Department of Pharmacology
Unconfirmed Minutes of Teaching Committee meeting
Held on Friday, 02 December at 9.00 am in the Seminar Room

Present: Robert Henderson (RMH) – Chair, Jo Dekkers (JD), Peter McNaughton (PAM), Colin Taylor (CWT), Ruth Murrell-Lagnado (RM-L), Rik van Veen (RVV), Roger Atance (RA) Virginia Searle (notes). Students: Stephen Rose – Part II, Alex Davies – NatSci, Charlotte Swanson – 1B Vet, Heather Farmer – 1B vet, Arham Qureshi – 1B Med

1 Apologies:
Lesley MacVinish

2 The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2011 were approved

3 Matters Arising from the minutes

3.1 External Examiner for Part II, 2012-2014
John Peters from Dundee has agreed to be Part II external. He has e mailed to make preliminary arrangements

3.2 Discontinuation of Chatterjee Part II Lectures
These lectures are not continuing. PAM will write to Prof Chatterjee to this effect Action: PAM

3.3 Modular Part II course – proposal from PAM for a 5 module course where students chose 4 modules.
This was not supported in the Academic Staff Meeting

3.4 Reply to Teaching and Learning Reviewers
This has been completed and sent to the FB

4 Matters to report

4.1 Faculty Board meeting(s) (RMH/PAM)
Dr David Summers (Genetics) has been appointed chair. The new Director of Education is Dr D Good (Department of Social and Developmental Psychology).

4.2 Biological Sciences Committee meetings October and November 2011 (LJM)
Nothing to report

4.3 MVST Part I Committee meeting (LJM)
Nothing to report

4.4 MVST Part 1 Review (RMH)
The review is nearing completion. The change most affecting this Department is that the structure of the Part 1B course will change and not include Options, thus allowing some extra time for core MoDA material.

4.5 NST Neuroscience Meeting (PAM/AJM)
Nothing to report about the meeting.

5 Second MB and Second Vet MB Senior and External Examiner Reports
There were no issues to report.

6 Second MB and Second Vet MB External Examiner Reply (PAM)
PAM had replied to Dr Curtis thanking him for his help.

7 Student Feedback
Notes form the three Course Review Meetings were discussed.

7.1 MODA
As there had been no vet reps at the feedback meeting, the two who attended this meeting gave comments on the following:
Dr Gibson – Anthelmintics
There were no negative reports. The handout was long but had a lot of substance and useful for future reference.
Dr Brearly – Aspects of Vet. Pharmacology.
There was very little content in both the lecture and the handout (apparently the handout the previous year was a lot better) and students felt they had not learnt much. We will talk to Mike Heritage about a solution for the future.

Additional comments
The drugs list came up again. Some vets would rather have a broad overview of the use of the drugs. In general the drugs list should be made shorter.
RMH again mentioned that when he gives some veterinary content at the end of his lecture, some medics leave, causing disruption and resentment among the vets.
Action: Referred to response to TLR.

Practical
Students would like an explanation at the beginning as to the reason for the practicals. They had not understood that the ‘practical’ exam is a numerical written paper with questions based on the results of the practicals.
The subject of our use of animal tissue in Practicals was brought up.

7.2 NST 1B Pharmacology
On the whole, the comments were favourable. However, LKH ‘s lectures could be structured better.

7.3 Part II/BBS
Generally good comments. Students liked 2 lecturers in discussion groups. Supervisions should not have more than 10 people. BJB’s with 5 people were very good (but this small number is not often possible). Some supervisions took place a long time after the lectures. One week later is ideal because its not too far ahead and gives time to read up.

Electronic feedback sheets would be better sent early in the year so they can be filled in as the year progresses.
Changes to external examining processes and documentation (TC021211.04)

All external examiners' reports should be made available, in full, to all students, with the sole exception of any confidential report which may be made to the Vice-Chancellor. Faculty Boards should consider how best to do this. This could be by publishing the reports on the Internet, in the course handbook, by making them available at the Faculty Library, for instance, or on request via a publicised route.

Action: These will in future be put on our website.

