



**Sefydliad Mathemateg a Ffiseg**  
**Institute of Mathematics & Physics**

# PHYSICS

## STUDENT/STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November at 2.00pm  
 In Room 319, Physical Sciences Building

### MINUTES

#### Present:

Chair:	Mr James Carter	JAC08	PG Rep
Secretary:	Miss Sarah Spring	RMS	Staff
	Dr Martin Wilding	MBW	Staff
Visitor	Dr Balazs Pinter	BAP	Staff
	Dr Tarlochan Virdi	TSV	Administrator
	Mr Robert Cooper	RWC	IS /Library Rep
	Phoebe Murphy	PHM1	Year 1 Rep
	John Gannaway	JOG2	Year 1 Rep
	Joseph Hutton	JOH9	Year 2 Rep
	Clare McLoughlin	CPM8	Year 3 Rep
	Robert Palmer	RIP8	Year 3 Rep
	Karl Stokes	KWS7	Year 4 Rep
	Jennifer Herbert	JEH8	Physoc
Apologies:	Natasha Barker	NAB11	Year 1 Rep
	Keiron Pizzey	KPP7	Year 4 Rep
	Tegwen Meredith	MZM	IS/Library Rep
	Gwenan Pritchard	GWP9	Year 2 Rep

#### 1. Minutes of the Last Meeting

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010 were approved.

#### 2. Appointment of Chair

2.1 Postgraduate student representative James Carter was appointed Chair.

#### 3. Matters Arising

3.2 MBW confirmed that he had drawn up a schedule of assignment deadlines for this session and that fortnightly deadlines would be set for lab assignments.

- 3.4 MBW reported that the issue of space in labs had been evaluated and that for this session the Part 2 lab had been split into two.
- 3.4 MBW confirmed that two hour lecture slots for MP26020 slots had been abolished.
- 3.6 MBW stated that he had not yet done this.
- 5.1 RMS confirmed that she had spoken to Barry Henley and that a Year 0 student rep had been recruited.
- 5.2 MBW stated that this was currently being reevaluated as part of the Teaching Implementation Group/TAG upgrade.

### 3. Student Matters

#### Yr 0:

- 3.1 No Issues to report.

#### Yr 1:

- 3.2 JOG2 requested that students were given a full week to complete and submit assignments for PH14310: The Quantum Universe.

**Action: MBW to look into the issue of on PH14310: The Quantum Universe.**

- 3.3 JOG2 reported that some first year students didn't feel that the time allotted during the first four weeks was sufficient to complete all four experiments for PH15720: Introduction to Computational and Experimental Physics.

**Action: MBW to look into the possibility of a allocating a longer period for experiments on PH15720: Introduction to Computational and Experimental Physics.**

#### Yr 2:

- 3.4 JOH9 asked whether the first half of the Thursday 11am – 1pm teaching slot on PH24010: Data Handling and Statistics in the Part 2 Lab, could be held in a centrally timetabled lecture room instead. JOH9 explained that as the labs were being shared this session, the noise level in the lab was distracting.

**Action: MBW to raise the issue of shared lab sessions at the next Management Board Meeting.**

#### Yr 3:

- 3.5 CPM8 asked whether it would be possible for students to have lockers in the building. TSV explained that he was currently looking into the possibility of a establishing a student common room which could be a possible location for student lockers.

**Action: TSV to look into the possibility of establishing a student common room and providing student lockers.**

- 3.6 CPM8 stated that students found the noise levels in labs and also the library unacceptable and asked whether the no noise rules could be more strenuously enforced. CPM8 asked whether there could be one designated lab for group work and the other as a quiet work space. RWC reminded students that the top floor in the Hugh Owen Library is a designated quiet space. TSV pointed out that the Foyer would be fully furnished in due course, which would provide students with another space.

**Action: MBW to look into the possibility of designation one lab for group work and the other as a quiet work space**

**Action: RWC to notify the Physics Librarian of the fact that students are unhappy with the noise levels in the Library.**

**Action: TSV to report on the progress of the Foyer refurbishment at the next SSCC meeting.**

- 3.7 CPM8 asked whether suggestion boxes could be put in labs. TSV stated that this could be arranged.

**Action: TSV to set up suggestion boxes in all labs.**

- 3.8 CPM8 asked whether signs could be put up outside labs when exams are taking place inside.

**Action: MBW to speak to SDF, DPL and CIW regarding signage outside labs when exams are taking place.**

#### Yr 4:

- 3.9 KWS7 reported that noise in labs was a real problem. KWS7 also reported that space in labs was becoming critical which posed a problem to students who have to use lab computers due to the software/programmes such as IDL, which they required.

**Action: TSV to look into the issue of specialised software (IDL) accessibility via for all IMAPS Pc's.**

**Action: MBW to look into timetables outside labs to show students when labs are occupied and if so, whether it will be a quiet session.**

- 3.10 KWS7 asked whether it would be possible to have a quiet room with IDL access for 4<sup>th</sup> year students to work on their dissertations. TSV stated that this was already being looked into.

- 3.11 KWS7 stated that students on PHM41310: Communicating Physics wanted more guidance with writing articles and dissertations.

**Action: MBW to look into recruiting a PG student to provide students with further guidance on dissertation and article writing on PHM41310: Communicating Physics.**

#### PGs:

- 3.12 No Issues to Report.

#### 4. Staff Matters

- 4.1 MBW reported that the department was still in the process of appointing new teaching staff. MBW explained that the search for a replacement for Dr Tudor Jenkins was still ongoing and that it would be at least three months until the position was filled (with interviews taking place on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010). MBW explained that there was therefore currently an uneven distribution of teaching duties, which could affect students.
- 4.2 BAP stated that Wednesday afternoon deadlines should not be set as it is a social/sports day for students.

