

**FACULTY BOARD OF BIOLOGY  
MEDICAL SCIENCES TRIPOS AND VETERINARY SCIENCES TRIPOS  
PART I MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

There was an online meeting of the MVST Part I Committee at 2.00pm on  
Tuesday 28 November 2023.

**MINUTES**

**There were present:** Dr Holly Canuto (Chair), Dr Robert Abayasekara, Dr Cecilia Brassett, Dr Nick Brown, Dr Colin Crump, Dr Lee De-Wit, Dr Robbie Duschinsky, Dr Steve Edgley, Dr Sarah Fawcett, Dr Sandra Fulton, Prof Anna Hollis, Dr Hugh Matthews, Dr Paul Miller, Mr Sid Nayak (Academic Officer, MedSoc), Dr Daniel Nietlispach, Mr Joshua Sebastine (Fac Bd Med student rep), Dr Suzanne Turner, Dr Erica Watson, Dr Chad Pillinger (secretary).

**In attendance:** Dr Claire Michel, Dr Dee Scadden, Mrs Jess Joseph, Prof Tim Weil.

**23.35. Apologies**

Dr Mary Fortune, Prof Dino Giussani, Dr Pooja Harijan, Dr Gareth Pearce, Dr Paul Wilkinson, Dr David Bainbridge, Prof Jane Dobson.

**23.36. Membership of the Committee**

Prof Anna Hollis replaced Prof Alun Williams as Course Organiser for the Preparing for the Veterinary Profession subject for 2023-24.

Prof Jane Dobson replaced Prof Alun Williams as representative for the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

Prof Suzanne Turner replaced Dr Gillian Frazer as representative for the Department of Pathology.

Prof Lee De-Wit replaced Dr Kate Plaisted-Grant as representative for the Department of Psychology during Dr Plaisted-Grant's sabbatical.

Kieran Cullen was replaced by Belle Chatdokmaiprai as MedSoc President.

Yusuf Adia was replaced by Sid Nayak as MedSoc Academic Officer.

Departing members were thanked for their service on the Committee, and new members were welcomed.

**23.37. Declarations of interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**23.38. Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2023 were circulated and approved.

**23.39. Matters Arising**

There were none.

#### **23.40. General Medical Council Accreditation Visit – Lent 2024**

The visit was due to take place in February. Pre-clinical Course Organisers had not been greatly involved in previous visits, but there would be more of a focus this time around.

On 28 February from 11:40 am there would be an in-person meeting at St Catherine's College with GMC representatives for members of staff involved in delivering undergraduate medical education. The meeting would take one or two hours, volunteers among the Course Organisers were requested.

***ACTION: interested Course Organisers to contact the Chair***

#### **23.41. Medical Sciences Tripos IA/IB Education Monitoring and Review exercise**

The Education Monitoring Review (EMR) for the Medical Sciences Tripos and Veterinary Sciences Tripos was due in the Lent 2024 term. Dr Chad Pillinger would be overseeing the exercise for these Triposes, it was not anticipated that departments would have to get too involved but it was requested that any information requested be provided promptly as timelines were tight. It was noted that EQPO had emphasized that this exercise should be seen as 'light touch' and responders were not expected to spend too long labouring over data or a lack of it.

#### **23.42. 2<sup>nd</sup> MB/VetMB Resit Examinations 2024**

Resit examinations for MIMS and BoD delayed by the marking and assessment boycott had been scheduled for dates in January 2024. Students and colleges had been informed of the dates and times.

#### **23.43. Formats of Examinations**

The 14 June edition of the Reporter (<https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2022-23/weekly/6704/6704.pdf>) described the regulation of methods and modes of assessment. Drafts of new regulation formats were circulated for review as **MVSTI.23.11** (MedST) and **MVSTI.23.12** (VetST).

It would need to be decided by the end of Lent term 2024 whether to stick with the older more detailed regulations, or move to the newer more flexible ones. The final versions of regulations will be implemented in October 2025.

There were some advantages and disadvantages to the new system. The current system, though cumbersome to change, did have the merit of making it clear to students the general format of the examinations they would take in a given year. On the other hand the new assessment framework proposed would allow for some changes to formats to take place more quickly than currently.

Committee members were asked to consider the proposals and feedback to the Chair. The Reporter article made reference to 'The General Board will publish guidance on expectations and good practice in respect of

each format' – it would be useful to have this information to inform the Committee's choice.

***ACTION: Committee members to consider adoption of new regulation formats.***

***ACTION: secretary to ask for guidance on expectations and good practice.***

#### **23.44. Examination Data Retention**

The University had recently introduced a new data retention policy for examination data (circulated as **MVSTI.23.13**). The most relevant update was:

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5.7 **\*\*New Office for Students' guidance for October 2023\*\*** In order to meet OfS registration conditions, providers are now required to retain 'appropriate records' of student work for five years after the end date of the course. Therefore, from October 2023, Chairs of Senior Examiners should ensure a range of coursework and examination scripts for this time period **for all taught courses** is retained. The range should include at least one example of each class.