External Examiners can now submit their reports and coversheet electronically to vcexternalexaminers@admin.cam.ac.uk

Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Dates of Future meetings

Friday 16 March 2012 at 9.00 am
Friday 15 June 2012 at 9.00 am
Department of Pharmacology
Unconfirmed Minutes of Teaching Committee meeting
held on Friday, 16th March at 9.00 am in the Seminar Room


1 Apologies:
Jenny Morton, Heather Farmer (MoDA Vet), Charlotte Swanson (MoDA Vet), Arham Qureshi (MoDA Medic), Genjing Zhao (NST IB)

2 The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2011 were approved

3 Matters Arising from the minutes

3.1 Changes to external examining processes and documentation

All external examiners' reports should be made available, in full, to all students, with the sole exception of any confidential report which may be made to the Vice-Chancellor. **Action: Our External Reports have now been placed on our website (Raven protected).**

4 Matters to report

4.1 Faculty Board meeting(s) (RMH/PAM/LJM)
Nothing to report

4.2 Biological Sciences Committee meetings October and November 2011 (LJM)
Part II students from MVST had asked if it would be possible to avoid scheduling compulsory items (e.g. methods sessions) on the open days of large clinical schools (Cambridge, GKT (KCL) & UCL). Current information on Clinical School Open days was available at:

http://www.bio.cam.ac.uk/sbs/facbiol/mvst/clinical_opendays.htm

The information contained in the above website will also be routinely sent to Part II Course Organisers.

4.3 MVST Part I Committee meeting (LJM)
The Cttee approved the MoDA form and conduct notice:

*Medical and Veterinary Sciences Tripos, Part IB, Second M.B. and Second Veterinary M.B. Examination, 2012*

*The Faculty Board of Biology give notice that the form of the examinations for the Medical and Veterinary Sciences Tripos, Part IB, and the Second M.B. and...*
Second Veterinary M.B. Examination, which will be held in 2012, have changed as follows:

Mechanisms of Drug Action
*The Paper I List of Drugs will be distributed as part of the stationery supplied in the examination*

This notice has now been sent to the Education Section

4.4 MVST Part 1 Review (RMH/LJM)
The review has been completed. Dr David Good and LJM are in the process of implementing changes in the course.

4.5 NST Neuroscience Meeting (PAM/AJM)
Nothing to report about the meeting.

5 Student Feedback

5.1 MODA
There was a discussion on student feedback regarding practicals in Lent term. Students would like to have them more aligned to lecture course i.e. to have additionally PK and chemotherapy practicals with the Extended Investigation being either dropped or provided as an optional practical in conjunction with new practicals. The antibiotics practical is popular with NatScis and could serve the chemo aspect of the course. The PK element would need to be investigated further. After discussion it was decided that it would be sensible to bring in any changes to our practicals when the course changes.

General contentment with course as it stands. Feedback on reduced Drugs List was positive.

5.2 NST IB Pharmacology
No major issues. Overall positive feedback.

5.3 Part II/BBS

5.3.1 There was extended discussion on the lack of provision of supervisions in Lent term whereas in Michaelmas term provision was provided for adequately. Only 2 lecturers offered provision in Lent (using sign-up sheets). Others either did not offer or asked students to organise groups themselves and this did not work well. **Action. RMH to take to Staff Meeting. TC to contact all lecturers to make it clear that they are required to deliver supervisions and that sign-up sheets or Doodle must be provided.**
5.3.2 Students commented that some of the Addenbrooke’s supervisors were “over-zealous” and quite “demanding” of their students especially in the time they regarded as suitable for lab work. CWT has contacted all supervisors regarding the length of time students are required to be present in labs during Lent term.

5.4 NST IB Neurobiology

No areas of concern

6 Online Feedback

No areas of concern

7 Data Sticks for Pharmacology Students

CRH has suggested that all Pharmacology Students should be provided with data sticks at the beginning of the academic year. The sticks would contain all the relevant material for each of the courses. It was felt that CamTools provided all the necessary resources for students and staff alike and therefore the provision of Data sticks may be of little benefit versus the cost of provision.

