

**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 8 March 2022.

MINUTES

There were present: Dr Robert Abayasekara, Dr Cecilia Brassett, Mr Nihal Basha, Dr Holly Canuto (Chair), Dr Steve Edgley, Dr Gillian Fraser, Prof Dino Giussani, Miss Athena Ham, Dr Pooja Harijan, Dr Adrian Kelly, Dr Mairi Kilkenny, Dr Hugh Matthews, Dr Claire Michel, Dr Paul Miller, Miss Emily Moon, Dr Gareth Pearce, Dr Kate Plaisted-Grant, Dr Paul Schofield, Dr David Summers, Dr Anne Swift, Dr Rob White.

22.1. Apologies

Dr Nick Brown, Mr Rudi Bruijn-Yard (CUVS rep), Mr Daniel Hughes, Mr Daniel Silverthorne (CUVS rep), Miss Elizabeth Stephenson, Dr Paul Wilkinson.

22.2. Membership of the Committee

Mr Daniel Hughes joins the Committee as Faculty of Biology CGC student rep. The secretary was asked to express the welcome of the Committee.

22.3. Declarations of interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

22.4. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021 were circulated and approved.

22.5. Matters Arising

22.5.1. Accessibility of timetable (21.41.1)

It was not yet possible to download/access a generic timetable for preclinical medics and vets, currently the work-around was to download the timetable for a specific student. Course Organisers and Administrators should be able to access a whole-course timetable via their logins.

22.5.2. New Student Liaison Administrator

The secretary was asked to express the best wishes of the Committee to the newly appointed Student Liaison Administrator, Jess Joseph.

22.6. Curriculum review

An away day had been organised and Course Organisers were requested to attend between 09.30 and 16.30 on 22 April at Madingley Hall.

The Curriculum Review was now into its 2nd phase, with 10 working groups addressing different aspects of the course.

The working group looking at core structure was chaired by Dr David Summers. This was considering options such as splitting out Tripos/2nd MB elements, student workloads and oversight of the course. There had been three presentations on proposals for the course. Three models will be developed in some detail and discussed at weekly meetings.

The group looking at intended learning outcomes aimed to understand the outcomes at the level of the whole course, then drill down to the module/lecture block level.

The working group on online assessment would probably await the outcome of the Inspira pilot to better assess the pros and cons.

The standards setting group would be looking at 2nd MB/vet MB question setting – it was felt that some questions were not justified for these types of examination. It would investigate the possibility of using question banks that would not be accessible to colleges/students, but would be run alongside sample papers that students could access. In addition, pass mark setting would be looked at.

The group looking at diversity of assessment would be looking at reasons why certain skills were taught and tested. Awarding gaps would be considered and in particular looking at the strengths and weaknesses of various assessment methods. It was anticipated that having a range of assessment types would make assessment overall more equitable across the cohort. Any changes would bear in mind that workloads should not be increased.

Preparation for assessment and remediation would look at how colleges could be helped to be equally prepared to assist their students. There should be clarity on what the assessments were, and good access to practice/sample papers.

The group looking at awarding gaps would look at how these affected different groups according to gender, ethnicity and disability and identifying factors that may drive gaps. The Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) and Disability Resource Centre (DRC) were being liaised with to identify how different types of assessment might impact different groups. A focus group of students with specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) was meeting to discuss awarding gaps, there would be a similar focus group with black students later.

Teaching staff support would look at what support could be offered to new lectures and early career researchers.

The working group for colleges would look at support for colleges and supervisors in the delivery of college teaching and how to support their students. Intra-college support/liason would also be looked at.

Steering papers would be presented at future MVST Part I Committee meetings. It was possible that some elements of the review could be implemented earlier than others.

ACTION: Course Organisers to attend away day at Madingley Hall, 09.30 22 April.

22.7. Access to Moodle sites

There had been some discussion about how much access students should have to Moodle sites of subjects which they had already completed. In particular there were concerns from some quarters about copyright issues. The Committee was asked if students should they be limited to archived sites from the year they attended the subject, or should they be allowed access to the live sites.

It was a principle of the University of Cambridge that students could attend any lecture of any course with the permission of the lecturer. The University had also a policy for recordings (available at <https://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/supporting-students/policy-recordings>):

“In the first instance, recordings of lectures/teaching materials associated with specific modules or courses of study are made available for use by the cohort of students, or individuals within the cohort, for which the recordings are prepared. Use in other modules/course sections or otherwise is at the discretion of the staff member who prepared the material, and other participants in the recording, if applicable. Individual Faculty Boards may set limits on the reuse of material within the courses for which they hold responsibility.”

