



**School of Geography  
Undergraduate and Postgraduate  
Staff-Student Liaison Committee  
Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
3-5pm GC601 Montagu LT  
Minutes**

**Staff Members present**

<b>Dr Philippa Williams (PW) (Co-Chair)</b>	Senior Tutor
<b>Catherine Mills (CM) (Secretary)</b>	Student Experience and Admissions Administrator
Alastair Owens (AO)	Head of School
Dr Stuart Grieve (SG)	Engagement Retention and Success
Richard Evans (RE)	HSS Library Liaison Officer

**Student Members Present**

<b>Deanna Emeny (Co-Chair)</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Year Environmental Science</b>
Aminah Ossman (AYO)	1 <sup>st</sup> Year Geography with Business Management
Albert Newton (AN)	1 <sup>st</sup> Year Human Geography/ BA Geography
Sara Shafique (SS)	1 <sup>st</sup> year Environmental Science
Alexandra Bool (AB)	1 <sup>st</sup> Year BSc Geography
Joseph Brown (JB)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Geography with Business Management

**Part 1: Preliminary items**

**1. Welcome**

PW welcomes everyone to the SSLC.

**2. Apologies for absence**

The below apologies for absence were given before the meeting:

Tim Brown (TB), Emily Lines (EL), Regan Koch (RK), Dominik Nagel (DN), Rianno Thomas (RT), Tilly Walker Wood (TWW), Sophia Fassbender (SF)

**3. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting**

The committee approved the minutes from the previous meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

#### 4. Report on matters arising and actions taken

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Completed?
2019:039	PW to update next SSLC about initiative to include inbox management and email etiquette in UG/PG learning.  Carried over from SSLC (2019:020) and (2019:29)	PW	<b>ACTION:</b> Ongoing, PW has emailed careers regarding this.
2019:040	RE to give an update on the introduction of the library flexible borrowing programme.	RE	See below.
2019:041	TB to speak to SL about when students will receive IGS/PES feedback. Previous SSLC recommended after examinations.	TB	AO stated due to the change in IGS/PES deadline feedback will be after examinations.
2019:042	CREps to speak to module reps about provision of module resources, and seek requests for additional resources where required.	CREps	See below.
2019:043	CREps to ask cohort whether digitizing module evaluations is a good idea or not	CREps	See below.
2019:044	TB to speak with SA about ensuring the digital evaluation is placed in the Coursework dropbox, which is easily accessible.	TB	Completed.
2019:045	CREps to discuss new feedback sheets with peers and report back to SSLC on how these have been received.	CREps	See below.
2019:046	TB to explore how to facilitate individualised feedback	TB	<b>ACTION: Pass to the next SSLC</b>
2019:047	DE to look into organising a CRep/ ModRep/ Staff social	DE/PW/TB	DE said this was organised but cancelled due to the strike. DE can show another CRep how to organise this for next academic year.
2019:048	CREps to send CM profiles of themselves which could be displayed around Geography, on QMplus and sent to cohorts.	CREps	Please see below.

<b>2019:049</b>	CM to speak with Shazia Sadiq (SS) about the prospect of a mailing list or forum for PGT CReps	<b>CM</b>	CM spoke with SS and this will not be happening.
<b>2019:050</b>	RE to keep us updated on the new library catalog.	<b>RE</b>	Please see below.
<b>2019:051</b>	CM to inform SS about the PGT Welcome week feedback	<b>CM</b>	CM did this via email immediately after last SSLC.
<b>2019:052</b>	PW and DE to liaise with Rebecca Dixon from QMGS and follow up idea of cross year social for all years within Geography as part of Welcome Back Week.	<b>DE/PW</b>	Please see below.

#### **2019: 040 and 2019:50**

New library catalogue to be launched in July 2020 which will also include flexible borrowing. More information will be circulated soon.

- **ACTION: This is an ongoing action.**

#### **2019:042 and 2019:048**

General discussion about the effectiveness of module reps in Semester B. CReps agreed that there had not been the same publicity around module reps this Semester but that by having module reps it adds an additional link in the chain. JB said we need to establish the connection between the channels and what we are trying to get out of having module reps.

DE stated that CourseReps are able to report back to lecturers directly even for modules they are not in. JB suggested we could split up the CourseReps so each CourseRep is also the module rep for different modules so students know who to contact about general queries and also those specific to a module. This could be organised at the beginning of the academic year.

