The meeting of the School Academic Committee of the School of Physics, Astronomy and Mathematics held on 19 June 2019.

PRESENT:
Professor M Thompson (Chairman)
Professor E Brinks
Dr M J Cahill
Dr C Carvalho
Dr C Chemel
Dr J L Collett
Dr S J Kane
Dr M Krause
Dr Y Peresse
Professor D Pinfield
Ms M Rivers-Latham
Dr J Stevens

IN ATTENDANCE:
Mrs M Aristidou
Mrs S Dunk
Mrs M Golder

APOLOGIES:
Miss L Buckwell
Professor P H Kaye
Mr A Saji
Dr S Kaviraj
Mrs J Ratcliffe
Professor R Sokhi


702 MEMBERSHIP

Noted: the membership of the committee (Agenda Paper 2, refers).

702.1 Membership category 3: ‘Where no Heads of Department had been appointed within the School, two (2) Subject Group Leaders’

The Committee wished Professor P H Kaye well for his retirement.

702.2 Membership category 13: ‘At least one (1) and not more than three (3) student representatives nominated for terms of office of one (1) year’

Noted: the terms of office of Miss L Buckwell and Mr A Saji concluded on 31 August 2019 and the Committee thanked them for their contribution.

703 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest by members, Officers in Attendance or others present in any of the matters to be considered during the meeting.

704 MINUTES – 13 March 2019

The minutes were confirmed and signed (Confidential Agenda Paper 4, refers).
705 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

705.1 Any other matters arising not taken elsewhere on the Agenda.

Noted: the current format of the School Academic Committee would be considered by the Academic Board at their meeting on 26 June 2019.

706 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGY – Minutes 571 and 624, refer

Noted: the School Academic Standards and Student Experience Action Plan (Confidential Agenda Paper 6, refers).

707 STUDENT RECRUITMENT – Minutes 572 and 625 refer

707.1 Received: a report from Dr J Stevens, Admissions Tutor (Confidential Agenda Paper 7, refers).

Minute 707.2 is confidential and is for members and officers in attendance only.

708 ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS – Minutes 573 and 626, refer

708.1 Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance)

708.1.1 Received: a report from Dr S Kane, Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance) (Confidential Agenda Paper 8.1, refers).

708.1.2 Noted:

i feedback from module exam boards was that there were too many errors going through. The moderation process would be changed to allow more time to scrutinise the papers to address this issue;

ii External Examiner recommendations included the consideration of anonymous marking of investigations, and the supervisor not being involved in the marking of investigations. The Committee agreed that this was a good suggestion. However, workable criteria from supervisors would be required;

iii External Examiner feedback had also recommended statistical analysis of exam papers outcomes. The MEF would be redesigned to have sections for the required analysis ready for next academic year;

iv the External Examiners had asked why were the module board reports anonymous? And why did the students have to be named? This would be raised with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience);

v the timeliness of exam and coursework marks had been an issue again this year. The late arrival of exam marks had put undue pressure on staff. A one-week turnaround on the marking of exam scripts would be beneficial and the academic calendar would need to have more time in between the exam and module boards. This would be raised with the Director of Academic Quality Assurance;

vi assessment deadlines would be added to Canvas by the end of July 2019 so that Programme Leaders could consider the assessment landscape;
the School had identified a need for the creation of a role to support students with mental health issues which had made up 70% of all disability cases. Training was available for all staff to help them deal with this issue.

708.2 Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports (AMERs), Annual Short Course Monitoring Reports and Annual Subject Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

Noted: all AMERs had been completed (Confidential Agenda Paper 8.1, refers).

708.3 Academic Standards and Audit Committee (ASAC) – Minute 568.3 refers

708.3.1 19 March 2019

708.3.2 Received: a report of the business discharged by ASAC (Agenda Paper 8.3.1, refers).

708.3.3 Noted:

i as part of the University’s ongoing conditions of registration on the OfS register of HE Providers, we were required to inform OfS of certain ‘reportable events’. These events included the loss of accreditation or registration by a PSRB;

ii Schools were reminded that if a programme lost PSRB accreditation/registration, this should be reported to Helen Davidson (Deputy Secretary and Registrar) for onward reporting to OfS and copied to Frank Haddleton for noting by the Committee. Schools also needed to distinguish between those programmes which were accredited or regulated (the loss of which does need reporting), and those programmes which were simply ‘recognised’ or ‘kitemarked’ (the loss of which does not constitute a reportable event).

708.4 7 May 2019

Noted: a report of the business discharged by ASAC (Agenda Paper 8.3.2, refers).

709 STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND LEARNING AND TEACHING – Minute 627 refers

709.1 Associate Dean of School (Learning and Teaching)

709.1.1 Received: the report of Dr J Collett, Associate Dean of School (Learning and Teaching) (Confidential Agenda Paper 9.1, refers).

709.1.2 Noted:

i a correction to Confidential Agenda Paper 9.1, the School Community Officer should be referred to as the School Community Organiser;

ii 2 School Community Organiser’s had been selected and would be sharing the role next Academic Year. The School were still awaiting on the decision if both would be funded.

