

**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 12 March 2024.

MINUTES

There were present: Dr Holly Canuto (Chair), Dr Robert Abayasekara, Dr David Bainbridge, Dr Cecilia Brassett, Dr Colin Crump, Prof Jane Dobson, Dr Sarah Fawcett, Dr Mary Fortune, Dr Sandra Fulton, Prof Anna Hollis, Dr Mairi Kilkenny, Dr Hugh Matthews, Dr Paul Miller, Mr Sid Nayak (Academic Officer, MedSoc), Dr Daniel Nietlispach, Dr Gareth Pearce, Dr Milka Sarris, Dr Erica Watson, Dr Suzanne Turner, Ms Belle Chatdokmaiprai (MedSoc President), Dr Chad Pillinger (secretary).

In attendance: Dr Claire Michel, Mrs Jess Joseph, Dr Madeline Lameris, Dr Rebecca Davis, Dr Tim Williams, Prof Jeff Dalley.

24.1. Apologies

Dr Nick Brown, Dr Lee De-Wit, Dr Robbie Duschinsky, Prof Dino Giussani, Dr Pooja Harijan, Dr Paul Wilkinson.

24.2. Membership of the Committee

Miss Jenny Chan replaces Mr Joshua Sebastine as Faculty Board medical student representative.

Ms Lily Pattison's term as Faculty Board CGC student representative has ended – no replacement came forward in last term's elections.

24.3. Declarations of interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

24.4. RCVS visit

Dr Tim Williams attended the meeting to update the Committee on an upcoming visit by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. The visit was scheduled for May 2024 and would require the provision of a lot of documentation as proof of standards. Some documentation had already been submitted for the pre-clinical course, there were just a few subjects with information outstanding. Uploads would need to be complete by 14 March.

The RCVS panel would review the documentation and then decide on which aspects it would like to focus on for the visit to fill out further detail. It would also check with staff and students that information in the documentation was correct.

The visit was due to take place in the week beginning 27 May which was a bank holiday week and also was in the middle of the main examination period. It was likely that the RCVS would want to talk to Course Organisers and students, but this could be done online/remotely and would be arranged for convenient times. Anyone who wished to volunteer should take the timings into consideration.

A timetable for the visit should only be available in April so there would not be much time to notify participants, but it was likely that there would only be one session with pre-clinical Course Organisers.

It was possible that the RCVS would focus on intended learning outcomes (ILOs), and these were missing for certain parts of the course, particularly individual components. They may also wish to talk about assessment.

On a general point, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine would like to make more of a contribution to pre-clinical teaching and would welcome contact from pre-clinical Course Organisers for help with teaching.

24.5. Curriculum Integration at the clinical school

Dr Madeleine Lameris, Curriculum Integration Lead at the clinical school, gave a short presentation on the project she was leading mapping patient presentations and conditions, and the resources available to pre-clinical course organisers.

Main points were:

- Teaching is driven to some extent by the requirements of the GMC and Royal Colleges.
- Student feedback indicates that some material is regarded as irrelevant, and they experience difficulties accessing and using virtual learning environments.
- Patient presentations – processes need to be constructed such that students can recall certain case studies.
- Course ILOs were being reviewed to check that they were up to date and fit in with other aspects of learning e.g. pre-clinical/clinical.
- Teaching and assessment need to be aligned.
- Need to consider how this process could be applied to pre-clinical aspects of the course.

The slides for Dr Lameris's presentation would be circulated with the minutes.

It was also requested that access for all MedST/VetST subjects should be given to Course Organisers (with the exception of FAB for Human Tissue Act reasons).

ACTION: secretary to arrange access for Course Organisers to other MedST/VetST subjects.

24.6. Climate Change Medical Education

Dr Rebecca Davis, Climate Change Medical Education Fellow, gave a short presentation regarding the project she was leading and how to get support to embed climate change-related content in the medical curriculum.

Course Organisers were invited to contact Dr Davis at Rd627@medschl.cam.ac.uk if they wanted assistance integrating climate content into their teaching.