#### 5. National Student Survey

- 5.1 MBW reported that Physics didn't score very highly and that the issues of feedback, feedback provision and employability were largely responsible. MBW explained that this would be dealt with by model answers for all assignments being posted on Blackboard within two weeks of assignments being set and that tutors were to discuss the results in tutorials. MBW reported that there would also be a fixed timetable for assignments. TSV reminded all students to complete the student questionnaires this year and stated that they would be given out in week 9.

#### 6. Employability

- 6.1 MBW stated that he had drafted a departmental Employability Strategy following on from the AU strategy and asked students to provide feedback on this (***Please See attached document/Page 6***).
- 6.2 CPM8 and JOG2 stated that they felt that some guidance/training on giving presentations would be very helpful. CPM8 suggested that students could be given mock job interviews at Gregynog.

**Action: MBW to look into arranging mock interviews for students at Gregynog for next year.**

- 6.3 CPM8 asked whether medical physics work experience could be arranged.

**Action: MBW to look into arranging more work experience placements for students interested in medical physics.**

- 6.4 KWS7 asked whether talks could be arranged for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Year students about careers in Physics Masters. MBW stated that PGCE courses for teaching careers in physics schemes were also a possibility as were talks and CV writing workshops. TSV suggested that records of old students and their profiles would also be helpful. JAC08 pointed out that PhD students were also a good resource for information about career options.

**Action: MBW to look into arranging career talks, workshops and training possibilities and provide an update on this at the next SSCC meeting.**

**7. AOB**

- 5.1 JAC08 asked student representatives to provide feedback on the recent SSCC training sessions, arranged by the Aberystwyth Guild of Students. CPM8 and KWS7 stated that they had thought the training to be largely useless. JOG2 reported that there had been very limited spaces on the shorter summery sessions which were only two hours long – no need to have a whole day. Jimmy – does it mean you cannot be a rep? MBW, TSV – NO.

Phoebe - emails

**Action:****6. Date of the Next Meeting**

- 6.1 The next meeting will be held in the second week of February 2011 (date TBC subject to Semester 2 Timetable).

## IMAPS EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY, NOVEMBER 2010

## INTRODUCTION

Employability is an important part of the Aberystwyth University mission and IMAPS is committed to integrating employability into the learning and teaching agenda and to ensuring that personal development and employability is central to the student experience. As defined by the CBI, employability is that “set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure that they have capability of being effective in the workplace.....”. Within this context, IMAPS is committed to providing opportunities for its students to develop academic and personal skills that will enhance their employability, through extra and co-curricular activities, work experience, personal development and career management.

The IMAPS strategy (subject to management board approval) is based on the six strategic aims outlined in the AU employability strategy 2009-2014.

1. To increase the awareness of staff, current and prospective students of employability.
  1. Employability and graduate skills are to be incorporated into marketing materials and open and visiting day talks.
  2. Ensure that there is a common understanding of employability and identify these attributes in an ideal IMAPS graduate.
  3. Include Careers Advisory Service (CAS) induction talks during as part of the registration process. There will also be follow up talks in later years.
  4. Promote a culture of active and reflective learning in IMAPS.
2. To place emphasis on and to embed employability within the curriculum.
  1. Identify a key member of staff who will have specific responsibility for personal development and employability.
  2. Integration of employability skills into the existing curriculum, specifically into core modules. In addition to dedicated modules such as MP12910, (communicating skills).
  3. Continued development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Gregynog careers experience which currently includes talks from career professionals to include activities such as simulated work experience and related activities.
  4. Promote opportunities such as those provided by the Year in employment Scheme (YES), GO Wales placements, ERASMUS schemes and study abroad programmes.
  5. Establish new initiatives in collaboration with the Institute of Physics (IOP) and the Institute of Mathematics and Analysis (IMA) including lunchtime employability seminars.
3. To fully utilise personal development planning (PDP)
  1. Use of the electronic PDP within the personal tutorial system to develop academic and employability skills.
  2. Use of other electronic resources within IMAPS, the Institute of Physics (IOP), Institute of Mathematics and its applications (IMA) and similar organisations to support the PDP.
  3. Use and development of IMAPS web pages to identify employability skills and to build and enhance relationships between IMAPS and local, national and international

employers.

4. To provide and promote work experience and work place understanding.
  1. To work with CAS to promote workplace opportunities for students.
  2. Integrate work placements and tasters into the curriculum where appropriate (e.g. as part of final year projects or summer projects).
  3. Develop opportunities within IMAPS to support employability skills such as peer mentoring or school demonstration, student exchanges etc.
5. To develop greater engagement with prospective employers
  1. Develop and maintain contact with graduating students through social networking sites.
  2. Create a steering group of potential employers and other professionals who will provide input into into the curriculum and employability initiatives.
  3. In collaboration with CAS and other departments establish an employability fair in which former graduates and employers present strategies for employment.
6. To strengthen and build on existing partnerships between faculties, departments, the careers advisory service (CAS) and Commercialisation and Consultancy Services (CCS).
  1. Develop a careers section and notice board on the departmental website.
  2. In collaboration with CAS encourage students to make full use of the careers service to develop an understanding of employer needs.
  3. Build on and develop links already established with CCS.
  4. Publicize the personal profiles of former IMAPS students now in current employment among current and prospective students.

#### EVALUATION.

Development of an effective employability strategy requires continual review and development. The structures outlined above must be continually reviewed taking into account external factors such as graduate employment rates, year-to-year variability in student performance and the outcomes of the employability strategy itself. The strategy will be monitored through the mechanism of the staff student consultative committee, statistics on student destinations, preparation of annual report and to be presented to all IMAPS staff and the management board and through informal discussions in personal tutorials.