Department of Pharmacology

Confirmed Minutes of Teaching Committee meeting
held on Monday 6th December 2013 at 09.15 in the Library

Attendees: Present: Robert Henderson (RMH) – Chair, Colin Taylor (CWT), Ruth Murrell-Lagnado (RM-L), Rik van Veen (RvV), Mike Edwardson (JME), Lesley MacVinish (LJM) Roger Atance (RA), Jessica Dunne, Virginia Searle

Student Reps: Maddie Winder (NST1B), Lisa Altman-Richer & Tamara Williams (Part II) Arun Kirupakaran (BBS), Ella Mi & Evan Herbert (MoDA)

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. Apologies for absence: None

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2013 – approved

3. Matters arising from the minutes - none

4. Matters to report
   4.1 Faculty Board meeting(s) (RMH/JME)
   4.2 Biological Sciences Committee meetings October and November (LJM/RMH)
     4.2.1 Mathematics Review. Letter to TC from Dr Nick Cunniffe (TC061213.01)
     This matter was discussed and it was concluded that in general, ‘A’ level maths was sufficient to build upon. One student suggested that we might have one or two training sessions before the course starts. However, since all the courses have different requirements, the colleges should perhaps do this. We have a stats training session for Part II at the end of the first term.

   4.3 MVST Part I Committee meeting (LJM)
   This is the last year of Options, therefore lectures can be more spread out, as there will be fewer, and we will be able to have more practicals and lectures in the Lent term

   4.4 NST Neuroscience Meeting (RML)
   The meeting will be held at the end of January 2014

5. Second MB and Second Vet MB Senior and External Examiner Reports
   JME has submitted his Senior Examiners report and the External report has recently been received. (TC061213.02) JME gave a vote of thanks to Dr Curtiss as this was his last year as external.

6. Student Feedback
   6.1 MODA (LJM/RMH) (TC061213.03)
   The notes from the meeting were discussed. On the whole, the course was enjoyed. There was only one student at the meeting, who is a vet.

   6.2 NST IB Pharmacology (HWVV) (TC061213.04)
   Again the feedback was discussed. The theme of more interaction in lectures was stressed. Students asked if the drug receptor seminar could be earlier in the term.
6.3 Part II/BBS (CWT) (TC061213.05)
   The feedback was good and detailed. On the whole there was a high level of satisfaction with the course.

7. Online feedback (TC061213.06)

8. AOB
   Pharmacology has the highest teaching hours. Dr Good would like to come and talk to departments and it was suggested that he be invited to a Teaching Committee meeting with student reps.

Dates of future meetings

Friday 14 March 2014 at 9.15am
Friday 13 June 2014 at 9.15am
Department of Pharmacology
Confirmed Minutes of Teaching Committee meeting
held on Friday 14 March 2014 at 09.15 in the Seminar Room

Attendees: Dr Robert Henderson (RMH) – Chair, Prof. Michael Edwardson (JME), Prof. Colin Taylor (CWT), Dr Ruth Murrell-Lagnado (RML), Dr Lesley MacVinish (LJM), Dr Rik van Veen (RvV), Roger Atance (RA), Jessica Dunne (JMD), minute taker Anna Osipova (AAO)

Student representatives: Tamara Williams (Pt II Pharmacology), Thomas Milligan (NST 1B)

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. Apologies for absence: None

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2013: Approved

3. Matters arising from the minutes: None

4. Matters to report

   4.1 Faculty Board meeting February (JME / LJM)

   4.1.1 Issues with delivery of Neuroscience going forward
   Concerns about academic staffing issues in Zoology and Psychology were raised with respect to Neuroscience teaching going forward. The general understanding is that there is no consensus on what should be done further, especially considering our own staffing issues to face next year.

   RML raised a concern that the two existing NST Part II Neuroscience courses (Part II Neuroscience and Part II PDN, specialisation in Neuroscience) are essentially similar, with the only significant difference being the length of projects (1 term and 2 terms respectively). This causes confusion for students and staff alike.

   RMH and JME suggested we should wait and see how the situation evolves and what rationalisation will be offered for the two courses.