8 Part II Supervision Provision

The Senior Tutors’ Standing Committee on Education has recently been asked by Departments to consider some issues that have come out of recent Learning and Teaching Reviews of some departments relating to centrally (i.e. departmentally) organised supervisions at Parts II and III. A report will be made in due course.

9 RFI sabbatical

To note that RFI will be on sabbatical for the academic year 2012-13. Replacement teaching provision will need to be organised.

10 Any Other Business

It was noted that Steve Hladky had offered to continue providing NST PK lectures. The Teaching Committee appreciated the offer and would be delighted if this could be delivered, at least, for the next academic year.

Dates of Future meetings

Monday 18th June 2012 at 9am
Monday 24th September at 9am
UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. Apologies for absence
Colin Taylor (CWT), Arham Qureshi (Medic), Jing Zhao (NST IB).

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2012 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

3.1. Part II Feedback
There was extended discussion on the lack of provision of supervisions in Lent term whereas in Michaelmas term provision was provided for adequately. Only 2 lecturers offered provision in Lent (using sign-up sheets). Others either did not offer or asked students to organise groups themselves and this did not work well.

**CWT has contacted all lecturers to make it clear that they are required to deliver supervisions and that sign-up sheets or Doodle must be provided.**

4. Matters to report

4.1 Faculty Board (PAM, RMH, LJM) – Another Department has been criticised in their Learning and Teaching Review for lack of supervisions. We have had problems in this area and in future all lecturers must put up sign sheets or send e-mails regarding supervisions.

4.2 Biological Sciences Committee meeting May (LJM) – Nothing to report

4.3 MVST Committee meeting May (LJM) – discussion on MVST course developments

4.4 NST Neuroscience Meeting (PAM) – nothing to report

5. Unconfirmed minutes of the MODA Curriculum Consultative Committee held on 18th May 2012 (RMH) (TC0612.1)

5.1 Next year there will be a change in the lectures. The 4 lectures given to vets in MODA requires revamping. Gavin Jarvis will be approached with the possibility of giving some lectures; to expand the Vet only lectures and restructure them to tie in with the rest of the course.

5.2 Update on review of MVST course
The Options will be removed. This will leave space for other teaching sessions. LJM (as Deputy Director of Education in Biology) will be talking to all departments about how we will deliver course content in the new MVST course. There was a short discussion about combining NST IB teaching with MoDA. There was general enthusiasm for this proposal (from David Bainbridge).

The TC agreed that this might be possible as many lectures could be combined to be suitable for both MVST and NST. The proposal would be explored.

5.3. Dr D Williams of St John’s has been invited to come to watch the “circus” MoDA practicals to have an overview of our lab-based teaching.

6. Unconfirmed minutes of the NST IB Curriculum Consultative Committee held on 18th May 2012 (RMH) (TC0612.1)

6.1 Replacement of RFI’s lectures while on sabbatical.
DMFC is willing to take these over for one year.

6.2 Replacement of Chris Langmead drug discovery lectures

Chris Langmead is leaving. Barry Furr already does one. RML has approached Dr Eddie Stevens to fill the slots vacated by CL with a view to bringing in the monoclonal antibody area into our teaching.

7. Student Feedback from MVST IB MODA (LJM) (TC0612.2)

7.1 Options
There were no lectures or practicals this term. The rep was asked to comment on the Options Courses. She took the Janus Drug Option and so was only able to give feedback on this option. Overall the course was interesting. It would help if the lecture on palliative care could be given before the hospice visit. Cannabis lecture was good, but handout was not. Supervision for opiates seminar – had to read a paper first and then form into groups and present. Students found this very challenging as they had never been exposed to this “Part II-style” of learning previously.

7.2 Exam Feedback
Overall students felt that the MoDA exam was about the same standard of difficulty as in previous years. They thought it a fair exam.
Practical exam - Students found pharmacokinetics quite hard but within the realms of previously set exam question. Trace was very like a similar paper which the students sat in MIMS last year.