24.7. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2023 were circulated and approved.

24.8. Matters Arising

24.8.1. Formats of Examinations (23.43)

The Faculty Board of Biology had approved the amended regulations for examinations.

24.8.2. Examinations data retention (23.44)

A new University policy required a selection of scripts to be retained for five years. This was to satisfy Office for Students requirements.

The Natural Sciences Committee recently agreed a process to align with this policy, and a similar policy for MedST/VetST examinations was proposed in **MVSTI.24.01**.

The Committee were happy with the proposal but asked for some tweaks to improve clarity on where responsibilities lay with departments and where these lay with the Faculty Office.

The Committee agreed to the proposed process for MedST and VetST examinations data retention.

24.9. General Medical Council Accreditation Visit – Lent 2024

The Chair reported on the meeting with GMC representatives on 28 February. Some informal feedback had been given, the formal report would be available in the next few weeks.

There were two meetings, one involving students and the other involving Course Organisers and Administrators.

Informally it had been stated that students appreciated the feedback systems in place, and felt that their concerns were responded to. The support from the University and colleges was good. Teaching was seen as being good but also very intense. There were also some queries on the clinical relevance of some of the material that was being taught in the pre-clinical course, and some concerns about the heterogeneity of college provision.

Supervisions sometimes took place at odd times, as late as 11pm or as early as 6am, usually where clinical staff were involved. This needed to be addressed urgently and was to be mentioned at the next meeting of the Senior Tutors Education Committee. Sometimes supervisions did have to be scheduled at odd times due to availabilities of supervisors. There had previously been reluctance to be too prescriptive about when supervisions could take place but some direction from the GMC could change this position, and might be good to have some guidance for academics. The Directors of Studies for Pre-clinical Sciences (DoPS) were also going to discuss this and action may preempt guidance from the GMC.

24.10. Education space and examinations

For information and discussion, paper **MVSTI.24.02** was circulated with an overview of examinations space at Cambridge.

The Committee agreed it would be good to have better spaces for teaching and examination with better provision of power sockets and wireless internet signal.

Many departments in the Faculty of Biology already had suitable spaces, albeit of varying size. This had proved a very useful resource for online in-person examinations.

24.11. Proposal for Neuroanatomy teaching 2024-25

A proposal for changes to neuroanatomy teaching in 2024-25 was circulated as **MVSTI.24.03**.

These proposed moving some in-person teaching to online only, incorporating practices used in 2019/20 during lockdowns. Student preparation was key in being able to deliver the most effective teaching in practicals, and asking students to engage with online content at specific times before practical sessions was seen as the most effective way of doing this.

The Department of PDN would like these online sessions to be monitored for diligent attendance purposes. It was noted that Histology currently have a requirement for students to take a series of online quizzes for diligent attendance purposes, with slides for these released at fixed times. The Committee felt that diligent attendance should be recorded for both online and in-person elements.

There could also be reconsideration of how diligent attendance was recorded for some other subjects, to ensure that students were actually learning something at in-person sessions. Practical classes provided vital skills and knowledge so it was important to monitor those students who were not attending.

The Human Anatomy Centre (HAC) was currently unable to use SEAtS to monitor diligent attendance as students' phones could not be taken into the dissection room. Therefore registration had to be done manually, which had to be done in any case to satisfy legal requirements.

Feedback received for BoD suggested that students preferred to learn online in their own rooms rather than the lab, as they felt there were fewer distractions in their rooms. Previous abuses of signing in systems were false certification and could result in severe penalties as this was a professionalism issue. There seemed to be some lack of clarity among students about what was acceptable behaviour. There were some high-performing students who did not engage with the course and yet still did ok academically.

The MoDA system of monitoring attendance and understanding was seen as a good example to try and follow, such as talking through examples so that students had to spend at least two hours in the lab. Those students that did not want to be involved in animal work didn't have to be directly involved, but still had to attend the practical.

The professional standards expected of students was given in lectures and seminars, as well as the student handbook. Further/amended provision was under discussion.