4.2 Biological Sciences Committee meeting Jan (RMH)
Meeting cancelled

4.3 MVST Part I Committee meeting (LJM)
Meeting cancelled

LJM reiterated that starting from next academic year the MoDA course will be expected to last the whole year as Options will no longer be part of the MVST course – and thus space will be freed up in the timetable allowing for the spreading out of the course. Therefore, we need a new timetable as soon as possible in order to agree time slots for our practicals. However, the Faculty Office, which is currently understaffed, is struggling to compile one.

4.4 NST Neuroscience Meeting (RML)
RML summarised the main outcome as a necessity to review the course: due to the prescriptive nature of modules, their lay-out and internal staffing changes, a lot of modules happen to be taught by academics outside of Cambridge.

5. Student Feedback

   5.1 MODA (LJM) (TC140314.01)
There was 1 student representative at the feedback meeting (and he was not present at the TC meeting). LJM reported that the overall feedback was positive and summarised the students’ comments.

There were only two issues raised that require UTOs’ attention: (a) RML – it would be helpful if the lecture on General Anaesthetics had a text hand-out in addition to presentation slides, (b) RvV – the lectures were very fast-paced, it was easy to get lost.

5.2 NST IB Pharmacology (RvV) (TC140314.02)
RvV reported that the overall feedback was positive and summarised the students’ comments. Among suggestions for improvement were: (a) scheduling CNS seminars closer to the lectures, (b) specifying clearly what the students are expected to know for the exam, and (c) granting access to dedicated software (e.g. Graphpad-Prism).

CWT and RA suggested the Poster Preparation sessions should be held in the Library (where Graphpad is installed on the computers) instead of the Classroom.
Action: RvV to make the Library accessible for Poster Preparation sessions.

5.3 Part II / BBS (CWT) (TC140314.03)
CWT confirmed that the students were happy with the course. Among other things, they particularly appreciated that the course was targeted to the application of statistics (thanks to LJM).

The two concerns were: (a) whether it is possible to offer supervisions in the following (Easter) term rather than in this term and (b) whether we must introduce a workshop on neuroanatomy to provide all the students with a prerequisite background in neuroscience.

CWT underlined that the lecturers have to acknowledge that not all the students have a background in neuroscience and should assume that the audience is ‘a clean slate’.
Action: CWT to brief the lecturers accordingly.

5.4 Online Feedback (TC140314.04)
No issues raised for concern

6. Reply to External Examiner 2nd MB (TC140314.05)
Noted by the Committee - no issues for discussion

7. Clinical School visit by RMH and JME to discuss clinical MoDA lectures
JME explained that the aim of this development is to provide 4-5 lectures at the end of the MoDA course to establish a link between Mechanisms of Drug Action and therapeutics. In essence, the lectures will focus on cases illustrating how the drug mechanisms operate. In addition to their educational effect, these lectures will also allow the department to have its say in what the syllabus (likely to be more influenced by the Clinical School) should include. Therefore, it would be good to get back to Morris Brown and/or Diana Wood with a well thought-through plan.

RMH observed that, despite potential issues with students’ motivation, it is better to leave these lectures unexaminable to avoid similar decisions by other departments, which may eventually lead to the unwanted re-instatement of optional courses. RMH also mentioned that the responsibility for these lectures should rest with Clinical Pharmacology.
Action: RMH to raise this matter for discussion in the academic staff meeting.

8. Moodle (LJM)
Online demonstration of replacement for Camtools

The new software is expected to be more user-friendly and allow intersection with other courses.
9. AOB: None

**Dates of future meetings**
Friday 13th June 2014 at 9.15am
Tuesday 23rd September 2014 at 9.15am
Department of Pharmacology  
Confirmed Minutes of Teaching Committee meeting  
held on Friday 13 June 2014 at 09.15 in the Seminar Room

Attendees: Dr Robert Henderson (RMH) – Chair, Prof. Michael Edwardson (JME), Prof. Colin Taylor (CWT), Dr Ruth Murrell-Lagnado (RML), Dr Rik van Veen (HWvV), notes - Anna Osipova

Student representatives: K. Arun (Part II BBS), E. Mi (MoDA), A. Abdaal (MoDA)

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. Apologies for absence: Dr Lesley MacVinish, Roger Atance, Jessica Dunne
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2014: Approved
3. Matters arising from the minutes: None
4. Matters to report

4.1 Faculty Board meeting (JME / RHM)  
JME reported that the main discussion points were MVST IB timetable and proposed Part II modularisation. The latter is to be taken forward in the next Faculty Board meeting in Michaelmas Term.