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Departmental Heads of Teaching were requested to bring this up with their departments' Senior Examiners.

The Committee had some concerns about this new guidance:

- 1) There had been no consultation with departments on this new policy.
- 2) It was not clear what this data was being held for, other than to satisfy Office for Students (OfS) requirements.
- 3) What format should the data be held in?
- 4) Should candidate data be retained on the retained scripts?
- 5) Ideally this process should be centrally administered.
- 6) Should the selection of retained scripts account for gender/ethnicity/other characteristics.
- 7) Was GBEC over-interpreting the OfS and other external bodies' policies, thereby putting unnecessary pressure on departments?

It was agreed that these queries should be sent to EQPO and reported to the next meeting.

***ACTION: secretary to contact EQPO.***

### **23.45. Course Management Committee reports**

A summary of Course Management Committee/student feedback meetings was circulated as **MVSTI.23.14**. It was noted that only some subjects were submitting reports and the Chair requested that all Course Organisers submit reports to the secretary for the summary at the next meeting.

***ACTION: Course Organisers to submit Course Management Committee/Student Consultation reports to the secretary in time for the next meeting.***

### **23.46. Senior Examiner and Chair of Examiner reports**

Summaries of Senior Examiner reports and the Chair's reports were circulated as **MVSTI.23.15** and noted.

### **23.47. Curriculum review**

#### **23.47.1. Working groups**

Meetings had been held with many Course Organisers for FAB, HOM, SECHI, FEBP, MIMS, HNA, BoD, NHB/NAB and PfP to discuss the draft Intended Learning Outcomes. Course Organisers for the remaining subjects would be met with soon.

Updated Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) would be distributed soon.

With respect to standards setting, more pre-clinical examples were needed although already many improvements had been implemented in SBA questions. The changes to standards setting would be implemented for individual modules as they were revised.

Work was being carried out on approval of resources to be provided to students and colleges. Further discussions were being held on remediation for examinations. A new session was being developed on how students should approach revision.

For awarding gaps a pilot review of BoD content was being run looking at cultural sensitivity.

The induction session was being further improved with academic induction, transition to University, learning from lectures and how to write a good essay topics added.

Study skills would cover a general framework, timelines, reflective checking, a college survey and discussions with central University bodies e.g. Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre (ADRC).

With respect to course structure, there was some discussion on whether ILOs should come before or after this. In considering diversification of assessment ILOs needed to be agreed first, along with workload and evidence of needs considerations.

The MVMCR away day was held in September and was an opportunity to share good practices, discuss ILOs and course objectives and present plans for 2023-24

In 2023-24, the review will investigate further four topics: Standards setting, Teaching culture, Study skills, Stakeholder engagement.

In addition, Deep dives will be held covering ILOs, content, assessment, resources and accessibility for each individual subject – in 2023-24 the subjects selected for this were FAB, HOM, VAP and MoDA.

It was important to get the ILOs correct for each subject. These may need to consider teaching that students would progress to in the clinical years that might be initiated in their pre-clinical years.

The Committee expressed its thanks to Dr Michel and all those making a contribution to the review.

### **23.48. Student Topics**

A meeting with student representatives had been held on 20 November where issues regarding examinations, timetabling and diligent attendance were raised.

### **23.49. Items for report**

#### **23.49.1. Additional FAB lecture Review**

Details of a proposal for an additional FAB lecture that was approved via circulation in October was circulated as **MVSTI.23.16** for report.

### **23.50. Any Other Business**

#### **23.50.1. Lecture attendance**

There was some anecdotal feedback that attendance in person at lectures was still very low for some subjects. It was suspected that some students were only viewing lectures in their colleges via the online recordings. It was possible that the Student Engagement and Attendance Software (SEAtS) monitoring system could be used to check how many students were attending in person lectures.

Members felt that there were groups of students who were very enthusiastic about attending lectures in person, and other groups who would only use online recordings. Should students be forced to go to lectures in person or was there a way of encouraging this? The former was unlikely to work; other Faculties had been discussing this issue.

There were some problems with proper engagement with the taught instead of rote learning. In person teaching was much better in addressing this, and was something that should be aspired to.

#### **23.50.2. SEAtS monitoring of diligent attendance**

Student members reported that there was some abuse of the SEAtS system in that students could register on the system whilst outside the practical location and not actually attending. There were some reports of individuals signing in on SEAtS then immediately leaving. Work had already been done to make it impossible to register whilst outside the practical location. Further work was being carried out so that students could not leave immediately after they had registered.

**23.51. Dates of Meetings for 2022-23, 2023-24**

The remaining dates for 2023-24 meetings were scheduled for 2pm on:  
Tuesday 12 March 2024  
Tuesday 4 July 2024

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