

**Faculty of Engineering & Design**

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**Meeting:** FACULTY BOARD OF STUDIES

**Date and Time:** Wednesday 14 October 2020 at 2.15 pm

**Venue:** Via TEAMS

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**Present:**

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| Prof Gary Hawley      | Dean ( <i>Chair</i> )                                     |
| Professor John Chew   | Dept. of Chemical Engineering                             |
| Dr Sally Clift        | Dept. of Mechanical Eng., Director of Doctoral Studies    |
| Dr Jos Darling        | Dept. of Mechanical Engineering                           |
| Dr Marianne Ellis     | Dept. of Chemical Engineering.                            |
| Prof. Stephen Emmitt  | Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering                 |
| Dr Adrian Evans       | Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering              |
| Dr Vaggelis Giannikas | School of Management                                      |
| Mr Raj Haria          | UG Representative, Dept. of Electronic & Elec Engineering |
| Dr Marion Harney      | Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering                 |
| Dr Tristan Kershaw    | Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering                 |
| Prof. Gary Lock       | Dept. of Mechanical Engineering                           |
| Dr Francis Robinson   | Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering              |
| Dr Mike Wilson        | Dept. of Mechanical Engineering                           |

**In Attendance:** Mrs Rachel Summers Faculty Assistant Registrar

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from Dr Kirill Cherednichenko, Dr Mark Evernden, Dr Carmelo Herdes Moreno, Dr Sabina Gheduzzi, Professor Davide Mattia, Mr David Stacey & Ms Annie Willingham.

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**1846 WELCOME & APOLOGIES ACTION**

Apologies as detailed above were noted. The Chair welcomed UG student representative Raj Haria.

**1847 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (FE2020-21/008)**

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Board of Studies held on 21 July 2020 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings. There were no matters arising

**1848 DEAN'S BUSINESS & DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Dean had no items of business to report. He asked for any declarations of interest which were not going to be declared during subsequent discussions. There were none.

**1849 PGT RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS 2020 (FE2020-21/009)**

Dr Clift introduced paper FE2020-21/009, which provided an overview of recruitment to the Faculty's portfolio of PGT programmes. The Faculty has experienced a mixed picture of recruitment – exceeding the target number for Home/EU admissions but down on International/overseas students by 50%. A similar pattern of PGT recruitment had been seen across the University. Recruitment had been dominated by the challenges of the Covid pandemic, including:

- Student and family concerns about safety.
- Student and family concerns about the quality of the University experience.
- Impact of closure/reduced opening of IELTS test centres.
- Disruptions to degree examinations worldwide.
- Limited availability/high cost of flights.
- Pre-sessional numbers down by approx. 50% (this has previously been a strong feeder route for the Faculty's MSc courses).

The collapse in international recruitment was particularly evident for the MSc in Conservation of Historic Buildings (down by approximately 70%) – Dr Harney commented that in recent years two-thirds of the programme's intake had been international students and so the impact had been substantial. However, alongside this the Faculty has a high number of students (approximately 180) who have requested to defer entry until 2021. The challenge is to retain the interest and commitment of these students during 2020 and Dr Clift will be working closely with the Faculty's Marketing Manager and the International office on this. She noted that the Deputy Vice Chancellor is leading a cross Faculty group to target international recruitment for 2021 and going forward. Dr Clift pointed out that the Faculty's more recent MSc programme developments (e.g. the MSc's in Engineering Business Management and Environmental Engineering) had positioned themselves to be able to recruit from a wider pool i.e. from non-engineering graduates which was showing clear dividends.