In response to UTOs’ concern about Part II modularisation, RMH explained its potential dangers: (a) the Department will have less influence on the Pharmacology content since the course as a whole will be controlled centrally and remotely; (b) there may be a risk of Part II degrading to an enhanced IB course; (c) students’ choice of subjects will be limited as there will be prerequisites for every module. CWT insisted on the protection of the present format of the course.

The argument cited by the proponents of modularisation is the existing inefficiency of teaching. However, while there is some duplication of teaching in the two different Part II courses concentrating on Neuroscience, this is not an obvious weakness of other courses.

RMH explained the essence of Part II to the MoDA representatives eliciting their point of view on modularisation. The course offers a deep analysis of the state of knowledge up to now encouraging students to think what they are interested in. It is lectured by experts in particular fields – this could cause a predicament if a modularised Part II had a prescriptive list of topics. Ella Mi responded that if there was enough variety, it would not matter what topics are included in the course.

Action: JME to contact British Pharmacological Society to explore accreditation prospects for the course.

4.2 Biological Sciences Committee meeting May (RMH)  
No issues raised for concern

4.3 MVST Committee meeting May (LJM)  
The main issue discussed at this meeting was the lack of progress of the new MVST IB timetable. Since then individual course organisers have received their timetables (see item 5) but the complete timetable is only now (in the last 48 hours) available to review and discuss in light of the MVST Review.

4.4 NST Neuroscience Meeting (RML)  
RML reported that the NST Neuroscience Organising Committee meeting is scheduled for 17th June 2014, with the Management Committee meeting to follow.
RML informed the TC of her intention to hand over projects within the course to another department (the projects are currently run by Dr Billups, who is to resign before the start of 2014-15).

RML will also raise the question of consistency in administrative support for the course: it should be assigned to key individuals rather than migrate with the change of course organisers. This would allow greater uniformity and control over the course and students’ affairs. RMH added that since it is an interdepartmental course, the policy guidance should be provided by the School of Biological Sciences.

5. MoDA timetable (TC0614.1)
No issues raised for concern, with the only difference being that some lectures will be held at the Lady Mitchell Hall starting at a quarter to an hour to allow students better logistics.
Action: RMH/JME to notify Dr Laura Itzhaki that she will need to shadow RML in Pharmacokinetics lectures in 2014-15 with an eye to teaching it in the future.

6. Unconfirmed minutes of the MODA Curriculum Consultative Committee held on 16th May 2014 (RMH) (TC0614.2)

Matters arising:
6.1 To alleviate the students’ worry about what 2 types of questions out of possible 3 they are likely to get in the exam, Dr Jarvis suggested returning to the old format of the exam when every student got all the 3 types of questions in their paper. In response, GMC requirements and potential tweaking of the examination format were discussed.

RMH raised this issue to find out that MoDA representatives did not think it caused much worry. RML noted that we could still have 3 questions despite a comment made by an external examiner in the distant past that 45 minutes was not enough to answer each question. It was agreed that this question will need further consideration in the context of agreement of examination structure for the MVST IB course.

6.2 Prof. Williams shared the results of a Vet students survey conducted every 4 years at all levels of study: Pharmacology was one of the subjects that students found not well covered. Consequently, he suggested considering the introduction of more Vet examples and drugs in Pharmacology lectures.
Action: Dr MacVinish and Prof. Williams to negotiate how to tailor the existing lectures to better meet Vet students’ expectations.