There was also a discussion about the attendance of CourseReps. It was suggested that if CourseReps do not attend the SSLC meetings then their position should be advertised again. There was some concern that students sign up for the role to add to the CV but then fail to participate in the meetings.

- **ACTION: CM and PW/DE to look into the requirements of CourseReps.**

AB suggested that we put CourseRep emails at the front of lecture slides so students know who to contact.

- **ACTION: CM to ensure that for next academic year CourseRep profiles and contact details are ready to be distributed to lecturers.**
- **ACTION for CourseReps to send profiles to CM by end of reading week.**

#### **2019:043**

JB reported that students prefer digital online evaluations and this is better for the environment. In addition to this AN and AYO said people fill the evaluations in during the break of a 2 hour lecture.

## **2019:045**

PW explained the difference between the new and old feedback sheets.

There was also a discussion surrounding the change in marking criteria. AO stated this had changed again due to feedback from external examiners.

- **ACTION: CReps to ask for feedback on feedback sheets again.**

## **2019:052**

This took place. DE said it was a good event that was well received. 80 people attended. It would be good to do at the beginning of next academic year, and to repeat at the end of Semester B exams. PW gave thanks to DE and Rebecca Dixon for organising.

### **5. Teaching and Learning**

#### **5.1 Annual Programme Review of 2018/19**

AO explained that the APR is to look at student performance, feedback, actions and efforts to improve programmes reflecting on the last academic year. There is then a meeting where we are asked questions about this and follow up on additional actions for the following year. AO stated SoG is a pilot for the new APR. There will be a meeting involving the whole school including student representatives on how things are going.

#### **Question 1**

- JB stated that students feel the volume of assessment is so much better this academic year compared to last academic year and everyone is so much happier. The only concern is group work and group work across three years has been an issue. JB said there should be a balance of the grade you get and how much you contributed continuing saying that the feedback sheets do not always work by reflecting this. DE stated the best group work is in modules where there is a dedicated time scheduled within the class for students to work on this together. DE enjoys group work.
- AYO said she has not had group work but stated that within GEG4106, Liverpool, her peers have emphasised said people are not pulling their weight. AN agreed. DE said people get more harmonious as you move through your degree and the stakes increase.
- AYO stated that this year there is a good mix of assessment for first years and AN stated that doing examinations in January 2020 had been a very reassuring experience, and reduced her anxiety about university exams in May.
- DE said preferred having examinations in January 2020 as it was split up and meant that material was fresh in her mind. JB said if you do not have examinations then you can focus on your coursework deadlines and dissertation.
- SG asked CReps about doing a seen exam compared to non seen examinations. AN said he felt more confident going into examinations knowing that had already planned his response even if he didn't write it word for word. AYO said it was more relaxing.

## Question 2

- AO stated that in ideal world students would know more about the Benchmark statement about how well this all merges together.
- DE said she felt it has all come together now she is in her third year. DE emphasised that her skill set is vast, and her writing has improved significantly thanks to consistent support throughout her degree from tutors and feedback from lecturers, which has proved very useful. SS stated that she sees the link between modules in the first year.
- JB said he made most improvement in his first year due to the module GEG4002 which supported his writing skills.
- AB said she also appreciates going through readings in the tutorials and likes that it is discussion based.
- AYO said she went to her Advisor about her first essay and this is now helping later in the year.
- JB emphasised that some students will not seek support from Advisors and just see them once every few months, whereas others try to see them all the time to access available academic support.

## Question 3

- DE stated that the outcomes for the School of Geography give you a very broad base allowing you to develop a broad range of skills.
- AYO said her tutorials are good-each pick the reading and go through summary then evaluate the readings. Trying to link the lectures with the reading. AB had a different experience and was less convinced about the purpose of the readings.
- JB said Sam Halvorsen was very open to changing is module when emailed about Latin American debates showing that contacting convenors about concerns can make an immediate difference.
- JB stated that we could reduce weighting of the group work. SG asked whether students learn a lot from group work and find it a productive experience. JB said over three years you can see the difference. Very much depends on the group you are given. DE said it works well. JB said it may be harder on the HG side than PGES side.