**1850 UNDERGRADUATE PLACEMENTS REPORT (FE2020-21/010)**

The Board received and considered the Placements report provided by the Faculty's Placement Manager (FE20-21/010). Covid 19 disruption had had a major impact on students completing their placement in the spring-summer of 2020, particularly the Faculty's architecture students who in the main carry out their placements in small architectural practices. The Faculty's placement team provided support to students throughout this period and the Board noted the very positive feedback from students quoted in the report. 90% of architecture students had responded in a recent survey that they were very happy with the placement support provided. The availability of undergraduate placement opportunities for 20/21 has also been adversely affected. The Board of Studies agreed earlier in the summer to permit mech, elec and civil MEng students unable to secure a placement in 20/21 to defer their placement year until 21/22. Unfortunately, the positioning of the placement year between the third and final year within the chemical engineering programmes meant that this option was unavailable to chemical engineering students. Mr Haria asked what support was available to students seeking placements for 21/22. The Chair advised that support was in the main being provided online via live webinars; recorded videos followed by live question and answer sessions alongside online activities delivered through Moodle and the myProfessional Development Software. One to one appointments are also available. Board members commented that the report was useful, and the Chair proposed that a further update be provided to the next Board of Studies by the Placements Manager.

**Placements  
Manager**

## 1851 BLENDED LEARNING UPDATE

The Chair invited Department Heads to report on the delivery of blended learning within their respective departments.

Architecture & Civil Engineering: Professor Emmitt provided an overview of the department's move to blended learning and delivery.

- In Person Teaching (IPT) had started well with very good attendance in week one but attendance levels had subsequently dipped, particularly amongst first year students. This may be due to the growth in the number of positive covid tests and the subsequent requirement for students to self-isolate which was especially relevant to the campus-based first years.
- The department draws extensively on external tutors (expert practitioners) for its architecture courses and has therefore had to move most of this learning online.
- Initial PGT student feedback about online delivery has been very positive

The Dept continues to monitor student engagement as we move forward.

Electronic & Electrical Engineering: Dr Evans commented that,

- The first week of In Person Teaching (IPT) had seen high levels of participation followed by a fall off and flattening out in subsequent weeks. Feedback from those students attending IPT sessions was very positive, particularly concerning the opportunity to work alongside other students and the value of having face to face time. The Dept's MSc programme in Robotics has adopted an innovative approach to bring together students on campus and those accessing IPT sessions remotely via a shared group activity which has worked very well.
- Synchronous live online learning sessions (LOIL) have been generally well attended although it's been noticeable that some students have not completed the required pre-work e.g. watched the lecture.

Mechanical Engineering: Professor Lock summarised the department's initial picture, which was comparable with the other departments,

- In Person Teaching (IPT) had seen high levels of attendance in week one with a subsequent dip. For the group project activities, the Dept. has operated live links across teaching rooms and combined online events with IPT sessions which has worked well. Students attending face to face sessions have been hugely in favour of the continuation of IPT and have said how valuable they feel it is.
- Attendance of LOIL sessions has been very good (roughly between 60-70%) and students appear to feel less timid about asking questions during sessions. Feedback from staff is that the sessions are a good medium to communicate with students.
- The Dept has identified that it requires upgraded AV facilities in its non GTA spaces in 4 East to support IPT. The Chair encouraged the Dept to bring forward costed proposals for submission to RCPT.
- The Dept. is adapting to the blended mode of delivery and is keen to evolve, improve and share best practice

Chemical Engineering: Professor Ellis reported on staff and student feedback on the learning and teaching experience to date

- Feedback from students (mainly via in-session polls and tutorials): A large number of students prefer the new way of teaching as they can get the "lecture" content at their own pace, rewind, make good notes the first time round. LOIL works well as consolidation for those who used the online material, for those who do not the LOIL sessions may not be as useful. A number of students were finding it harder and they miss the structure that lectures gave them which forced them to get up (the hill).

Some of the (year2) students were struggling with making enough time for everything including problem sheets (or the weekly MATLAB assignments).