The Committee agreed to the proposed changes to neuroanatomy.

24.12. Examination Board balance

At a recent meeting of MVSTIA Senior Examiners it was suggested that there be a more representative gender balance on Examination boards. As Dr Bainbridge was not present at the meeting this discussion would be deferred to the next meeting.

24.13. Availability of past/example examination papers

The bound volume, which used to be circulated to colleges with all examination papers (except those with approval to be excluded) for use by colleges and students, had been discontinued since 2020. The Education Quality and Policy Office (EQPO) has now devolved responsibility for making past/example papers available to students to Faculties. Queries are being received from colleges and students requesting access to past/example papers.

As part of the MVMCR and reviews of the 2nd MB/Vet MB examinations, courses have been asked not to publish their past 2nd MB/Vet MB exams so that a question bank can be created.

The MVMCR policy on Standardisation of Examination Preparation Material for Med and VetST departments (approved by the Faculty Board in Oct 2022) stated that each subject should provide

- One full example for each paper to include the number of questions present in the actual paper with a full set of answers (22/23).
- Sample Tripos essays for each class with examiner's notes highlighting good practice points and gaps (23/24).

The Committee was reminded of the above policy and that each course should have a process to ensure that students have access to example papers.

Some departments had experienced difficulties in obtaining sample scripts as students had not provided the necessary permissions to utilise them. It was agreed that examples of failed scripts should not be used, just upper seconds or firsts. Use of 'tick boxes' for online examinations were not recommended due to the stress that students were under.

For MoDA all students were emailed after the examination to see if they would be prepared to have their essays used. Five or six examples of each essay question of 1st, 2.1 and 2.2 standard were used. Annotations were added by staff and shared on the Moodle site. There were between 50 and 60 essays to choose from and the system seemed to work well and it was appreciated by students.

Some departments felt like they needed more support in providing example essays. The MoDA system was a good example and the Faculty Office could also assist.

24.14. Curriculum review

Dr Michel updated the Committee. The NST review had approved a series of aims for NST biology, and these may be applied across the NST including Physical Sciences subjects.

The ILOs for the first two years of the medicine and veterinary medicine course have been drafted and all subject organisers would be contacted to map their course to these ILOs in due course.

Study skills were also being looked at, led by Dr Bainbridge. Some improvements were being considered along with reviewing the induction sessions, advising on how best to use vacation time and providing advice on Inspira examinations.

24.14.1. Intended Learning Outcomes for pre-clinical medicine and veterinary medicine

Intended Learning Outcomes for the first two years of the medicine and veterinary medicine courses have been drafted and consulted on with each Course Organiser and Head of Teaching. The final list of ILOs has been approved by the MVMCR Steering Committee and is circulated as **MVSTI.24.04**.

This represented a huge amount of work – it was suggested that the pre-amble was an important part of the document and should be regarded as an integral part of the ILO.

The Committee approved the list of ILOs.

24.15. Course Management Committee reports

A summary of Course Management Committee/student feedback meetings was circulated as **MVSTI.24.05** and noted.

24.16. Student Topics

Items recently raised at a meeting of the Med/VetST Student Focus Group had been discussed under previous items in the meeting.

24.17. Generative AI and assessment

A document from the Academic Division with some suggestions for guidance on 'Generative AI and Assessment' is circulated as **MVSTI.24.05a**. Committee members were asked to send any feedback to the secretary.

ACTION: members to send any comments to the secretary.

24.18. Any Other Business

24.18.1. Lab coat usage

Students who turned up to FAB practicals without white coats could not participate in the class. There was some variation in policies on how to deal with these situations in different subjects. In most subjects, spare lab coats were available and lent to students. Some common guidance would be useful; students in more distant colleges were affected more by some requirements than those from

more centrally located colleges. It was recommended that all courses make spare lab coats available to students who have forgotten theirs, potentially with a 'three strikes and you're out' policy if the numbers become problematic.

24.19. Dates of Meetings for 2022-23, 2023-24

The remaining date for 2023-24 would be held at 2pm on Tuesday 2 July 2024.