

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

There was a meeting of the MVST Part I Committee at 2.00pm on Tuesday 24  
November 2020 **via Microsoft Teams.**

**MINUTES**

There were present: Dr David Bainbridge, Dr Cecilia Brassett, Dr Holly Canuto, (Chair), Miss Naimh Casstles, Dr Robbie Duschinsky, Dr Steve Edgley, Dr Gillian Fraser, Prof Dino Giussani, Dr Adrian Kelly, Dr Mairi Kilkenny, Dr Becky Lawson, Dr Rebecca Lawson, Dr Hugh Matthews, Dr Paul Miller, Miss Emily Moon, Dr Gareth Pearce, Dr Paul Schofield, Mr Rahlul Shah, Miss Elizabeth Stephenson, Dr David Summers, Dr Anne Swift, Dr Rob White.

In attendance: Dr Mary Fortune, Prof James Wood, Miss Lun Zhu.

**20.16. Apologies**

Prof Alun Williams, Dr Diana Wood, Mr Azmaeen Zarif (Med Soc).

**20.17. Membership**

Dr Paul Miller replaces Dr Lesley MacVinish as Pharmacology representative.

Dr Rebecca Lawson replaces Prof Simon Baron-Cohen as Psychology representative.

There are several new CUVS members - Emily Moon (1st Year); Niamh Casstles (2nd Year); Elizabeth Stephenson (3rd Year). Susannah Simpson is now the CUVS 4th Year representative.

Ramya Narayanan has been replaced by Rahul Shah as Academic Officer for MedSoc. Azmaeen Zarif has been appointed MedSoc president.

**20.18. Declarations of interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**20.19. American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) accreditation visit**

Professor James Wood (HoD Veterinary Medicine) reported to the Committee on the proposal to undergo an AVMA full accreditation visit.

Professor Wood thanked all the departments for their assistance with the initial AVMA visit.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine had requested formal written feedback from the AVAM on their initial visit, that provided matched up with the verbal feedback given at the time of the meeting.

The report looked at 11 categories. Five of these were classed as 'ready', the remainder had some minor issues, overall the visit was encouraging. The categories that were deemed needing further work were:

- 1) Admissions – the Cambridge system seemed a little opaque to the AVMA assessors, but further explanation of the system satisfied them that admissions was appropriate and fair in the Cambridge context.
- 2) Organisation – there were some concerns that as the institution delivering veterinary education was a department rather than a school it did not enjoy the same status as other accredited courses. This was based on a misunderstanding about School/Faculty/Department designations at Cambridge and could be resolved.
- 3) Finances – details for these needed to be available for all Parts of the course. Discussions were being held with the School Finance Manager to obtain the relevant information.
- 4) Facilities – some very minor issues were raised that could be easily resolved.
- 5) Teaching – there was an issue that an overall review of teaching had not been carried out in the last six years – this was now being addressed.
- 6) Vacant clinical positions – this was more difficult to address in the current climate.
- 7) Outcome assessment – this was being addressed.

A final report by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine will be produced responding to the AVMA report. Comments from any interested parties on what this report should contain would be welcome.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine were keen to pursue AVMA accreditation – it was felt that this would be critical in attracting good students from across the world. A return visit by the AVMA would not take place until the financial issues had been clarified. It was hoped that the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine could report to the MVST Part I Committee in March.

Professor Wood asked if the Committee would prefer to see the report before the AVMA was asked for a full visit, or if it would endorse the application now. The Committee agreed that it should see the report at the March meeting prior to making a decision. Professor Wood agreed to submit a report in time for the March meeting.

A full visit was unlikely to take place any earlier than two years from the date of this meeting, given that the AVMA was busy confirming accreditation of other institutes, and therefore a timely decision on a full visit would be welcomed by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

#### **20.20. Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020 were circulated and approved.

#### **20.21. Matters Arising**

##### **20.21.1. Proposal for determination of class boundaries (20.10)**

It was noted that the MVSTI Examinations working group had not yet met to discuss the proposal to amend the classing of MedST and VetST candidates.

#### 20.21.2. Curriculum review (20.8)

The Chair reported to the Committee that a formal review of the MedST/VetST curriculum was being asked for. It was hoped to start the review process early in the new year.

#### **20.22. Course Management Committee minutes**

Course Management Committee/Student Consultative Committee minutes were reported for the following meetings:

<b>Course</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Summary of activity</b>
FAB	Student rep meeting 26 June 2020.	Students noted intense workload in Lent term but general feeling this worked well in the context of the whole academic year. Online enrichment sessions conducted via Zoom were well received. Online teaching materials were also welcomed but correct usage of these may require extra training. Reassurances were given on how the September examinations would be delivered.
SECHI	End of year review 6 May 2020.	Students provided feedback on various parts of the course and adjustments were agreed to next year's teaching programme. Reported on the intention to proposed changes to the examination structure (see 20.27.1).
MoDA	Teaching Committee September 2020.	For online practical examinations it was agreed that 'pre-drawn graphs would be issued in future thereby focusing on testing the analysis of the data'.

Course Organisers were asked to send copies of Course Management and Student Consultative Committee minutes to the secretary.

#### **20.23. FAB Course Evaluation**

The Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) recently conducted an assessment of the amended FAB teaching offered for 2020-21. A report was circulated as **MVSTI.20.04**.

This was generally positive, but the Course Organisers were a little bemused that they didn't really know what was expected of them where they were asked to participate. The assessment was based exclusively on the Moodle site, Dr Brassett was interviewed about this and the report was then produced.