7.3 Drugs List
MCQ and Drugs List - Basically almost all agreed that it was pointless, though a few appreciated having the reduced list as an aide memoire. In discussion in TC the Vet Rep was very enthusiastic that the Drugs List be circulated in the Paper 3 (essay) exam. There was no enthusiasm among any other members of the Committee for this proposal.
8. Student Feedback from NST Part IB Pharmacology (RML) (TC0612.3)
The course was mostly enjoyed and considered to be well structured compared to other courses. There is a lot of content and many lectures (perhaps could be shortened a bit) but broad and interesting.

8.1 Cancer lectures
Students proposed that we should consider expanding cancer lectures as they were very low in number (2 back-to-back this year). In discussion it was proposed that these lectures could be given by Rik van Veen as he delivers similar material in MoDA and also that they could be delivered earlier in the year. It was further suggested that we move iso move drug discovery to Easter term. **Action: LJM to approach Rik van Veen to see if he would consider expanding his lecture course. LJM and VS to consider timetable issues.**

8.2 Exams
Exams: Generally no major complaints about the examinations. Suggestion that a choice of 5 essays out of 9 was not that much choice compared to other examinations. Also that the trace analysis question in the practical paper was not really trace analysis requiring knowledge acquired in the pharmacology course but instead involved material that was covered in first year courses.

9. Online student feedback (LJM) (TC0612.4)
No areas of concern

The list was included in the meeting papers

11. Lab Class expenditure 2011-12 (RA) (TC0612.6).
RA produced charts showing the breakdown of expenditure. The price of animals has risen considerably (partly due to the fact that last year we were able to get an exceptionally good price) and the class size was bigger this year. A large proportion of his budget was spent on animals and there was nothing left over for necessary equipment. It was suggested that the teaching budget be increased, and that a contingency fund be set up for necessary equipment etc.

12. Offer of Biostats course for Part II and incoming graduate students (Anne Seconds-Pichon @ Babraham)
TC felt that the proposed workshops would be beneficial in Michaelmas term. To run in conjunction with first year grad students.

A draft paper from the General Board was circulated. Brief discussion on the definition of reasonable teaching and assessment adjustments which we as a Department will need to be fully in tune with going forward
14. AOB

14.1 Part II
Some lecturers didn’t provide any examples of essay questions which frustrated some students. Good practice to provide example questions in handout.

14.2 Neurobiology course Contact
RML to be course contact for Neurobiology.

Dates of future meetings:

Monday 24th September 2012 at 9.15am
Friday 30th November 2012 at 9.15am
Friday 15th March 2012 at 9.15am
Department of Pharmacology
Unconfirmed Minutes of Teaching Committee meeting
held on Monday 24 September at 09.15 in the Seminar Room

Present: Robert Henderson (RMH) – Chair, Lesley MacVinish (LJM), Peter McNaughton (PAM), Colin Taylor (CWT), Ruth Murrell-Lagnado (RM-L), Rik van Veen (HWvV) Jessica Dunne (JMD – from item 4) Virginia Searle (notes). Roger Atance (RA - from item 8).

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. Apologies for absence – None

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2012 – Approved

3. Matters arising from the minutes

3.1. NST IB Drug Discovery lectures. Replacement of Chris Langmead Drug Discovery lectures by Eddie Stevens has been arranged.

3.2 Expansion of Cancer Lectures. HWvV was thanked for agreeing to expand his lectures in NST IB to incorporate cancer therapies.

3.3 Offer of Biostats course for Part II and incoming graduate students (Anne Seconds-Pichon @ Babraham). AS-P will run a series of workshops in Michaelmas (grad students) and beginning of Lent (Part II) using the library computer terminals and some of the Teaching Lab laptops on which GraphPad will be installed. Training will take place in the library.

3.4 Departing Lecturers (R) DIB and AJM are leaving Pharmacology in October and January respectively. Neither have lecture loads in IB Pharm or MoDA. Both have Part II commitments.

3.4.1 AJM had offered to teach her Part II lectures and practicals in Michaelmas prior to departure. This has been organised and timetabled in.

3.4.2 DIB taught on MVST IB NHB/NAB and Neuro NSTIB. BJB has taken on Neuro. Dr Peter Evans (Babraham) is replacing NHB/NAB lectures.