Noted by the Committee - no issues for discussion

7. Unconfirmed minutes of the NST IB Curriculum Consultative Committee held on 16th May 2014 (RMH) (TC0614.3)

7.1 Replacement of BJB lectures: 7 CNS lectures will be delivered by BDB going forward.

7.2 Replacement of CRH lectures: Cardiovascular and renal lectures will be delivered by RMH in 2014-15.

7.3 Pharmacokinetics lectures: Dr Hladky has agreed to deliver them for another year.

7.4 RMH proposed that in 2014-15, with CRH and DMFC retiring, there should be a good chance to review the course and come up with an efficient course structure for 2015-16 that will (a) attempt to re-introduce lectures on contraceptive drugs (an item brought to Committee’s attention by HWvV) possibly by paring down the existing lectures on Cardiovascular and Renal Pharmacology, and (b) contextualise monoclonals in the introductory lecture.

7.5 From 2014-15, HWvV to deliver his lectures in MT (with the practical also moved to
MT), whereas TPF to give his lectures on Inflammation, Pain & Immuno-pharmacology (including monoclonals and steroids) in ET. Similarly, the CNS seminar held by Dr Glynn to be moved to MT.

7.6 Taking into account that DMFC is to retire in 2014-2015, it was suggested that UTO Dr Walid Khaled should take over radioligand binding practic als from DMFC and Dr Mike Young, who are currently running them for NST IB and MoDA courses. RML suggested that Senior Research Associate Dr Andrew Thompson be nominated to assist Dr Khaled in this as he is very keen on traditional core pharmacology and analysis.

Noted by the Committee - no issues for discussion

8. Student Feedback from MVST IB MODA
Unfortunately, despite a reminder, no student reps appeared for the meeting. No apologies were received.

9. Student Feedback from NST Part IB Pharmacology (HWvV) (TC0614.4)
It was reported that the overall feedback was positive and the majority of improvement suggestions related to the timing of lectures and practicals in the Easter Term as part of the academic year. For example, Dr Stevens’ lecture witnessed a low turn-out as it was the last (unexaminable) lecture in the course just before the exams.

Action: HWvV as Senior Examiner for 2014-15 to consider making the material of this lecture examinable, at least in the short questions paper.

Another concern was a perceivedly overloaded nature of Dr Elvin’s lecture.

Action: HWvV as Course Organiser to discuss the amount of material with Dr Elvin.

10. Online student feedback (TC0614.5)
No issues raised for concern

11. Examiners / Course Organisers 2014-15 (TC0614.6)
Noted by the Committee - no issues for discussion

12. New external required for Part II and BBS
UTOs have a few names in mind including the suggestions of this year’s External Examiner Prof. John Peters. It was agreed that this question requires further consideration.

13. External examiner report Part II 2013 (TC0614.7)
Noted by the Committee - no issues for discussion

14. AOB

14.1 JME reported that Dr Peter Richardson, Dr Jenny Pell and Dr Llewelyn Roderick now have the official status of Affiliated Lecturers.

14.2 CWT expressed concern about the existing university stance on insurance for those in transit (not university employees): there is no liability insurance for the retired (M. Young, B. Callingham), independent researchers (D. Demaegd) and, possibly, affiliated lecturers. There is no evidence of change despite the numerous departmental efforts.

Action: RMH to investigate further.

14.3 Ella Mi enquired how 2nd MB marks were scaled for inclusion in the Medical and Veterinary Sciences Tripos overall mark. RMH explained that it is an ongoing exercise and the final class is decided centrally for all individual subjects of MVST IB at once.

Dates of future meetings
Tuesday 23rd September 2014 at 9.15am
Friday 5th December 2014 at 9.15am
Department of Pharmacology
Confirmed Minutes of Teaching Committee meeting
held on Monday 22 September 2014 at 09.15 in the Seminar Room

Attendees: Dr Robert Henderson (RMH) – Chair, Dr Lesley MacVinish (LJM) – Secretary, Prof. Colin Taylor (CWT), Roger Atance (RA), notes – Anna Osipova (AO)

Student representatives: none

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. Apologies for absence: Prof. Michael Edwardson (JME), Dr Ruth Murrell-Lagnado (RML), Dr Hendrik van Veen (HWvV), Jessica Dunne (JMD)

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2014: Approved

3. Matters arising from the minutes:
   3.1 Faculty Board meeting (JME/RHM)
   In discussions about Part II modularisation JME had volunteered to contact the British Pharmacological Society to explore accreditation prospects for the Part II course. As a result, he e-mailed BPS President in August 2014 but had so far received no reply.