## Questions 4

- AJO said there is a list of Queen Mary Graduate Attributes. JB asked where these are and that they would be useful for CV and applying for jobs.
- AN said knowing what they are would help you develop these throughout your degree programme.
  - **ACTION: CM to ask SA if we could include a banner on QMplus about the Graduate Attributes.**
- JB, DE and AYO all thought GEG4003 should be compulsory for all programmes and linking up of two schools can sometimes be challenging.
  - **ACTION: PW to take to TLC for discussion.**
- JB said there is a survey you do when you re-enrol and wondered where this information goes
  - **ACTION: CM to speak with Serena about this.**

## 6. Organisation and Communication

### 6.1 Communication between CourseReps and other students in cohorts

- QMplus forums
  - o CReps agreed this would be good to give it a go. Ensure people know it is a safe place.
  - o Is there a way to in the forum only have CReps receive notifications but anyone can write this on the forum?
    - **ACTION: CM to speak with SA to execute this forum of communication.**
- Barcode scanners
  - o CReps said these worked a lot better and much preferred them to the paper registers. This is good for the environment as well.

## 7. Learning Resource

### 7.1 Library facilities/ materials

- RE passed comments about cleanliness back to maintenance structure. Need to be given an idea about exact problem locations. Email [library@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:library@qmul.ac.uk) with issues with location problems.
  - **ACTION: CReps to email [library@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:library@qmul.ac.uk) regarding exact locations of mess in the library.**
- Student lift in Mile End library currently has work going on. This should be completed in March and hopefully disruption have been kept to minimum. If you have any disability problems ask at library reception.

### 7.2 QMplus

- CM reminded students that SA is the QMplus contact.

## 8. Student Feedback

- AO outlined the difference between the two surveys; NSS and UKES. UKES is for students not in their final year. UKES is for students in their first/ second year to provide feedback.
- NSS has been open for about 4 weeks and runs until the end of April 2020. AO emphasised this is a very significant survey as the data from this survey feeds into league tables and also into the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Response rates are good but we need to encourage students to take the survey and reflect on their whole university experience. Not just the past few weeks.

## 9. Equality and Diversity

- AO said we are engaging an initiative with an inclusive curriculum. Second years next year have a new module convened by Miles Ogborn and Kathryn Yusoff-GEG5142: Colonial Lives and Afterlives. This initiative is ongoing and we welcome feedback.

## 10. Engagement, Retention and Success

- SG said there is nothing specific to report but at the end of Reading week he will be looking at how students have been performing and identifying barriers and particular modules so we are able to work on that.
- AO said University is getting better at performance between different students and the attainment gap. In School of Geography there is no difference between BAME and white students. Data is showing a consistency about performance.

## 11. Any other business

### 11.1 Careers update

- Alumni Panel this evening 6-7:30pm in Bancroft 3.26
- It was requested for Advice and counselling to have an online booking system for booking appointments as people who have anxiety may find it difficult and some find it difficult to express themselves (JB and DE).
  - **ACTION: CM to speak with ACS about this.**

## 12. Date of next meeting

- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in Room 226 3-5pm
- **UPDATE: 3-5pm Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 online via MS Teams.**

## Action Sheet: Student-Staff Liaison Committee

Minute	Action	Responsibility
2020:001	PW to update next SSLC about initiative to include inbox management and email etiquette in UG/PG learning.  Carried over from SSLC (2019:020), (2019:29) and (2019:39)	PW
2020:002	RE to update on the new Library catalog due to launch in July 2020	RE
2020:003	CM and PW/DE to look into the requirements of being a CRep	CM and PW/DE
2020:004	CM to ensure that for next academic year CourseRep profiles and contact details are ready to be distributed to lecturers.  CReps given deadline of end of Reading week to send these to CM	CM & CReps
2020:005	CReps to ask for feedback on feedback sheets again	CReps
2020:006	TB to explore how to facilitate individualised feedback  Carried over from SSLC (2019:046)	TB
2020:007	CM to ask SA if we could include a banner on QMplus about the Graduate Attributes.	CM to SA
2020:008	PW to take GEG4003 being compulsory for all first year programmes to TLC	PW
2020:009	CM to speak with Serena about where the survey goes that is completed when students re enrol	CM to Serena
2020:010	CM to speak with SA to execute a CRep SSLC forum	CM to SA
2020:011	CReps to email <a href="mailto:library@qmul.ac.uk">library@qmul.ac.uk</a> regarding exact locations of mess in the library	CReps
2020:012	CM to speak with Advice and Counselling about having an online booking form	CM to ACS