



Meeting **BOARD OF STUDIES FOR THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE**  
Place Microsoft Teams  
Date Wednesday 1 April 2020 at 14:15

Present	Professor N Brook Dr R Bradford Professor A Burrows Professor F Burstall Dr S Flower Dr N Fotaki Professor M Fraser Professor C Frost Dr A Gorbach Professor M Hejmadi Dr R James Professor M Jones Dr G Mathlin  Professor T Mays Professor N McHugh Professor P Milewski Dr F Qin Dr T Shardlow Professor D Tosh Professor C Wilson Dr M Wright	Dean of Science (Chair) Department of Computer Science Head of Department of Chemistry Department of Mathematical Sciences Department of Chemistry Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology Department of Computer Science Deputy Dean of Science Department of Physics Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) Head of Department of Physics Department of Chemistry Natural Sciences (alternate for Dr J White, Head of Natural Sciences)  Faculty of Engineering and Design Head of Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology Head of Department of Mathematical Sciences School of Management Department of Mathematical Sciences Head of Department of Biology and Biochemistry Associate Dean (Research) Department of Computer Science
In attendance	Mrs M Hallett Mrs A L Harper	Faculty Assistant Registrar (Secretary) Faculty of Science (Observer)
Apologies	Dr F Bisset Mr C Lai Mr C Okayo Dr A Preston Dr G Stothart Dr J White	Learning Partnerships Office UG student representative PGT student representative Department of Biology and Biochemistry Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Head of Natural Sciences

**Action**

**6956 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 26 February 2020 (Paper 186).

**6957 MATTERS ARISING  
M6934 ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIZES**

The Board noted that the Director of Policy, Planning and Compliance and the Climate Action Framework Group had no objection to establishment of the Infineum Prizes, given the Prizes were compliant with the University's Code of Ethics. Therefore, establishment of the Infineum Prizes was approved under Chair's action.

## 6958 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair reported the following matters:

- The Chair thanked members for their quick response to the rapidly changing situation over the last few weeks.
- Departments are finalising online assessments, to be completed by the end of the week. Most Departments are changing closed book exams into 24 hour open book exams, with a few Departments changing these to other forms of assessment. Communications with fuller details will be sent to students shortly. The Board noted that that the Faculty chose this approach from a range of options agreed by UEB. Not all faculties are following this approach; H&SS and E&D are changing exams into a coursework format, available to students to complete throughout the whole examination period.
- The University has developed a 'no detriment' policy in which Departments will be given authority to account for the Coronavirus disruption when considering students' results. Exam Boards will be asked to check academic decisions using individual, unit and cohort profiles, to compare students' results against previous years and ensure they are not disadvantaged, adjusting marks or scaling if necessary. The S2 exam period will be extended, and Boards delayed, by two weeks. Central communication on this and an FAQ page for students will follow shortly. *(Post-meeting: following advice issued by OfS on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April Senate have been asked to approve an update to this).*
- The REF submission has been delayed, but the census date remains as 31<sup>st</sup> July. No new date has been set for submission, but the University will be given 8 months' notice once the date has been confirmed. Given the uncertainty about when the new submission date will be, the University's internal schedule will go ahead as planned.
- Research facilities are being maintained across the Faculty. MC<sup>2</sup> have a team coming on to campus to look after NMR and other equipment that cannot be shut down over this period. Staff are coming in to maintain natural environments in Chemistry, P&P and Physics. There is a rota to maintain the organisms (non-mammalian animals and plants) in the South of the Faculty, and animals in the BSU.
- There is still some low level research ongoing mainly related to animal care and maintaining animal / plant lines. There is also some Covid 19 explicit research being undertaken for production of instrumentation that is of a critical nature. The PVC Research has sent an email containing a weblink to research advice over this period covering grants, etc.
- Some Faculty staff have been involved in supplying equipment to the RUH. There may be opportunities for the Faculty to join the effort led by E&D regarding the manufacture of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); the Faculty has donated PPE from our stores and another batch (gloves, protection suits and facemasks) is due to be sent shortly.

## 6959 STAFF STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE (SSLC) MEETINGS

The Board noted the minutes of the meetings held on:

**Department of Biology and Biochemistry** 20 February 2020 (Paper 195).

**Department of Chemistry** 5 February 2020 (Paper 196).

**Department of Computer Science** 10 February 2020 (Paper 197).

**Department of Mathematical Sciences** 26 February 2020 (Paper 198).

**Natural Sciences** 19 February (Paper 199A) and 25 March (Paper 199B) 2020.

**Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology** 6 February 2020 (PGT) (Paper 200A).

**Department of Physics** 12 February 2020 (Paper 201).

**6960 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  
There was none.



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**Action**

**6961 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 26 February 2020 (Paper 186), and there were no matters arising.

**6962 REPORT ON RESEARCH GRANTS**

The Board received details of awards accepted by Research and Innovation Services from 19 February until 26 March 2020 (Paper 187).

The Chair congratulated in particular:

- Professor James Davenport, Department of Computer Science, for his award of

£505,756 from the EPSRC for research into Pushing Back the Doubly-Exponential Wall of Cylindrical Algebraic Decomposition. The Board noted that Dr Bradford was Co-Investigator.

**6963 SEMESTER 1 SCALING REPORT AND ERRORS IN EXAMINATION PAPERS**

The Board considered scaling of unit marks (Paper 188A) and errors in examination papers (Paper 188B) in Semester 1 2019/20.

The Board noted that there were 9 instances of scaling (same as Semester 1 last year); 6 in Computer Science (compared to 4 last year), 2 in Maths (compared to 5 last year) and 1 in Physics (compared to none last year), including 2 units where the mean marks were not atypical (CM30174 and CM50206), and 32 instances of means that were atypical but not scaled (compared to 34 last year).

The Chair requested that Computer Science and Maths DLTQCs review units which had been scaled or had mean marks in the atypical range for a number of years, and report back to the Board.

**Comp Sci &  
Maths DoTs**

The Chair highlighted in particular:

- CM20217 which had mean marks in the atypical range, but not scaled, in 2016/17 and 2017/18. Dr Wright explained that the unit tends to be an outlier due to the nature of the topic and because a large number of Maths students take the unit which skews the results. Dr Wright provided assurance that the BEU had reviewed the results rigorously.
- MA30234 which had been scaled in 2016/17 and 2018/19 and had mean marks in the atypical range, but not scaled, in 2017/18. Dr Shardlow explained that this unit is offered to non-Maths students.

The Chair acknowledged that units that are coursework, lab or project-based may tend to have mean marks in the atypical range because students generally perform better, disproportionately, in these types of assessment than they do in more traditional exam based units.

The Board agreed that the errors in examination papers report (Paper 188B) was suitable and relevant.

**6964 PROPOSED ADDITION TO BOARD OF STUDIES STANDING ORDERS**

The Board noted that it had approved, by email, a proposed addition to Board of Studies Standing Orders, permitting the Board to agree decisions by email if an actual meeting cannot be held (Paper 189). The Chair thanked members for their responses.

**6965 FACULTY LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE**

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 (Paper 190).

**6966 FACULTY RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2020 (Paper 191A).

**6967 FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2020 (Paper 192A).

**6968 FACULTY DOCTORAL STUDIES COMMITTEE (FDSC)**

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020 (Paper 193A).

**6969 UNIVERSITY BOARD OF STUDIES (DOCTORAL) (BoSD)**

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2020 (Paper 194).

**6970 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.