   3.2 MoDA timetable
   RMH/JME to notify Dr Laura Itzhaki that she would need to shadow RML in Pharmacokinetics lectures in 2014-15 with an eye to teaching this subject in the future.

   3.3 MODA Curriculum Consultative Committee
   Dr MacVinish and Prof. Williams were to negotiate how to tailor the existing lectures to better meet Vet students’ expectations. Some discussion subsequently took place, with response at this stage being expected from Prof. Williams.

   3.4 Student Feedback from NST Part IB Pharmacology (HWvV)
   HWvV as Senior Examiner for 2014-15 was to consider making the material of Drug Discovery lectures examinable, at least in the short questions paper. Prior to this TC meeting, HWvV advised that both Dr Elvin and Dr Stevens had been made aware and agreed that their lectures would be made examinable.

   HWvV as Course Organiser was to discuss with Dr Elvin the amount of material covered in his lecture (which was perceived as overloaded by students). Prior to this TC meeting, HWvV confirmed that the student feedback had been forwarded to Dr Elvin, and he had agreed to present less information in his lecture.

4. Tripos examinations
   4.1 External examiners’ reports and replies (LJM) (TC220901)
   Noted by the Committee - no issues for discussion.

   4.2 Senior examiners’ reports (LJM) (TC220902)
   RMH highlighted the new Senior Examiner’s Report pro-forma for NST IB. Noted by the Committee.

5. Allocation of examiners 2014-15 (LJM) (TC220903)
   It was stressed that Dr Rossi would not be an examiner in 2014-15. Noted by the Committee.

6. New External required for Part II
   Action: UTOs to consult the BPS website and come up with suggestions.
7. **Peer review 2014-15 (LJM) (TC220904)**
   Noted by the Committee.
   **Action:** LJM to discuss Peer Review responsibilities with Dr Fan.

8. **Teaching lab budget (RA)**
   RA reported the percentages. It was agreed that the budget was well balanced and similar to the previous year. Noted by the Committee – no issues raised for concern.

9. **Course Handbooks 2014-15**
   9.1 **NST Part II Pharmacology/BBS revisions (CWT) (TC220905)**
       Noted by the Committee.
   9.2 **MODA handbook revisions (LJM) (TC220906)**
       Noted by the Committee.
   9.3 **NST IB handbook revisions (HWvV) (tabled meeting)**
       It was highlighted by HWvV before this TC meeting that a new person should be named as the College Liaisons Officer in view of Dr Robin Hiley’s retirement in 2015. As most contacts between Colleges and Department occur early in the year (when Robin was still in the Department), his name was maintained in the draft version. Noted by the Committee.

   It was also drawn to the Committee’s attention that the Departmental Library would cease to exist as of Michaelmas Term 2014.
   **Action:** Course Handbooks to be revised accordingly.

10. **Moodle (TC220907)**
    Taking into account the various difficulties PDN was facing with Moodle, it was agreed that keeping to CamTools for 2014-15 NST IB and Part II was a wise decision.
    **Action:** LJM, RA and AO to ensure that Moodle MoDA was mirrored by CamTools MoDA as an emergency back-up for 2014-15.

11. **Gavin Jarvis**
    It was reported that Dr Gavin Jarvis was to take up a part-time teaching position in the Department and contribute to MoDA lectures, NST IB mini projects, Part II projects, and Part II Statistics course.
    Noted by the Committee.

12. **AOB**
    CWT suggested bringing proposed withdrawal from Part II Neuroscience teaching to the attention of all academic staff in the Department.
    **Action:** JMD to include in the next Academic Staff meeting agenda the recommended withdrawal of Pharmacology from Part II Neuroscience teaching.

**Dates of future meetings**
- Friday 5th December 2014 at 9.15am
- Friday 13th March 2015 at 9.15am
- Friday 12th June 2015 at 9.15am