- Feedback from staff was generally positive especially once a LOIL/IPT has been delivered a couple times and teething problems were overcome. Preparation time needed has been more than some expected, especially for those with very established material and delivery styles. The Dept. is open to make changes and needs students to engage in the Stop Start Continue to help with that.
- General reflections on IPT to date. Some staff had initially had a negative perception of safety of GTA which had been totally overcome when they got on campus. The situation is being closely monitored by Professor Ellis and the Director of Teaching.
- Anecdotal feedback from students suggest that, since IPTs were designed so that they would work well for online delivery as well as IP, the main reason for coming onto campus is to see each other. Final year students are often joining in their house groups at home.
- Students are attending IPT in variable numbers 60-90%+, but in some cases this seems to be based on the type of activity as much as anything else. Year 1 90+; year 2 60+; year 3 60+; year 4 60+, MSc 90+.
- In practice some four-hour IPT slots are being relaxed (shortened) depending on the session needs; students seem fine about this, but the Dept. is keen to hear feedback on this from students.
- Reflections on LOIL - what has worked really well has been using the full scope of Zoom. Using breakout rooms is being used extensively which seems to be useful and well received. Activities include solving problems in small groups and producing collective answers to an open-ended question (with the shared file on Moodle for revision).
- For MATLAB in year 2 which is traditionally held in computer rooms with support from Graduate Teaching Assistants, the Dept. has found a way that works for running the equivalent of computing tutorials by using Zoom breakout rooms and looking after 2 - 3 groups of 4 – 5 students each. The students are very good at helping each other (to an extent not previously seen before).
- There are some challenges such as students with poor internet connections who experience drop out from meetings, international students with lack of access and timing issues (e.g. a student for whom one of the LOIL sessions finishes at midnight).
- From the staff perspective it can be really challenging not being able to see all students and feeling that you're talking into the void. It's difficult to respond to facial expressions let alone body language and therefore to know whether what you're saying is what is needed.
- PGT students all appear to be engaging well with 90-100% attendance on the online sessions so far. Feedback has generally been positive. The MSc group, the break out rooms and running a long PBL has worked very well. For both groups, running an open 'let's discuss the online lecture material' has worked less well

The Chair thanked Department Heads for their feedback and asked Mr Haria if he had any comments he wished to make from the student perspective. Mr Haria commented that the informal feedback he'd had from other students was that IPT was going well so far although there were occasions where sessions could have been better structured. LOILs were well received by students and using the LOIL session to follow on from the online lectures was good. Mr Haria asked if the IPT sessions would be uploaded so that students who'd been unable to attend could review them. The Chair advised that this was the expectation, but it may not be possible in all cases e.g. where multiple groups are involved in hands on activities cross a number of teaching rooms. Mr Haria commented that so far the Faculty's handling of the transition to blended delivery had been very good. The Chair thanked Mr Haria and asked if he could provide an update at the next meeting of the Board of Studies in November. Professor Ibell commented that the HoD's and student feedback was incredibly useful and that a key concern for the Faculty was to understand how our students are

**Student  
Reps**

studying and engaging with blended learning. How we can combine/involve students who are participating in IPT remotely with the students who are 'in the room' is also a challenge for Depts. and an area where sharing examples of good practice will be vital. He recommended that if Depts. identify that they require investment in additional IT or AV facilities in support of IPT they should submit costed bids for funding to the University's Resilient Curriculum Project Team (RCPT) as a matter of priority. Looking ahead Dept's are encouraged to identify which of their teaching activities would be classed as priorities for continued delivery by IPT should the changing covid situation require the University to move to HE Tier 2. Professor Ibell thanked colleagues across the Faculty (academic, technical and the professional services team) for their enormous efforts in preparing for and delivering the Bath blend.

**1852 LEAGUE TABLES 2021 (FE2020-21/011)**

The Board noted the latest University subject league table rankings from the Guardian, Times and Complete University Guide.

**1853 GRANTS & CONTRACTS REPORT 2019-20 QUARTER 4 (FE2020-21/012)**

The Board received and noted the final quarter Grants & Contracts report for 2019-20. The Dean commented that the year-end Faculty total of £53 million was slightly up on the 18-19 cycle and within touching distance of the faculty's best historic performance (£58 million). The awards pipeline was also looking positive.

**1854 VACATION AND CHAIR'S POWERS (FE2020-21/013)**

**APPROVED:** Powers for the Dean to take Chair's Action on behalf of the Board and vacation powers for the Dean during the 2020-21 academic year.