Some material was of a sensitive nature (e.g. anatomy material from particular donors) and therefore had to be treated confidentially.

The students found access to the ‘live’ sites to be very useful. Accurate up to date information on pre-clinical sites was useful for students on the clinical part of the course. The Committee felt that it would be a shame to discourage clinical students from revisiting material that had been updated from their previous years’ studies. In addition it was agreed that vertical integration of the course with respect to clinical/pre-clinical would be encouraged by students having access to the live pre-clinical sites.

It was noted that it would not be possible to give clinical students access to pre-clinical material at pre-defined times due to the fact the clinical courses were rarely delivered to the whole cohort, instead different sections of the cohort were on rotation to different parts of the course at different times.

It was agreed that students should retain their current access rights (i.e. access to all live parts of the course) but that individual lecturers had the right to restrict access to their lectures to just the current cohort of students. Technically there were ways to do this on the subject Moodle sites and a method would be confirmed before a general communication to Course Organisers would be sent out.

ACTION: Claire Michel to investigate method of restricting access to certain groups on Moodle sites.

22.8. Cambridge Open Days

The University planned to offer limited in-person open days on 7 and 8 July 2022, plans were circulated as **MVSTI.22.01** (Key dates) and **MVSTI.22.02** (outline). For Medicine there would be an in-person information stand staffed by the Faculty Office – would any Committee members consider attending the stand for an hour or so? The Medicine

Degree stand will be located in the Student Services Centre.

Course presentations and sample lectures were suggested as being run online. In-person departmental tours (guided or self-guided) have been suggested by the University – individual departments will need to decide whether these or other in-person activities can be accommodated.

ACTION: Members to contact the secretary if they would like to volunteer for the stand or their departments offer in-person activities.

22.9. Requests for online teaching in 2022-23

The University now expects all teaching to be given in-person for the academic year 2022-23, with the option to record in-person teaching sessions. Requests to offer online-only need to be approved by this Committee, the Faculty Board of Biology, the General Board's Education Committee and the Academic Standards Enhancement Committee.

Requests had been received for veterinary histopathology (**MVSTI.22.03**), MoDA (**MVSTI.22.03a**) and PfPC (**MVSTI.22.03b**).

The Committee discussed whether, and what form, recorded lectures/lecture capture should continue with the return of in-person teaching, and what purpose these should serve. At present these were optional, but the reality was that students really valued having recordings of lectures available, either to view for revision purposes or because the in-person lecture was missed. Some Part II courses had reported poor attendance at in-person lectures.

GBEC's general principles were that most teaching should be in-person but that some online-only teaching was acceptable.

There was some disappointment expressed that there didn't seem to be a joined up approach being taken at the University level. Surveys of students and staff with appropriate questions could have been carried out. Was the lecture capture policy consistent with the desire for a return of in-person teaching? Should recordings only be for students who could not attend in-person, such as disabled students?

For some courses although there was no intention to move online some material on the course would be more appropriate online. If lecture attendances continued to be poor should in-person lectures be dispensed with entirely?

Potential applicants to the University of Cambridge were already asking questions about what to expect in terms of online versus in-person teaching. The University needed to be honest about what they could expect.

There was also the question of what happened when technology failed (as it had done on a number of occasions this year) – how would the needs of disabled students be dealt with then? Would old recordings suffice and how would these be distributed in good time? The Disability Resource Centre's (DRC) philosophy was that if recordings were made they should be available to all as a normal service, not just disabled students. But this

also needed to be considered against student attendance at in-person activities.

It was appreciated that students learnt in different ways, and that while some would prefer in-person teaching others may prefer online teaching, most preferred a combination of the two. Students felt that the Part IA and IB MedST/VetST lectures were well attended - perhaps there was an issue with Part II. They also saw the advantages and disadvantages of both methods of teaching although individual students may prefer one or the other.

There was a slight difference between lecture capture (which recorded live lectures being given at a specified time to a live in-person audience) and lecture recordings (which could be recorded at any time with or without a live audience). If lecture capture failed would lecturers be expected to provide a recording – this would represent a large extra workload.

Poor attendance at lectures could affect the experience of students and lecturers. In particular it could be very discouraging for external speakers who may have travelled long distances to only have a few students attend in-person. Some thought needed to be given to how to incentivise in-person attendance of lectures.

