

School of Geography

**Minutes of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught
Student Staff Liaison Committee held on Wednesday 6th May 2020
at 12.00- 13.00 via MS Teams**

Staff Members present

Dr Philippa Williams (PW) (Co-Chair)	Senior Tutor
Catherine Mills (CM) (Secretary)	Student Experience and Admissions Administrator
Emma Shapcott (ES)	Teaching and Learning manager
Prof Alastair Owens (AO)	Head of School
Dr Emily Lines (EL)	Deputy Director of Education
Dr Stuart Grieve (SG)	Engagement, Retention and Success lead
<i>Kate Amis</i>	<i>Minuting meeting</i>

Student members present

Deanna Emeny (Co-Chair)	3 rd Year Environmental Science
Aminah Ossman (AYO)	1 st Year Geography with Business Management
Mima Moyo (MM)	PG Human Geography
Joseph Brown (JB)	3 rd Year Geography with Business Management
Sara Shafique (SS)	1 st Year Environmental Science

1. **Welcome** from PW and DE who jointly chaired the meeting
2. **Apologies** received from Dominik Nagel (DN) Tim Brown (TB) Tilly Walker-Wood (TW)
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting** were approved.

4. Matters arising from the previous meeting and action

Minute	Who?	Details	Action to date as reported Green= complete Orange= in progress and to be reported next meeting Red =Awaiting action/ roll over
Action 2020: 20	PW	PW to follow up online content in Bus Man	Completed and resolved. Online content now being provided
2020:21	CM	Communicate revised EC policy to all students asap.	A video has been made by PW and CW to communicate these key messages and uploaded to QMPLUS home page with email sent out to direct students to it

2020:22	CM	CM to email all students advising them to make contact with Advice and Counselling if they had a financial hardship claim	Completed by CM
2020: 23	TB	Investigate talking heads style videos for communicating key messages on new regulations and guidance etc	For now the key new video is the one made by CM and PW on the key messages regarding new guidelines on coursework, deadlines etc. This has been well received – see section 7 below.
2020:24	MM and TB	MM to give detail on issues with contacting supervisors to TB so he could follow up	Completed. MM's feedback via TB was followed up by GH and SS.
2020:25	OP and CM	Action OP to send <i>Studywell</i> info to CM for dissemination to geographers.	The <i>Studywell</i> information was circulated via Twitter
2020:26	PW and LB	Clarify with LB weighting of each year of degree and report back to SSLC	A report on this clarification was made to the committee and followed an email sent out to all students from the registry last week. PW to simplify and further clarify this and message out to all our students. See section 6.1 below
2020:27	AO	Pass the written guidance on <i>study in Ramadan</i> by SF to SA to upload to QMPLUS	Publish 'studying during Ramadan' advice on QMplus.

5. Well being

5.1 Fit to Sit policy: Since our video was posted last week additional changes around assessments have been published. There has been a relaxation of the conditions relating to the 'fit to sit' exam policy. This relates to all students across all university departments and was communicated via email to all students by Stephanie Marshal (VP for student experience and learning) last week. The core message is that you can ask to withdraw your assessment ASAP after you have submitted it, if you believe you were not able to execute the work to the best of your ability. This must be done immediately by contacting Catherine Mills and **before** the work has been marked and feedback returned. The deadline for notifying that you intend to take this up is 1st June 2020.

ES explained that in other departments where students were sitting timed assessments the questions would be different in the subsequent exam but in geography, as it would be a seen question, it would be the same question again.

5.2 Other issues relating to current adjustments and deadlines: PW clarified that the marking period of four weeks would apply from the end of the grace period. This would be four weeks from 18th May.

CM reported that one first year module had a submission of 19th May and there could be no further extensions beyond the 19th May deadline. This had been communicated to first year students.

ES explained that as usual SIS would be closed off before the exam board but marks and comments for all coursework would be available until then on QMPLUS

DE asked when students would get their results if they do a first sit? PW replied that these later submissions would be finalised at the Late Summer Resit/First exam board due to take place in September, so final results for these candidates would be in late September/October.

DE asked if getting the results later would prevent students from taking up places on Masters courses at other universities for example. PW replied that SOG could write to other universities with an indication of outcomes and students should get in touch with their tutors if this was an issue for them. AO reiterated this point and added that most universities were likely to be understanding and would not want to lose candidates and that employers would also be likely to be flexible in this respect too, CM added that for 1st and 2nd year students waiting for their outcomes from first sits there would not be an issue with allowing them to progress.

6. Teaching and Learning and Learning resources

6.1 Clarification regarding the number of credits required for progression and how marks are weighted for degree classification: This discussion followed on from the issue being raised at the last meeting and clarification being sought by numerous students and their course reps. PW reported to the meeting as follows

Progressing from 1st to 2nd Year. Whilst Queen Mary's Covid 19 amendments mean that, in theory, you can progress into 2nd year regardless of your marks or credits, you are strongly encouraged to submit and pass a minimum of 90 credits. This is because to be awarded your final degree you will need 315 credits overall. To progress with only 90 credits (out of the 120 credits) would however put you at a disadvantage as it would be harder to then achieve the full credit requirement of 315 credits by the end of the 3rd year if you had dropped 40 credits at this early or mid-stage. The marks achieved in your modules for the 1st year can be used to count as 10% of your final degree result but only if this is in your favour. If your marks are lower in the first year then the system will discount your marks so that you are not disadvantaged. Your degree will be classified with the ratio for year 1:2:3 as 1:3:6 or 0:3:6, whichever is higher.

In years 1 and 2, the key message is that even if you plan to discount a module's marks from your final result you must still pass the module (pass is 40% min) in order to be able to count the credits towards the minimum you must accrue from each year's study. To graduate you need a minimum of 315 credits from across your full degree. Third years will need 270 credits overall for their degree to be classified, and will have the degree classified on the best 90 credits for third year.

EL reported that in her experience some students were working on the basis of misinformation and assumed that if they were planning to discount the marks from a module they didn't need to actually do the coursework. They were unaware that they needed to pass enough credits per year and across the whole degree. This message needs to be made much clearer to all students. See action 2020:28 later agreed by the committee.

PW explained that we were offering an automatic first sit opportunity for those who were not able to submit work to the best of their ability by the published deadlines. The next opportunity for submitting work is the Late Summer Resit/First board in August.

Communication

EC claims: CM reported that lots of EC claims had been coming in which was very helpful and she encouraged reps to continue to pass on the message that students should submit an EC if they can't meet the deadline. CM advised that due to the volume of ECs being received emails were being answered with a group reply rather than an individual one.

Clarification on the Credits and marks which contribute to progression and final degree classification: DE asked, further to discussion in section 5 above, if CM and PW could create another video with the key messages in regard to this issue. She asked if this could be a priority bearing in mind the nearness of deadlines. PW suggested that one video per year group might be the way forward and she would work on this with CM.

Action 2020: 28 PW and CM to create video /s to advise students about the new/ current guidance on weighting of modules and credit requirements for end of year progression and final degree classification

General feedback: DE reported that as a result of the first video now on QMPLUS and clear emails, feedback from peers had been positive and they felt reassured.

7. AOB

No items raised

8. Date of next meeting: provisionally set for Weds May 20th. Time to be advised.

Summary of actions to be carried forward		
2020:28	PW and CM	Create video /s to advise students re new/ current situation guidance on weighting of modules and credit requirements for end of year progression and final degree classification