**1855 BOARD OF STUDIES MEMBERSHIP (FE2020-21/014)**

The Board noted the Board of Studies membership for 2020-21. The Students' Union is currently finalising the election of a postgraduate taught (PGT) student representative and it is hoped s/he will be able to attend the next meeting of the Board.

**1856 FACULTY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2020-21 (FE2020-21/015)**

The Board noted the composition and membership of Faculty Committees as detailed in paper FE2020-21/015.

**1857 FACULTY LEARNING TEACHING & QUALITY COMMITTEE MINUTES (FE2020-21/016)**

The unreserved minutes of the Faculty Learning Teaching & Quality Committee meeting held on 23 July 2020 were received and noted.

**1858 BOARD OF STUDIES (DOCTORAL) COMMITTEE MINUTES (FE2020-21/017-020)**

The unreserved minutes of the Board of Studies (Doctoral) Committee meetings held on 1 April, 13 May, 24 June and 27 July 2020 were received and noted.

**1859 FACULTY DOCTORAL STUDIES COMMITTEE MINUTES (FE2020-21/021-022)**

The unreserved minutes of the Faculty Doctoral Studies Committee meetings held on 8 July and 9 September 2020 were received and noted.

**1860 REPORTS FROM ASSOCIATE DEANS & DEPARTMENTS**

- a) Dr Ellis (HoD Chemical Engineering) reported the very sad news of the death of third year MEng Chemical Engineering student Martin Bowers. In research matters the Departments' laboratories are fully open with staff attending on a rota basis. The Dept. has seen some research grant success over the summer with Dr Hannah Leese being awarded the Royal Society research grant (£14k) and small grants to Davide Mattia IAA for Naturbeads (£36k) and BP for Chris Chuck (£81k).
- b) Prof Emmitt (HoD Architecture & Civil Engineering) reported that Dr Michael Forsyth and Mr Frank Lyons had retired from the Dept. during the summer. Mr Will Hawkins has joined the Dept. as (probationary) Lecturer in Structural Engineering.
- c) Dr Adrian Evans (HoD Electronic & Electrical Eng.) was pleased to report that Professor Peter Wilson had won the 2020 IEEE Standards Association Medallion for "For leadership in standards and technology road mapping in power electronics". Dr Despina Moschou was awarded a Royal Academy of Engineering Industrial Fellowship and Professor Peter Wilson awarded £118k from West of England Combined Authority for project entitled "DETI - PoC2 - CFMS/NCC Design Automation of Next Generation Automotive Systems" (joint with Prof Chris Brace, Mech Eng). Dr Paulo Rocha and Mr Steve Watts had recently resigned and will be leaving the University at the end of this semester. Dr Jonathan Graham-Harper-Cater recently appointed as Lecturer (Teaching), was previously on 12 months fixed term contract.
- d) Prof Gary Lock (HoD Mechanical Engineering) was pleased to report that Sophie Parsons had been selected to be part of the National Engineering Policy Centre working group on Decarbonisation and Alan Hunter received a Doctoral Recognition Award 2020. Two new members of academic staff had recently joined the Dept. - Dr Aaron Costall, Imperial College, joined as a Reader and Dr Daniel Coren, Brighton University, joined as a Senior Lecturer. The Dept. had been successful in a number of grant awards over the summer period including an EPSRC award of £146k to Richard Butler.
- e) Prof Tim Ibell (Associate Dean L&T) was delighted to report that the Curriculum Transformation (CT) proposals for the UG course in Civil Engineering had been given final approval and ringing endorsement by the University's CT Committee. It was fantastic to see that the climate emergency and the digital revolution were at the heart of these curriculum proposals. Professor Ibell noted that the Education, Quality & Standards Committee (EQSC) would shortly be reviewing NSS action plans and that Dept feedback to him on PTES was due imminently.

The Chair provided a brief update on REF preparations. He commented that Professor Mattia and the REF delivery team continue to make an immense contribution and investment of time and energy to the project.

**1861 LIBRARY MATTERS**

The Board noted the 'While You Were Away' 2020 library report.

**1862 ANY OTHER BUSINESS.** There were no other items of business.