With respect to the cases brought to the Committee – these were all small components of the courses or contingencies that had been assessed by the Course Management Committees carefully. The MVST Part I Committee was therefore happy to approve these approaches.

ACTION: secretary to forward proposals for online teaching to ASEC.

22.10. Proposal for changes to PfPC

Dr Harijan presented some possible changes to the PfPC course, a paper detailing these changes was circulated as **MVSTI.22.03c**. Feedback suggested that students were not that engaged with the complementary medicine aspect as at this stage they hadn't experienced enough of the standard clinical environment to provide a contrast. For this it was proposed that complementary medicine would be looked at later in the clinical part of the course, and in place of this PfPC would instead offer placements involving disabled patients. Some work had already been done on this.

Pre-clinical DoS would not be involved in this course, only the clinical DoS who had relevant clinical experience.

It was noted that some of the review sessions could be a little repetitive due to the same material being presented. The structure if these sessions and its participants should be considered.

The Committee supported the proposal.

ACTION: Dr Harijan to take forward proposals with Course Management Committee.

22.11. Examination data retention

The Faculty Board had recently approved a new data retention policy that was to apply to all MedST/VetST subjects. The policy was put in place in response to a University-wide change in its data retention policy.

One of the changes is to require individual question data to be retained for one year following publication of the examination results. Students will be able to request their data, and the Committee is asked how best to disseminate this information – should it be released upon individual request, or should it be released along with other marks to all students?

A copy of the policy was circulated as **MVSTI.22.04**.

One query was on examiner's comments – most MedST/VetST papers didn't write comments for students but other courses did. It was clarified that comments that were only for the use of Examiners could be destroyed immediately following the final meeting of Examiners. Comments that could be fed back to students should be retained for three months after the final meeting of Examiners.

It was noted that the changes were required to satisfy the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), who had adopted the principle that the calculation of a students' final mark should be traceable all the way back to the original script for a suitable length of time.

There needed to be clarity on who should hold the data and whether Senior Examiners should save it or should it be held at the Faculty level. Some disappointment was expressed that while the University was requiring departments to perform this task there didn't seem to be any extra resource to assist with it, and seemingly no plans to develop a central resource where this information might be held.

Further discussion away from the meeting would be held and brought back to the Committee as necessary.

22.12. Course Management Committee minutes

A summary of Course Management Committee/Student feedback meeting minutes were circulated as **MVSTI.22.05** and noted.

22.13. Student Topics

There was a meeting of the Med/VetST Student Focus Group on 1 March.

Unfortunately only one student representative attended the meeting but a useful discussion was still had. Some thought needed to be given on how to encourage attendance.

At this meeting some feedback had been gathered and was discussed. One particular area of concern was the availability of pre-generated data sets for use in practical classes where students had not been able to generate their own data. This would be useful to allow students to perform the relevant analyses to gain practice in techniques. Several courses had such data sets, although some may not provide this yet. The Committee agree that it would be useful to have this provided for and Course Organisers should review what was provided for their practical classes.

ACTION: Course Organisers to check availability of pre-generated data for use by students in practical classes.

22.14. Items for report

22.14.1. SECHI Prizes (21.35)

Discussions were ongoing on how quickly a prize for SECHI could be implemented.

22.14.2. FEBP Course Organiser

The Committee was asked to note that from 2022-23 the Course Organiser for FEBP would be Dr Mary Fortune. A paper was circulated as **MVSTI.22.06.**

22.14.3. Senior Examiner's reports 2020-21

A summary of Senior Examiner's reports received for the 2020-21 academic year was circulated as **MVSTI.22.07.**

22.15. Any Other Business

22.15.1. Action for Student Support Documents (SSDs)

It was queried if Course Organisers needed to take action on receipt of SSDs. Practice varied across departments; in some there were Teaching Administrators who would distribute SSDs to those who needed the information to ensure any recommended adjustments to teaching facilities could be made, in other departments it was possible that Course Organisers were expected to distribute this information. If any member of a department wanted to be added to the Moodle site used for deposit of medic/vet SSDs they should contact the secretary or Jess Joseph.

ACTION: Course Organisers to check how SSDs are distributed in their departments.

ACTION: departmental members to contact secretary if they wish to be added to the SSD Moodle site.

22.16. Dates of Meetings for 2021-22

The final meeting of the MVST Part I Committee in 2021- 22 was scheduled for 2pm on Tuesday 5 July.