709.2 National Student Survey (NSS)

709.2.1 Received: the NSS report (Confidential Agenda Paper 9.2, refers).

709.2.2 Noted: the final response rate for the School was 72% in line with the University’s of 73.6%. The split by programmes was: Mathematics 69%; Physics 60% and Astrophysics 83%. One of the main issues for the School was the loss of students who moved from the 4-year MPhys to the 3-year BSc programme. As they were registered on the longer programme, they then miss the opportunity to fill in the NSS.
709.3 **Student Educational Experience Committee (SEEC) – Minutes 476.3 and 504.3 refer**

709.3.1 **12 March 2019**

Noted: the report of the business discharged by SEEC (Agenda Paper 9.3.1, refers).

709.3.2 **21 May 2019**

Noted: the report of the business discharged by SEEC (Agenda Paper 9.3.2, refers).

709.4 **School Information Manager Report – Minute 656.4.2ii refers**

709.4.1 Received: an oral report from Ms M Rivers-Latham, Information Manager, Library and Computing Services.

709.4.2 Noted: the information budget had been submitted to the Finance Committee and the budget consultations had resulted in 1 print title being cancelled. The Committee expressed thank to Ms Rivers-Latham for her continued support.

709.5 **Student matters**

Noted: there were no further student matters for report.

710 **RESEARCH DEGREES – Minute 628 refers**

710.1 **Associate Dean’s Report**

Noted: there was nothing to report for this meeting.

711 **RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP – Minute 629 refers**

711.1 **Associate Dean’s Report**

711.1.1 Received: a report from Professor E Brinks, Associate Dean of School (Research) concerning any matters relating to research and scholarship (Confidential Agenda Paper 11.1, refers).

711.1.2 Noted:

i the Code of Practice had been adapted to ensure guidance compliance with research allocation and contracts made clearer;

ii academic and research staff (but not postdocs as they are not considered REFable) in the School were encouraged to address any queries they may have regarding the REF submission for UoA 9 (Physics) to Professor Brinks;

iii the School had produced a substantial number of high quality (potential 4*) outputs for the interim mock-REF. Four case studies had been defined and were in different stages of preparation;

iv the travel budget had been cut which had resulted in travel being restricted for both staff and students;

v the Committee congratulated everyone involved in the successful bid led by Bristol for an EPSRC funded CDT (Centre for Doctoral Training) in Aerosol Science. This would boost the number of PhD students within CACP/CRBT. The first wave of PhD students were being recruited. Most would be supervised by teams that straddled multiple Schools making this a truly interdisciplinary enterprise.
ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO – Minute 630 refers

Noted: there were no withdrawals or temporary suspensions reported at the Academic Development Committee meetings held on 30 January 2019 and 20 March 2019.

EXTERNAL EXAMINERS – Minute 573 refers

713.1 Noted: amendments to External Examiner appointments (Confidential Agenda Paper 13.1, refers).

713.2 Noted: items referred from the External Examiners (Confidential Agenda Paper 8.1, refers)

VALIDATIONS, PERIODIC REVIEWS AND REVALIDATIONS – Minute 576 refers

714.1 Noted: the schedule of validations, periodic reviews and revalidations (Confidential Agenda Paper 14.1, refers).

714.2 Received: oral assurances from Dr Kane, that none of the School’s validated or revalidated programmes had failed to commence within six (6) months of the date of approval.

AGENDA - PART II

Noted and approved: the remaining items in Part II of the Agenda (Items 716 to 722, refer.)

PROGRAMME COMMITTEES

Programme Committee – Meetings

Received: a report from Mrs M Aristidou, School Administration Manager concerning the date on which each of the Programme Committees met during the Academic Year together with confirmation from her that, as required by Standing Orders, the record of these meetings (Agenda, Agenda Papers and Minutes) had been placed in the Electronic Document Management System (Agenda Paper A.1, refers).

BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

Noted: amendments to the titles of the Short Course/Module and Programme Boards of Examiners established within the School by the Vice-Chancellor, their Chairs appointed by the Vice-Chancellor, and their memberships (Agenda Paper B, refers).

PROFESSORSHIPS, READERSHIPS AND HONORARY TITLES

Noted: any changes of professorships, readerships and honorary titles conferred by the Dean of School, the names of the individuals concerned and the dates of the term of conferment (commencement and conclusion) which also showed other senior academic titles (Reader, Reader Emeritus, Professor, Professor Emeritus) conferred on other members of the School by the Academic Board or the Board of Governors since the last meeting (Agenda Paper C, refers).
COMMITTEES OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD

Noted: reports of the minutes of meetings of the following committees and boards of the Academic Board, issued since the last meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Committee /Board</th>
<th>Date of Meeting</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Committee</td>
<td>2 May 2018</td>
<td><a href="https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/word_doc/0019/234235/2018-05-02-ECSIHP-Minutes.doc">https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/word_doc/0019/234235/2018-05-02-ECSIHP-Minutes.doc</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNIVERSITY POLICY AND REGULATION – COMPLIANCE

There were no matters concerning compliance with University policy and regulation which had not already been considered during the meeting.

RISK

There were no further risks inherent in the matters dealt with by the Committee during the meeting not discussed when the item was taken.

EMERGENCY BUSINESS

There was no emergency business.