training for malpractice awareness for DEES students may have to be tailored. Refreshed training also to be considered for staff. TG agreed the online course is ambiguous in parts.

4.9 **Action**: DJ to produce review of current training and a plan for training by next TLC.

4.10 Noted: Update from JM, Assessments. Student results in DEES were released ahead of the Faculty timetable. There is a debate between Faculty v School v Department regarding Exam Board structures. There is a deadline of 14 April to upload assessments to EART70000 (end of term assessment for the “exam” period).

The penalties for late submission of scanned work will be strictly enforced in semester 2.

4.11 **Action**: Communicate to students the penalty decision for S2 exam period – JM / GM

5. BAME participation and inclusion

5.1 Noted: KJ reported there is a committee within the department looking at how we can be more inclusive (started last year). The committee has reviewed a University of Oxford [their own review of their practices] report. An audit of what we teach and whether we incorporate aspects should be considered. The department is covering some of the recommendations already.

5.2 Noted: Suggestion of one topic for a staff away day would be to review how the department teaches in respect to consideration of social, historical and cultural aspects, and the link between what topics we are teaching and the different communities that might be influenced by those topics.

5.3 Noted: Inclusivity on field work – applicants unfamiliar with “field” work and experiences outside of the urban environment. Field clothing is also a consideration – walking boots etc. and being honest about upfront costs. Consideration of “at risk” individuals on University field trips – awareness of risk assessment planning and clear reporting structures while in the field. Consideration of in the field toilet provision and information to female students regarding supplies of for example, sanitary products. BvD commented there should be a female member of staff on every field course. The first aid kits need updating and should include some basic provisions.

5.4 Noted: RJ reported the risk assessment for field work has been re written including a “what happens if...” Lone working should be possible with the introduction of route cards and tracking devices. Mental Health first aid should also be included.

5.5 **Action**: SK and RJ to draft new field guide and distribute for comments.

5.6 Noted: JM commented the 7 protected principles to be included in the risk assessments. BvD suggested a Student Rep(s) should be included in discussions.

6 Social Responsibility

6.1 Noted: CW presented the SR goal of sustainability. The department should be at the front of environment and sustainability goals. Students do seem to be very receptive of this. A suggestion of an audit to see where we are already covering these goals in our teaching, and thinking how we can approach this to our teaching.

6.2 Noted: The UCIL unit is popular with DEES students. BvD commented a number of units are including these goals [example – Tenerife field course]. CW commented a reference to the [UN] sustainability development goals explicitly within the unit content can help. DJ commented the first year unit, Understanding the Earth, is built around the sustainable development goals. The UCIL course is also flagged to students.

6.3 **Action**: Blog post about first year teaching – DJ / VC / Jemma Stewart

6.4 Noted: Linking the goals in teaching – unit coordinators need to reflect on their teaching. This needs to be in balance with other goals and considerations. LCG suggested second year tutorials could be used for student reflection on how / where the goals have been taught.

6.5 **Action**: CW to produce a synopsis and link to the UN document, and ask unit coordinators to reflect.

7 Reserved business

Nb: this section of minutes not available to student reps.

7.1 Noted: JM reported three students had submitted Chinese language text on one online test – EART62051. The students have claimed the “system” or “interest” re-set their English to Chinese on submission. JP< Unit Coordinator, confirmed formative assessments had been submitted with no issues encountered.

7.2 Noted: The committee considered possible actions to take including zero mark, translate and resolve / mark, or offer a first sit.

7.3 Agreed: The committee agreed to leave zero for this question and the students can appeal. This was not accepted as a plausible explanation.

End of meeting.