

Institute of Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science
SSCC Physics 2nd March, 2016 - 13:00 Physics Common Room

Present: Chris Finlayson (cef2), Chris Lorch (chl38), Katie Hope (klh12), Nick Mellor (ndm1), Paola Montoya (pgm2), Dean Clarke (dct2), Xing Li (xxl), Nia Ellis (nrj), Gareth Stephens (gfs2), Sandy Spence (axs), Gwenno Foster Evans (gmf5), Rachel Evans (ree21), Dave Langstaff (dpl), Andy Evans (dne), Tom Cross (thc26), Chloe Sumner (cus49), Naveen Vijayan (nav), Giselle Morris (grm4), Edwin Filkkema (edf), Balazs Pinter (bap), Jackie Hedley (qah, Minutes)

1. **Apologies for absence:** Eleri Pryse, Luke Searle, Alex Pitchford, Ryan Cutter, Phoebe Holcombe
2. **Election of Student Chair for 2015/2016 session:** Rachel Evans was elected in previous meeting.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting – 11th November 2015:** accepted
4. **Matters Arising from the minutes of 11th November 2015**

4.1. Actions

Action number	Minute number	Action	Whose action	Action status
1	4.2.	Contact the Director of Infrastructure, Dave Price, concerning available study areas for all years	RE	Ongoing - rooms 307 and 410 will be available shortly. Need to be carpeted and will have whiteboards, desks and chairs. Room 106 and 41/42 in CS are now ready, each with 5 PC's for use.
2	5.1.2.	Discuss lack of preparation time for tests with the coordinators of the module(s) in question	Year 1 Reps.	Phoebe was dealing with this, but not present today. No issues this semester.
3	5.2.3.	Circulate the lab timetable and encourage lab use	Year 2 Reps.	Message has been shared on FB.
4	5.4.1.	Discuss 11/12/2015 assignment pile up with EP	Year 4 Reps.	This was discussed and some dates moved. Future dates have been looked at to prevent the problem arising again.
5	5.4.2.	Advertise the use of Computer Science computer rooms to all Physics students	RE	Rachel advertised this on FB.
6	5.4.2.	Request that FORTRAN is installed in all the 24 hour computer rooms around the University	SS	Sandy confirmed that this can be run through other programmes such as PuTTY.
7	5.4.3.	Investigate the possibility of changing the status of the part 2 lab printer	SS	Done

5. Student Matters

5.1 Year 0

It was noted that there are many absences on modules PH02520, MP12910 and PH06520 in particular. The process of attendance monitoring (MOPS) was discussed, explaining how this progresses to Year Tutor and to Institute Director of Undergraduate Studies.

It was suggested that attendance levels may be affected by electronic swipe cards.

Balazs asked that staff and students are considerate when someone returns from a period of absenteeism, as there may be sensitive reasons behind the non-attendance.

5.2 Year 1

Students raised the point that they thought staff seemed very busy in the post exam period, in comparison to other times of the year. It was noted that the start of semester 2 teaching and end of exam period coincide in January, but there is no overlap in May. It was asked whether there would be a possibility of more teaching staff, and it was reported that 2 new teaching posts have been filled by Tom Knight and Maire Gorman this year.

It was suggested that maybe there could be more staff allocated to the Foundation Year scheme.

5.3 Year 2

5.3.1 Exam grades Grades on two modules were not correctly reported following the introduction of a new examination process this year. This was identified and resolved and should not reoccur in May. Students felt that the communication regarding the matter could have been clearer.

5.3.2 Assignments Students asked if assignments could be provided at the start of term, to allow time to manage their time and make a start as early as possible. It was noted that they felt some assignments were too long for the timescale given. The compulsory announcement of assignments at the beginning of the semester should be raised at the Institute L & T.

5.3.3 Gregynog The general consensus was that everyone loved it!! They said that more extra-curricular activities would be welcomed.

5.3.4 Visiting Day interruptions Several students mentioned that their lecture in IBERS 0.26 was interrupted on the last Wednesday Visiting Day by the department that was using the room at 1.00pm. The lecturer was asked to hurry up and finish the lecture.

1. ACTION: Students have been asked that if it happens again, to ask which department they are from, along with their name. The issue can then be reported (e.g. Tell us Now)

5.3.5 Discussion Forums Students raised the issue of not being able to have discussion forums on all modules on Blackboard. It was suggested that the module coordinator could be emailed to see if they would set up the discussion group for that particular module. A current group is set up on PH25510 (dpl). Nia (IS) mentioned that there is now a Blackboard App that can be used on mobile devices, which will send notifications.

5.4 Year 3

5.4.1 Blackboard Students raised the issue that they thought that Blackboard was not used to its full potential. It was suggested that it could be used to auto alert deadline announcements. Students were informed that as of September 2016, all lectures or lecture content will be recorded and made available. Students were concerned that this may result in people then not attending lectures in person.

5.4.2 Dissertation marking It was raised by the students, that they felt that the marking of dissertations was inconsistent. They said that they would like to know the do's and don'ts for dissertation content, so that everyone is working within the same guidelines. It was also mentioned that the marking of the literature reviews was very varied too. Students requested all marks to be given back at the same time to all students.

