

Faculty of Engineering & Design

Meeting: FACULTY BOARD OF STUDIES

Date and Time: Wednesday 24 February 2021 at 2.15 p.m.

Venue: Via TEAMS

Present:

Dr Sally Clift Dean	Director of Doctoral Studies (<i>Acting Chair</i>)
Dr Kirill Cherednichenko	Faculty of Science
Professor John Chew	Dept. of Chemical Engineering
Dr Jos Darling	Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
Dr Marianne Ellis	Dept. of Chemical Eng.
Prof. Stephen Emmitt	Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering
Dr Adrian Evans	Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering
Dr Jeff Gavin	Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences
Dr Sabina Gheduzzi	Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
Dr Vaggelis Giannikas	School of Management
Dr Carmelo Herdes Moreno	Dept. of Chemical Engineering
Prof. Tim Ibell	Associate Dean L&T Dept. of Architecture & Civil Eng
Ms Simmi Kansagra	UG Student Rep (Dept of Mechanical Eng)
Dr Tristan Kershaw	Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering
Prof. Gary Lock	Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
Prof. Davide Mattia	Associate Dean Research Dept of Chemical Engineering
Dr Francis Robinson	Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering
Mr Tom Sawko	Student's Union Officer
Mr David Stacey	Faculty Librarian
Dr Mike Wilson	Dept. of Mechanical Engineering

In Attendance: Mrs Rachel Summers Faculty Assistant Registrar (Secretary)

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Prof Gary Hawley & Dr Marion Harney.

1910 APOLOGIES & DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

ACTION

Apologies as detailed above were noted. The Chair welcomed UG student representative Simmi Kansagra who had replaced Raj Haria on the Board. The Chair asked for any declarations of interest which were not going to be declared during subsequent discussions. There were none

1911 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (FE2020-21/070)

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Board of Studies held on 13 January 2021 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings. There were no matters arising

1912 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair congratulated Professor Evans on his recent professorial promotion.

1913 GRANTS & CONTRACTS REPORT QUARTER 2 2020-21 (FE2020-21/071)

The Board received the second quarter Grants & Contracts Report for 2020-21. Department Heads commented on the report and the Board noted that the Dept of Chemical Engineering was piloting skills support for writing grant proposals. Members of the Board expressed interest in receiving feedback on the pilot in due course. A challenge for all Departments was improving conversion/success rates. Professor Mattia commented that this was also a key University objective and that one initiative was to develop internal expertise in 'good' peer review.

1914 REPORT FROM STUDENTS' UNION / STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Mr Sawko (SU Officer) reported on the following items

1. Student Life Survey- student wellbeing & concerns. The January survey had highlighted an increase in mental well-being and physical health issues students were experiencing compared to the January 2020 survey. (The data summary was shared with the Board during the meeting). Other concerns identified in the survey were academic workloads and career prospects.
2. Plans for the return of students to campus. The SU team are working with various University services to plan the route back to campus for students including access to new study spaces (in the Edge and Dartmouth Avenue) and sports facilities.
3. Students' Union Officer elections would be held in the first week of March.
4. Review of student representation – currently underway supported by the SU's Academic Representation Coordinator

Ms Kansagra commented that at the recent Faculty Student Forum, students had asked for greater transparency surrounding scaling decisions and more information on the reasons why units had been adjusted. The Board agreed Departments were responsible for communicating details of scaling decisions to their students. Ms Kansagra also drew the Board's attention to the need to plan support and guidance for students sitting 'in person' exams in 21/22 e.g. second year students who will not have completed conventional exams in their first year (this academic year).

1915 REPORTS FROM ASSOCIATE DEANS & DEPARTMENTS

- a) Professor Ibell (Associate Dean L&T) reported on the following
 - i. Return to IPT. Further to the recent Government announcement of the roadmap out of lockdown, full details of the arrangements for students permitted to return to campus would shortly be published. In the Faculty the following cohorts were being prioritised, Years 1 & 4 (BSc Arch) and 6 (MArch), all engineering courses years 1 & 2, final year competition teams from Mechanical & Electronic & Electrical Engineering and all engineering students who are doing lab-related research dissertations. Some members of the Board expressed concern at the decision to prioritise the Competition Teams over other students. Professor Ibell noted that Government restrictions currently only permitted in-person teaching for practical/practice-based courses but it was hoped that by the end of the Easter holidays these restrictions would be lifted permitting IPT to resume for all students.