There were some points that the report had issue with. Closed captions was one issue – however Dr Brassett made the point that these were not reliable, in particular for scientific terms. Students who needed captioning were provided for using more reliable software, instead of using an unreliable system for all students (most of whom did not need it). It was noted that a recent proposal to force use of Panopto captioning was voted down due to its reliability issues.

#### **20.24. Teaching in 2020-21**

The majority of teaching was taking place online; there was some limited in-person teaching for practical classes and supervisions.

Members were asked to report on their experiences of delivering online teaching in the Michaelmas term.

For FAB the teaching had gone well and the first years seemed to have adapted. For the dissection practicals there was a ratio of one student to one donor which meant much more student engagement. Live sessions increased the sense of inclusivity. Unfortunately live streaming with large numbers of students didn't work well due to lag so these had to be discontinued. As the term progressed staff were learning more about remote teaching and were able to share tips and best practice for running online sessions. Having large numbers of demonstrators facilitated blended learning; some older members of staff preferred to conduct teaching online.

The vets were getting online sessions with up to 40 students as a podium presentation. There was a general feeling that it may be useful to retain some aspects of online teaching once things returned to normal.

The students were generally happy with online learning. The Moodle pages for FAB and HNA were particularly praised. There was some desire that it be made clearer what material was examinable. There was also some concern with demonstrator ratios at practicals, however there were severe limitations on how many could be accommodated under social distancing restrictions. The segmented nature of HOM material was appreciated as it allowed better consolidation. Problem based learning was also enjoyed as among other things it allowed some mixing with students from other colleges. The SECHI seminars were good and the FEBP practice questions were seen as very helpful. For NHB the content was very interested albeit with some sound quality issues. The BoD practicals were good although students would appreciate separate handouts for each practical instead of one large one for all the practicals. Some lectures had gone over one hour which was unhelpful. Having access to recorded lectures was very useful for students.

There was a query on whether the histology Q&A sessions should be recorded – these were run as 16 drop-in sessions. It would be difficult to record all of these and given the nature and variety of the exchanges on these sessions recording them would probably not be helpful.

The FEBP course had run the first term of the new course. The lectures were being delivered by Zoom in real time and also being made available as recordings. There was positive feedback on the live sessions as it seemed to aid motivation.

#### **20.25. Senior Examiner's reports September 2020**

Summaries of Senior Examiner's reports were circulated as **MVSTI.20.05** and noted.

#### **20.26. Examinations in 2020-21**

The Committee expressed its thanks to the UIS team and the secretary for their work on the delivery of online examinations in September.

Both the rescheduled resit examinations in early Lent 2021 and the main examination periods in late Lent 2021 and Easter 2021 would be run as online examinations. It was hoped that the main examination periods would be run as invigilated examinations in central facilities.

Dr Matthews felt that the September examinations generally ran smoothly but some lessons were learnt. If online examinations were to be used they needed to be as robust as possible in a way that replicated as closely as possible the normal examination format. Some adjustments were necessary for the practical examination. Proctoring was not possible for the September 2020 examinations, but it was hoped that invigilation would be possible for the main examination periods in 2021.

Dr Schofield was concerned about the practicalities of running online examinations in central facilities. These were being discussed with the Student Registry who were confident that examinations could be run in this way.

Dr Summers noted that GBEC had agreed to the request for invigilated examinations in response to a requirement from the RCVS for this. The main examination sittings in 2021 would be timetabled centrally, start at a fixed time and be run in such a way that social distancing requirements could be satisfied.

The MedST/VetST essay papers would be run in a way similar to the Part II examinations in June 2020.

## **20.27. Regulations change proposals**

### **20.27.1. Social and Ethical Concepts of Health and Illness (SECHI)**

A proposal to amend the SECHI examination in time for the Lent 2022 examinations from Dr Duschinsky was circulated as **MVSTI.20.06**. The change would be from an unseen written examination to submitted work.

The Committee agreed to the change.

***ACTION: secretary to forward to Faculty Board of Clinical Medicine for approval.***

## **20.28. Student's Topics**

The Chair reported on items recently raised at a Med/VetST Student Focus Group held on 17 November.

Some timetabling issues had been reported where the Faculty timetable did not match up with the individual course Moodle sites. This was thought to be mainly practical class related as Course Organisers were not sure of the size or composition of the practical sets and therefore had to allocate students to sets themselves. Courses affected were MoDA, BoD, PfVP and NAB.

Students had suggested that reopening libraries in departments would give more choice to students for study locations. Unfortunately departments had to prioritise access to libraries to their Part II and graduate students due to social distancing requirements.

For examinations the early communication was appreciated. There was some concern about how the mock examinations would be run and whether they could be run in such a way as to reflect what students would experience in Lent and Easter 2021. It was asked that there be some feedback consultation with students in planning the examinations, although this was sometimes difficult when having to route changes through central University bodies, accounting for departmental preferences and trying to keep leaking of inaccurate information to a minimum.

Students expressed a preference for recorded lectures to continue when normal lectures resumed – the ability to catch up and consolidate information using recorded lectures was seen as very valuable by students.

There was some fatigue among students with the September examinations being so close to the start of term.

**20.29. Items for report**

**20.30. Changes to regulations – FEBP (20.13.5)**

It was noted that the name change to Foundations of Evidence Based Practice (FEBP) from Introduction to the Scientific Basis of Medicine (ISBM) had been approved by GBEC.

**20.31. Any Other Business**

There was none.

**20.32. Dates of Meetings for 2020-21**

A further MVSTI Committee meeting will be scheduled for the end of Lent term.