

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 MAY 2015 IN UPPER HALL 1

Present: Master (in the Chair), Senior Tutor, Dr Canuto (Admissions Tutor), Dr Chalmers, Dr Jardine, E Costello (JCR Academic Affairs Officer), G Khullar (MCR Academic Affairs Officer, MPhil), YL Tan (MCR Academic Affairs Officer. PhD), Mrs Claydon (Minute Secretary), Graduate Officer

Apologise: Dr Rentfrow (on leave), Dr Vira

350. MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 FEBRUARY 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February were signed as a correct record.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

351. MATTERS ARISING

(i) COLLEGE PLAN (cf minute 339)

The issues below were identified in discussion at the last meeting. The Senior Tutor invited the Committee to agree how best to proceed in each case.

(a) Measuring undergraduate performance (Plan Ref 1.6) Task: "Determine how we should assess, measure and communicate progress."

(i) Communication of examination results.

Results should be analysed and communicated in two stages: positive news of the results of those graduating in late June; and full analysis of undergraduate results in September, after the University results are made available in late August.

(ii) Careers after Graduation.

We have received data from the Careers Service, by graduating year, detailing the numbers of our students who go on to further education or to various classes of employment.

(b) Graduate applications (Plan Ref 2.2) [with Tutorial Committee] Task: "Establish mechanisms to attract first choice Graduates to Fitzwilliam, and encourage the best students progressing to PhD to remain at Fitzwilliam."

(i) Information for prospective applicants.

Mr Khullar wishes to produce a short film illustrating 'a day in the life of a graduate student at Fitzwilliam' and the Committee asked him to circulate a proposal including a breakdown of cost. It was noted that the University is also

producing a new film with a broader remit than that recently produced by the Gates Trust.

The new MCR website is up and running and will include FAQs for prospective applicants. Updates to the College website will be made once the new content management system is made available. Mrs Free and Mr Khullar have discussed the possible changes and menu structure and will work on them as soon as they are able.

It was noted that the fully-funded one-year Studentship brings in lots of first choice applications, but that applications for the part-funded PhD Studentship have tended to come from our own students.

- (c) Masters Students (Plan Ref 2.3, 2.4) [with Tutorial Committee]
Task: “Define a package which provides meaningful support and can build loyalty to the College among these students.”

(i) Careers advice for Graduate students.

(ii) Integration of undergraduates and Masters students.

It was noted that the graduate students on MAST, LLM and Clinical courses benefit from having a Director of Studies, and as a result tend to interact more readily with the undergraduates.

- (d) Graduate fee (Plan Ref 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6) [with Tutorial Committee]
Task: “Define and promote the College offering for graduate students demonstrating the value offered by membership of the College.”

(i) Mentoring of graduate students.

Mr Khullar reported that discussions regarding ‘fresher’ mentoring had taken place and that a new ‘freshers committee’ had been established of around 10 graduates (not on the MCR Committee) who would welcome the new graduate students and support them in the first few weeks of arrival. This was welcomed by the Committee, who expressed the hope that such a scheme might bring in some PhD students who have otherwise tended not to engage. It was also noted that Life-Fellows could be asked to be involved in mentoring.

352. GRADUATE ADMISSIONS REPORT

The Committee received the Graduate Admissions report, noting that the University’s application numbers were down by 1-2% overall. It was reported that at this stage it was not possible accurately to estimate final numbers but it was hoped that they would be similar to last year.

The Graduate Officer reported that the University had made a big effort in making scholarship offers to students much earlier in the year and that, in line with this, Dr Vira planned to review the schedule for the College’s Graduate Studentships and Scholarships. Interviews for the Fitzwilliam College one-year full cost Studentship had already taken place on 29 April.

353. GRADUATE SELF-EVALUATIONS

The Committee received the details which had been circulated to Graduate Tutors prior to the implementation of the pilot scheme for MPhil students, plus additional information from December 2014 relating to the success of the scheme.

The Committee noted that the scheme was set up primarily to improve communication between Graduate students and their Departments but that Graduate Tutors have also reviewed the self-evaluations for their students and where any issues were raised the student has been invited to meet with their Tutor to discuss further.

It was reported that the scheme appears to have been a success and that it is likely to be continued next year, with potentially a wider group of graduate students.

354. SOCIETIES, EVENTS AND ACADEMIC ETHOS (cf minute 345)

A summary emerging from the review of the 2007 Report on the Academic Ethos of the College was circulated. In discussion the Committee noted that, in relation to point 9 (Books and Computers) since the Ethos Report was written the College had an excellent new Library and IT facility but that awards for students for books (or money towards laptops) would still be very useful, especially in Arts subjects.

It was noted that the need for books differed greatly subject by subject, and the Committee recommended that the Senior Tutor consult Directors of Studies in his end of year meetings and facilitate these requirements as he saw fit.

Action: Senior Tutor

355. RISK REGISTER

The Committee reviewed the Education risks and mitigating actions, noting that items 7,10 and 11 were items which came directly from the College Plan. The Committee approved the Risk Register following the addition of a further point - 'Attract and maintain high quality supervisors'.

356. REPORT ON EXAMINATION RESULTS

In line with arrangements this academic year, the Committee agreed the following schedule of meetings regarding the Report on Examinations:

Thursday 1 October	Upper Hall 1, 2pm	Education Committee
Tuesday 6 October	Parlour, 1pm	First lunchtime meeting with Fellows
Wednesday 7 October	Parlour, 1pm	Second lunchtime meeting with Fellows
Wednesday 14 October	Upper Hall 2, 5.30pm	Governing Body

357. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) 3-minute Thesis Competition

The Committee noted that a 3-minute Thesis Competition had been running across the University whereby students explain their thesis to a novice audience in 3 minutes. It was suggested that a similar challenge could be set alongside the Graduate Conference and that it would be a good way to encourage interaction between graduates and undergraduates.

- (ii) The Committee thanked Mr Khullar for all his excellent work on the Education Committee.

358. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2015/2016

Meetings to be held in the Upper Hall 1 as follows:

Thursday 1 October 2015	2pm
Wednesday 18 November 2015	5.30pm
Wednesday 17 February 2016	5.30pm
Wednesday 4 May 2016	5.30pm

RESERVED