3.4.3 LH had indicated that she would like to pick up the Neuro lectures rather than to do the Repro Pharm lectures she requested last year when ZS departed. TC did not agree to this proposal. LH was notified of this decision.

3.5 Modular Part II Course

PAM had proposed a 5 module (24 lectures per module) Part II course where students choose 4 modules. PAM argued that this would increase student choice. Discussion at the last meeting of the Committee centred around the very recent significant restructuring of the Part II course where lecture loads decreased and were
concentrated in Michaelmas term. No consensus was reached and it was agreed that this proposal should be discussed at the next staff meeting (held on 11 July 2012), where there was no enthusiasm for this proposal.

4. Tripos examinations

4.1 External Examiners’ reports and replies. (PAM)
   The reports were generally complimentary and PAM will reply in the near future.

4.2 Senior Examiners’ reports (PAM)
   There were no major issues

5. Allocation of examiners 2012-13 (LJM)

5.1 TPF is the Chair of MVST examiners for 2012/13 and is therefore on half load for examining. CRH will take over in 2013/14 while TPF is on sabbatical.

5.2 HWvV is the course organiser for NST 1B, but an examiner for Part II. He expressed a wish to be involved with NST examining. PAM explained that this would not be possible to arrange this year but consideration for next year would be made.

5.3 MAB and SBH have been appointed as examiners for 2012-13. Justin Rochford will be examining MoDA.

5.4 CWT suggested that JMD becomes the ‘secretary’ of the MoDA exam spreadsheet.

6. Peer review 2012-13 (LJM) (TC240904)

As there are many lecturers new to the Department, it has been decided to peer review all of them this year. **Action. LJM to distribute Peer Review information**

7. Disabled student (LJM)

LJM, BDJL, PC, JMD, VS, a Disability Resource Centre advisor (Sally Ivens) and the Faculty of Biology Safety Officer held a meeting in the Department on 20th December with a disabled MVST IB student. As none of the lectures are held in Pharmacology, discussion was concentrated mainly on access to practicals. A low mobile bench has been acquired and she aims to work with 2 friends from College who understand her limitations. She will also require handouts to be sent to her before the lectures (RA to arrange). Sally Ivens to find out if it will be possible to record lectures in the Chemistry lecture theatre.

8. Teaching lab budget (RA) New arrangements for Langendorff Heart practicals

The teaching lab budget is severely stretched due to the increasing price of guinea pigs for the Langendorff Heart practical. PAM suggested that perhaps this could just be demonstrated, but the discussion focussed on the fact that this is the Practical most popular and effective with the students and its use in recruitment activities had been highlighted as part of the reason many students opt for Pharmacology and indeed the
Veterinary course at Cambridge. In order to try to save on costs, there will be fewer preps set up (8) with consequently bigger groups. CRH will also look into the possibility of obtaining and using rat hearts which should be much cheaper.

9. Course Handbooks 2012-13

9.1 NST part II Pharmacology/BBS revisions (CWT)
We currently do not have anyone to teach neurodegenerative diseases next year as AJM is leaving. Replacement lecturer (to be appointed) may be able to step in.

9.2 The requirement for the layout of the Part II Project Report has been changed. The report should begin with a single short paragraph summarising the background, results and conclusions written in a style suitable for an intelligent lay person. The report should not exceed 6000 words.

9.3 MODA handbook revision (LJM)
Revisions complete

9.4 NST handbook revisions (RML/HwVV)
Revisions complete


Update on MVST review (LJM)

Over the summer five students were employed to look at the course to provide a synoptic view and to develop a course handbook

12. AOB

In early summer, an individual from University College London was offered the vacant position of University Lecturer in the Department. He has not yet accepted the position. Should he be unable to accept the terms offered for his employment and therefore decline the appointment TC recommended that the interview committee should re-convene, to reassess the applicants who applied for the position and were shortlisted in the spring.

Dates of future meetings
Friday 30th November 2012 at 9.15am (NB LJM will not be in attendance)
Friday 15th March 2013 at 9.15am
Friday 14th June 2013 at 9.15am