- ii. Student Feedback Semester 1 Online Exams A very useful meeting had been held between Directors of Teaching (DoT), student representatives and members of the Faculty's Professional Services team to discuss student feedback on the semester one online exams. A number of department level specific issues had been flagged up for consideration by Dept SSLCs e.g. exams that were seen as having been too hard or too easy, errors in exam papers. Broader discussion had covered student feedback on the 24-hour exam window and the mismatch between the expectation that an exam should take just 2 hours to complete which then took much longer e.g. instances of students taking up to 12 hours. Much clearer messaging and clarification about how students should approach their exams was required for future online exams. For example clear advice on what is expected from students in answering 'open ended' questions e.g. specified word length for answers and better messaging to make clear that students shouldn't be approaching the 24 hour window as time in which to undertake their revision alongside completing the exam. Student feedback on the 24-hour exam window varied with no clear agreement for or against keeping the 24-hour approach. There was some support for a reduction in the time permitted to complete an exam within the 24 hour window – e.g. students could start the exam at any point but then would have x hours to finish (e.g. 6, 9 or 12 hours). Also of note were student concerns about the impact on students of errors in exam papers. In most instances errors were 'minor' but even a small error can cause huge levels of stress to students and can completely put them off-track. Students asked for much better 'checking' of papers and if possible someone on hand who could be contacted if a student suspects an error. The Faculty has identified a number of cases of cheating in the online exams, something that was possibly a direct result of errors in papers, where students sitting the exams remotely, in isolation, reach out to their peers to check whether it's a genuine mistake or not. The difficulty of having someone on hand for the full 24 hour exam window and the fact that students who've already finished and submitted and may not have noticed an error would be disadvantaged if then other students are informed of an error, was also perceived as a problem. University exam rules currently ask students to note on their answer script if they suspect an error and explain how they've approached the question on that basis – online exams should be approached in the same way. DoTs had been asked to take away the message for better, robust checking and moderation of exam papers.
- iii. Timetable Planning for 2021-22. Scenario timetable planning for the next academic year was underway factoring in either a continued requirement for social distancing or a return to 'normal' teaching arrangements. Consultation with students was crucial in developing these plans. Mr Sawko commented that consultation arrangements would need to allow students sufficient time to comment and contribute.
- iv. Curriculum Transformation (CT). The Departments of Electronic & Electrical and Mechanical Engineering had agreed to push ahead with CT - confirmation by Senate of the academic framework and agreed parameters was scheduled for April. Dr Kershaw noted that unit evaluation for the CT MSc courses in the Dept of Arch & Civil Engineering was currently scheduled to be held after unit marks had been released which was not ideal (and was currently being addressed).
- b) Prof Stephen Emmitt (HoD Architecture & Civil Engineering) reported that Professor Andrew Heath had been appointed as Deputy Head of Department. Dr Paul Shepherd and Dr Dan Maskell were congratulated on their recent academic promotions to Reader and Senior Lecturer respectively. Dr Stephen Allen had been awarded a New Investigator Award by the EPSRC.

- c) Dr Adrian Evans (HoD Electronic & Electrical Eng.) was pleased to report that Despina Moschou had been granted an award of £68k from the Impact Acceleration Account (EPSRC) to support her work on a portable COVID diagnostic platform for community use. The Dept. is mid-way through the recruitment process for two academic positions. There have also been a number of appointments to internal positions – Dave Chapman as Co-Chair of the Department’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Team (EDIT), Tareq Assaf as inaugural Link Tutor for the Integrated Design Engineering programme and Corwin Wright as the new Departmental Research Staff Coordinator (DRSC).
- d) Prof Gary Lock (HoD Mechanical Engineering) advised that Dr Min Pan had been promoted to Reader. The Dept. is currently recruiting to four academic positions; two lectureships in mechanical engineering, one lectureship in Electrical Propulsion; one Chair in Electrical Propulsion – all closing date 1 March. He was pleased to report a number of recent research grant successes including a £1.8 million Innovate UK award to Prof Richard Burke and a £125k award from DSTL to Dr Alan Hunter.
- e) Dr Marianne Ellis (HoD Chemical Engineering) advised that Dr Emma Patterson had been promoted to Senior Lecturer. The Dept had seen a number of research grant successes totalling approximately £190k comprising four different awards (Professor Mattia, Dr Chris Chuck and Dr Emma Patterson (x2) being the recipients). Dr Ellis was pleased to report that the Dept had won the ‘online’ Frank Morton Sports Day – the nationwide chemical engineering sports day hosted by the University of Bradford.
- f) Professor Davide Mattia (Associate Dean Research) noted that the Faculty had been notified of its University Research Studentship Awards (URSA) allocation for 21/22 with funding sufficient for fifteen studentships - details had been circulated to academic colleagues. The Faculty’s REF submission had been finalised and forwarded for inclusion in the University’s overall REF return to be submitted at the end of March. The Board reiterated its thanks to Professor Mattia and the Faculty REF delivery team, for their immense efforts singling out in particular Ms Ryan (Faculty coordinator) for her support to the team.

1916 LIBRARY MATTERS

Mr Stacey provided an update on Library matters;

- Sunday 28 Feb DD&T web downtime means no Library e-resources for the day and also services like TopDesk would be out of action - so any staff/students unaware of the web downtime may be perturbed by not being able to report problems. Further information was available at <https://tinyurl.com/3eqp8842>.
- Departments were asked to encourage staff and/or admin to collate and send on 2020 past papers to SREO so that the Library team can upload them to the past papers database.
- The Library would welcome any feedback or information on where students had sat their online assessments in order for future planning e.g. if students made use of study spaces on or off campus for their online exams.
- Tom Rogers and Mr Stacey had been talking to publishers about eBook options (if any) for any texts on Library Lists tagged essential for Sem 2 but only available in print. The Library’s budget is very tight this year after cuts, so they may struggle to purchase much more this financial year. The Library was also experiencing high demand from individuals who are working on dissertations/theses, with more switching to literature-based topics. In some cases the Library may not be able to deliver on requests if material cannot be borrowed from other libraries or be secured online at a reasonable price.

1917 FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES (FE2020-21/072)

The unreserved (unconfirmed) minutes of the Faculty Executive Committee meeting held on 11 January 2021 were received and noted.

1918 FACULTY LEARNING TEACHING & QUALITY COMMITTEE MINUTES (FE2020-21/073)

The unreserved (unconfirmed) minutes of the Faculty Learning Teaching & Quality Committee meeting held on 20 January 2021 were received and noted.

1919 FACULTY RESEARCH COMMITTEE MINUTES (FE2020-21/074)

The unreserved (unconfirmed) minutes of the Faculty Research Committee meeting held on 27 January 2021 were received and noted.

1920 ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Dr Evans congratulated Dr Clift on her appointment as Associate Dean International – expressions of interest in the position of Faculty Director of Doctoral Studies had been invited.