

**Education Committee**

**Thursday 16th April 2020, 5:30pm – Microsoft Teams Meeting**  
 **MINUTES**

1. Welcome and Introduction (DG)
2. Apologies

* Valeria (Economics)

1. Matters Arising

* Student survey of digital teaching and remote exams (AB)
* AB: Hopefully we have all received the student survey of digital teaching and remote exams. Essentially, the University has cancelled MEQs for this semester, but there will be three different surveys on the student experience of online teaching and exams: i) a survey coming out around about the end of teaching, asking about your experience of online teaching; ii) survey taking place during and after exams regarding remote exam experience; iii) survey at the end of the summer asking PGT (Masters) students how their dissertation experience has been
* AB: University would like this survey to be in a format which generates good response rate ad helpful feedback. University has a few questions for us (see below):
* AB: i) Balance between open-ended and tick-style questions? Would writing text be a better way of giving feedback despite it taking longer to complete?
* AH: Give students the option to write their own comments for the questions. Works in her School with feedback
* AB: Rating and then the option for free text under each question
* CC, SR, KW, NT: Agree with AH, especially given the tricky circumstances
* AB: ii) Would students prefer to complete a survey per module they study or just one survey for their overall experience with open-ended questions to talk about their individual modules if they wish?
* AB and KW: The former option seems better
* KW: If they have only one survey, they may go into less detail about each module
* JH: If you do it at the modular level, you may receive more negative feedback and the focus on best practice may fall away
* SR: Would this not be good insofar as we don’t have MEQs, so people may want to leave specific modular-level feedback, so the modules can improve?
* NT: Could it not be one survey with a bunch of generic questions on one page and a space to talk about each module on another page?
* CC: May not logistically be possible?
* EC: If you were to hand out one survey, it wouldn’t need to be specific to each student, it could just say ‘type in your module code’. That way, it’s the same format for each student without having to put too much work into it from the University’s end
* AB: Yes, and we could have a ‘landing page’ for general comments which can then take you to specific comments. A general comments and then specific comments
* KW: One survey that the entire University sends out or modules surveys sent out by Departments?
* AB: Just one survey for each of the three stages (mentioned above)
* NT: Will Schools be able to add in additional questions? E.g. Medics and Arts students’ teaching and learning experiences may be very different regarding online teaching
* AB: Completely agrees with AT. Don’t know yet; early stages designing it
* **ACTION for AB:** Will raise the above comment (but doesn’t know if it will be logistically possible)
* AB: These surveys will help form best practice, but these will also be other ways of giving feedback (e.g. Academic Monitoring Dialogue)
* There will be the opportunity for staff to get feedback from Schools individually in the future
* AB: Any other comments to pass forward? (No comments)
* Volunteering Log (AB)
* AB: Went through all of the volunteering hours and approved them all. Feel free to keep adding volunteer hours
* AB: If you are a graduating student, the School President position will be added to your transcript, as long as you submitted the report in January
* AB: Deadline for final submission of hours is the 15th of May for graduating students in order to have volunteering hours on your transcript. If you would like volunteering award(s) to go on your transcript, you need to write a reflective essay and the deadline for this is the 22nd of May
* **ACTION for AB:** Send all School Presidents further key details of the above

1. AOCB

* KW: Does anyone know about anything the University is doing for postgraduate Master’s students right now? Became clear through their SSCC that the one-year Master’s students are quite unhappy and affected
* AB: Had a few meetings with the PG Academic Convenor. Some concerns raised at the PGR Executive Forum (concerns that there wasn’t any postgrad specific info. coming out). Uni explained that a long of info at the start regarding the gov and closure of halls was for everyone. Claire’s equivalent for postgrads has sent out some information to them. Next week, AB has the PGT forum, which will be attended by the Proctor and the Deans. PGT Executive reps can feed back at that time; AB hasn’t had any queries come forward from PGTs. For their (PGT) dissertations, there will be no S-coding, but this situation is being dealt with on the School-/Department-level. University is aware that the PGT students have had huge obstructions during their entire PGT degree; University is trying to deliver teaching in despite of this. Are there other things that PGTs would like clarification on?
* SB: PGTs are very vocal in Computer Science; roughly 160 PGTs taken in. All PGTs are demanding refunds and loads of other stuff. The SSCC information has just been collected and SB does not know what to do with them really. In the same area as KW; anyone have any advice?
* ES: In the same boat as well, as the Grad School is just consisting of postgrads. Just discussed refunds earlier and they decided to schedule an emergency SSCC next Monday. The only update: the help-desk for when students are in financial need, which helped to ease and calm down students a little bit (thanks to Jamie’s advice regarding the bursary). Still, there has been a lot of disruptions for the PGTs. Waiting to see what comes out of the SSCC next Monday
* AB: Can understand why students feel this way about refunds. University thinks given that there are about 9,000 students, it would be impossible to qualify who is deserving of a refund and who isn’t. Staff have also done their best regarding delivering teaching and assessment despite COVID-19. Of course, there is time not being made up due to strikes. Echo what Jamie has said regarding encouraging students to use the student hardship fund. Moreover, if students are worried about paying rent or coming back after the summer, then please do encourage them to access the aforementioned fund. Currently, AB thinks Jamie is also trying to get a campaign together to get students to work on farms around St Andrews who may have wanted to work in St Andrews over the summer
* NT: Heard from one student trying to apply to the hardship fund that she couldn’t get the info required because everything got shut down. NT doesn’t know what to say to her
* AB: If NT could find out what the student’s issue was, he can email Jamie about it (**ACTION for NT**)
* ES: Issue about socials and careers events that could no longer take place in the Grad School. Every Friday, the Careers Centre now delivers online events for job applications (etc.) for Grad School students. This may be an option for others, too. The Careers Centre is very open to put these remote solutions in place
* ES: The Graduate School Director launched the Journal Club for Interdisciplinary Studies on MS teams as a platform to keep in touch socially but also to discuss and analyse the current situation (e.g., by inviting guest speakers, uploading papers or notes on the respective papers, offering Q&A sessions) on a regular basis. This Journal Club is intended as a mean to touch bases over the summer/ dissertation period since face-to-face meetings/ tea afternoons/ trips can no longer be realised in their traditional format
* AH: Are we allowed to tell our School’s students that MEQs are not happening? Want to make sure students respond to the student feedback forms AH has sent around
* AB: AB cannot comment on this, but she can check for AH with the Proctor (**ACTION for AB**)
* NT: Regarding the VIPs, is the University thinking of plans for any non-credit bearing versions/are there any non-credit bearing versions available? Medicine never allows students to take a non-medicine module and it’s kind of like a missed opportunity for students if they are only credit-bearing
* AB: Interesting point NT. Are other Schools in this situation?
* AB: VIP structure adopted from the University of Georgia. Doesn’t think this has been discussed, but AB can raise this at the next Working Group on such matters (**ACTION for AB**)