



SEFYDLIAD MATHEMATEG A FFISEG  
INSTITUTE OF MATHEMATICS AND PHYSICS

PWYLLGOR YMGYNGHOROL MYFYRWYR/STAFF (FFISEG)  
STUDENT/STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (PHYSICS)

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 12 DECEMBER 2012 AT 1.00 P.M. IN THE STAFF COMMON ROOM

**Present:** Kevin Wingfield (Year 4, Chair), Caitlin Jones (Year 4), Natasha Barker (Year 3), Steven Kelly (Year 3, Secretary), Thomas Smith (Year 3), Osian Morgan (Year 1), Gavin Gray (Year 0).

**Staff:** Dr Eleri Pryse (Year 4 Coordinator, Deputy Director of Learning and Teaching), Sahn Nikoi (Information Services), Alan Jones (Director of Learning and Teaching).

**Apologies:** Rachel Cross (Postgraduate), Guy Stimpson (Year 1), Calum Gardner (Year 2), Dr Chris Finlayson (Year 2 Coordinator), Dr Dave Langstaff (Year 1 Coordinator), Dr Martin Wilding.

**In attendance:** Llinos Evans and Trystan Pugh.

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1. MINUTES OF MEETING OF 7 NOVEMBER 2012

The minutes were confirmed and approved.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 7 NOVEMBER 2012

**Role of Student Representatives:** Each representative had received a booklet from the Students Union giving guidance on their duties as student representative. They felt that it was important to raise awareness of their roles in the department and had already used Facebook for this. Students asked if posters could be displayed in the department and on Blackboard/website giving the names and photographs of the student representatives. This would promote their roles and give guidance to fellow students of whom to contact with issues they wished to raise. It was decided that the Department would contact all student representatives to ask permission for their photographs to be displayed.

LIE and TP

**Late arrival at lectures:** An e-mail pointing out the importance of arriving promptly at lectures had been sent to all IMAPS students.

3. SEMESTER 1 QUESTIONNAIRES

The results of the recent questionnaire exercise were tabled and discussed. The questionnaire response rate varied significantly across the modules, with scope to increase the overall rate of response. The low response to the practical sessions did not reflect the actual attendance. Electronic submission was suggested, but this had already been trialled by some departments with even lower response rates. The results for PH38410 were queried; this will be checked. PHM4410 showed a low rating for organisation, but students indicated that the reason for this had been cited and that steps were being taken to address this. The results of the completed questionnaires will be discussed by staff in detail to identify scope for improvements prior to next session.

4. STUDENT MATTERS

**Year 0**

The representative said that Blackboard was confusing and used in different ways by different lecturers and students. During the discussion it became apparent that this was partly because different lecturers had different styles of working leading to varying layouts on Blackboard. It was also because Blackboard had been updated.

Sahm Nikoi explained that two days had been set aside in the Library during Induction Week for students to familiarise themselves with Blackboard etc. It was unfortunate that no IMAPS student had taken advantage of this. Sahm confirmed that he would be available in the Physics Library between 2 and 4.30 p.m. each Thursday to provide any such support to students.

Also mentioned was that information received by students prior to the start of term did not contain a preliminary reading list. The student felt that there were two textbooks that covered most of their modules, and it was suggested that these were included in a preliminary reading list.

#### **Year 1**

There were no issues to report.

#### **Year 2**

No representatives were present.

#### **Year 3**

Students enquired about the submission date for Professor Zhongfu Zhou's assignment and to whom it should be submitted. Staff were not aware of the issue here and agreed to look into it.

The representatives also reported problems with Blackboard, which had broken down several times recently in the Physical Sciences building and at other sites on campus. There had also been problems with M-drive and with FORTRAN. Information Services have responsibility for resolving technical problems with Blackboard and M-drive. However, students are asked to report the problems with FORTRAN and any other IMAPS computer support issues to Martin Vickers by email to [imaps-cs@aber.ac.uk](mailto:imaps-cs@aber.ac.uk).

Students asked if the exam timetable was now correct. They were concerned that two exams were scheduled for the same day and also that exams had appeared on the timetable for modules not assessed by formal examination. Students were told that they would not have two examinations on the same day and that the problem of extra examinations appearing would be rectified.

#### **Year 4**

The representatives enquired if it is possible to display a time-table of laboratory usage outside the laboratories so that students could see easily when the laboratories were free. This will be investigated.

They also asked if past examination papers for 2011/12 could be put up on the IMAPS website. This was in progress.

Computing updating issues were raised regarding IDL and gnuplot. These will be referred to Martin Vickers, and students are asked to report any IMAPS computer support issues to Martin Vickers as mentioned above.

#### **Postgraduates**

The representative was not present

### **5. STAFF MATTERS**

No matters to report.

### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Sahm Nikoi reminded of the More Books Campaign. He reported that the current photocopier/printer in the IMAPS library would be replaced in the New Year and that it would then be possible to print directly from a USB drive. Drop-in sessions would be reintroduced in the library on Thursday afternoons; an email will be circulated to inform all students.

The Chair wished all students and staff a Merry Christmas and all enjoyed refreshments and mince-pies at the end of the meeting. The meeting closed at 2.00 p.m.

The next meeting will be held in February 2013 before students receive their examination results.