2. ACTION: Staff to discuss at the next subject group meeting.

5.5 Year 4

5.5.1 Communicating Topics Students highlighted the fact that other Universities receive 6 credits, rather than the 4 credits applied by AU. Balazs has queried this before and this is a matter that could be raised at the annual review of teaching. Students have asked if the trip to Gregynog could be held earlier in the year, to help with job and PhD applications, possibly around Fresher's week. Currently there is no 5 day period available in the early part of the academic year.

5.5.2 Careers Students have asked for more encouragement with Employability matters, in particular, Summer Internships, year or semester out in employment, drop in sessions, CV writing and practice interviews. It was noted that the recent Careers Fair was very Computer Science based, so next year, more Physics based companies need to be involved.

5.5.3 Physics Magazine Raquel Taylor is currently in charge of producing the Physics magazine, and is looking for someone to take over when she finishes. Also, if anyone has any articles to be included, please let your rep know.

5.6 Postgraduates

Nothing to report – Alex is currently away.

5.7 Welsh Medium

Gwenno confirmed that the visible representation of the Welsh language has greatly improved.

6. Staff Matters

6.1 Careers & Employability It was agreed that this would be kept as a permanent item on the agenda. IS also brought to the attention of the meeting, that a Keynote database is currently being trialed. It will be advertised on the weekly email, but can be accessed by following the link below.

<http://aberssel.blogspot.co.uk/2016/02/boost-your-employability-with-our.html> It enables students to research employers before the interview stage.

3. ACTION: Reps to spread the word about this, and make sure that positive feedback is given to support the purchase of the database.

6.2 Diversity & Inclusion It was agreed that Diversity and Inclusion should be put on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

6.3 Tell Us Now The TUN team have asked if they can send a representative to attend the next meeting. It was agreed that they could be invited at the start of the meeting, but that more information about the reason behind this would need to be gathered. It was also noted that staff and students were slightly concerned about what they would get from TUN attending the meeting.

4. ACTION: Rachel to email and invite TUN to the next meeting, then decide whether or not for them to be included in a more formal capacity.

6.4 Student Polls Student reps have expressed that it could be a good idea to try and arrange for some type of poll to be set up, to make sure that all students have somewhere to voice their concerns. This way there would be no excuse not to have your voice heard! It was mentioned that maybe a poll sheet could be sent around at the same time as the register in a class, whereby all that would be need is a tick in a box. It was felt that there would be more of an uptake, if the poll was done in study time rather than their own. Sandy said that he could check to see if there was a possibility of a suitable web poll.

5. ACTION: Sandy to investigate further regarding the possibility of a web based poll.

7. AOB

7.1 Nia Ellis - update on IS issues. She emailed a summary of her points, which includes 2 items that were not raised due to lack of time – please see below:

1. Simon French, the current Physics subject librarian, has left his post and therefore any queries or concerns should be sent to acastaff@aber.ac.uk. We are currently recruiting to replace this Subject Librarian post, with the post holder starting in the job 1 June 2016 at the earliest.
2. IS User Survey – **please** can both students and staff make an effort to fill in the IS User Survey which runs for all of March. <https://aber.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/issurvey2016> . IS depend heavily on this data when deciding on planning priorities for the forthcoming year. Chance to win £100 Amazon voucher for participating
3. More books <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/library/morebooks/>. Opportunity for students to request books for the library
4. Physical Sciences Library – new chairs have been installed. New tables on their way as well. Please let IS know of any ideas/issues with this space. Do students want group study to remain or not?
5. Loan stock at Hugh Owen and Thomas Parry Libraries (free service). – Laptops, tablets, projectors, microphones, voice recorders, flipcams etc. See <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/media/loans/> for full list

I also raised during the discussion on Employability that we are having a trial of Keynote database – see <http://aberssel.blogspot.co.uk/2016/02/boost-your-employability-with-our.html> and please provide feedback to acastaff@aber.ac.uk. Note that the more positive feedback we get, the better the case we can make to purchase this database.

Also, I didn't mention in the meeting because of lack of time, but would appreciate if you could send out the following 2 message to staff:

Digitisation. IS are moving to a digitise on request service for chapters and journal articles being digitised through Aspire. "Please digitise" Please add "Please digitise" as a note to library to any chapter or article in an Aspire that you want IS to digitise for the 2016-2017 academic year as soon as possible, regardless of whether IS have digitised it before or not, and remember to re-publish.

The deadline for Semester 1 and Semester 1 & 2 module lists on Aspire is now July 31st.

AberForward trainees

If you are planning to recruit AF trainees and they are going to be adding reading lists to Aspire, please ensure that it is included in the job description. Then the trainees will be offered Aspire training on their first day.

Thanks
Nia

Nia Ellis

Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Cwsmeriaid a Chysylltiadau Academaidd / Customer Services and Academic Engagement Manager

Gwasanaethau Gwybodaeth / Information Services

7.2 The next meeting will be arranged for after Easter

Action table

No.	Minute No	Action	Whose Action	By	Action Status
1	5.3.4	Students asked to email a complaint via TUN, if lectures are interrupted again by a Visiting Day	Students /Reps		
2	5.4.2	Staff to discuss marking of dissertations at next subject group	SEP		
3	6.1	Student reps to spread the read about using Keynote database and to give positive feedback where possible	Student Reps		
4	6.3	A member of the TUN team to be invited to the next meeting	RE		
5	6.4	Investigate the possibility of finding a suitable web based poll for students use.	SS		