

**School of Mathematical Sciences  
Postgraduate Student Staff Liaison Committee  
5<sup>th</sup> August 2020 Minutes**

**Staff members present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
Sebastian Del Bano Rollin (SdBR)	Chair
Mark Walters (MW)	Director of Education
Michael Phillips (MP)	Director of Postgraduate Taught Studies (DPTS)
Primoz Skraba (PS)	MSc Data Analytics Programme Director
Neofytos Rodosthenous (NR)	MSc Mathematical Finance/MSc Financial Computing Programme Director
Alexander Gnedin (AG)	MSc Mathematics Programme Director
Sukhpal Gill (SG)	Lecturer in Cloud Computing-School of Science and Engineering, EECS Representative
James Soderman (JS)	Faculty Liaison Librarian – School of Science and Engineering
Simon Rawstron (SAR)	Education Services Manager
William NG (WN)	Student Support Officer
Maria Patsou (MP)	Secretary

**Student members present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Programme name and level</b>
Camilo Blanco Vargas (CBV)	MSc Financial Computing Course Representative
Stuti Malik (SM)	MSc Mathematics Course Representative
Shane Richardson (SR)	MSc Data Analytics Course Representative
Muhammad Abdulmuntaqim (MA)	MSc Financial Computing Course Representative

**Apologies for absence:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Programme name and level / role</b>
Boris Khoruzhenko (BK)	Head of School
Stefan Couch (SC)	Careers Consultant
Jon Strathdee (JS)	Employer Engagement and Internships Coordinator (EEIC)
Olumide Popoola (OP)	Student Study Skills Coordinator – Library Services

<b>Part 1 – Preliminary Items</b>	
<b>1(a)</b>	<b>Welcome and introduction for new members</b>
2019.125	SdBR welcomed all members to the Virtual meeting. SdBR explained the protocols for the Virtual meeting.
<b>1(b)</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>
2019.126	The meeting noted the apologies of members as recorded above.
<b>1(c)</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b>
2019.127	The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2020.
<b>1(d)</b>	<b>Report on actions taken and matters arising</b>
2019.128	<p>2019.32i: This item is closed as exams have now taken place. No reps objected to SdBR’s query about whether material that was meant to be covered during strikes, was included in the exams. University policy instructs that this material should not be included in the exams. This was confirmed by SG.</p> <p>2019.078: This item has been confirmed and information has been circulated. SM queried about whether exclusion of worst 30 credits includes all credits (i.e. dissertations too). SdBR confirmed this includes dissertations too. SAR also informed that students can resit dissertations although this year it will be earlier than usual, possibly January, with exact dates to be confirmed. SAR offered to send information to programme directors, an action that was completed during the meeting.</p> <p>2019.80: There were follow-ups after the meeting and at this stage the item can be considered closed as marks are now confirmed. SR noted that the only reason the item can close is due to the passage of time, and that efforts to get marks in time did not make any difference. Delays in marks were echoed by MA as well. While academic members of the committee agreed that the marks were severely delayed and accepted responsibility for what happened, MW noted that unfortunately chase-ups coincided with the switch to online learning due to the pandemic and SdBR noted that this year was the first time that semester-based exams were applied, which meant that markers would need to mark during Christmas where they usually tend to other responsibilities, and that in the past it would be acceptable to deliver SEM A marks in the summer. Both SdBR and MW confirmed that they would pass along a firm message to all module organisers that SEMA marks should be delivered in SEMA.</p> <p>2019.091: In the absence of OP, JS and WN confirmed that action has been taken on this item and communications have been sent out, therefore the item can be closed.</p> <p>2019.120: This item can be closed. Communications have been sent.</p>

<b>1(e)</b>	<b>Terms of reference and membership</b>
2019.129	Nothing to report
<b>1(f)</b>	<b>Admission, induction and enrolment</b>
2019.130	Nothing to report
<b>Part 2 - Programme Delivery and Other Matters</b>	
<b>2(a)</b>	<b>Programme/module developments and amendments</b>
2019.131	MP (DPTS) reported no changes. He noted that next year will involve blended teaching and learning and that he hoped campus activities will increase.
<b>2 (b)</b>	<b>Learning and teaching matters</b>
2019.132	As this period is primarily devoted to dissertation work there was nothing to report on teaching and learning.
<b>2(c)</b>	<b>Assessment and feedback</b>
2019.133	All reps queried about whether exams feedback is possible. SdBR noted that the policy does not oblige academics to give feedback to exams, and the scale of the activity could pose an issue. He also said that traditionally it has not been in place. MP (DPTS) noted that guidance is in place but it is not strict. SAR noted that exam drop-in sessions were offered while everyone was on campus, and it is something we would encourage MOs to do. CV noted that some lecturers reveal a range of marks and some don't which can make students wonder why they did not do as well as others so it is important that there is a standardised approach. SAR to chase up the possibility of providing exam feedback to students.
2019.134	SR and SM requested clarification on ECs regarding dissertations. SAR explained that as an assessment dissertations go through the same rules as exams. SAR to send a clarification email to students about ECs regarding dissertations.
<b>2(d)</b>	<b>Academic support</b>
2019.135	SR expressed a wide concern about students who might 'slip through the cracks' regarding their dissertations. MP (DPTS) noted that projects are meant to be guided but independent work with regular contact with supervisors, specifically ten one-hour meetings. SAR and WN requested that if students are experiencing issues and have concerns they can contact the Maths team. JS noted that if students experience issues with finding resources they should contact him at <a href="mailto:library-sande@qmul.ac.uk">library-sande@qmul.ac.uk</a> MP (DPTS) and AG to contact PGT students to check all is going well with their Dissertations.
<b>2(e)</b>	<b>Organisation and communication</b>
2019.136	CV noted that he had limited contact with peers recently due to everyone focusing on projects. He also noted doubts over the Industry Experience part the MSc in Financial Computing, due to the pandemic.

<b>2(f)</b>	<p><b>Learning resources &amp; Careers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Library facilities / materials (books, journals etc.)</b></li> <li>• <b>QMplus</b></li> <li>• <b>Q-Review</b></li> <li>• <b>Updates from faculty E-learning forums</b></li> <li>• <b>IT</b></li> </ul>
2019.137	<p>JS noted that some library spaces are now open and can be booked. Books can be picked and students will need to complete a form and send to <a href="mailto:learningdevelopment@qmul.ac.uk">learningdevelopment@qmul.ac.uk</a> to have the book ready. In terms of returning books, the library will let students know about the process.</p>
2019.138	<p>SdBR noted that he will be holding the employability seminar prior to 18th August after checking with all reps about the best dates. With regards to careers, as students are both home and international, MA requested that this is something that is factored in to the employability seminar.</p>
2019.139	<p>SdBR has been working with Dr Seth Sarfo about Bloomberg certifications and would encourage students to take them. Microsoft certifications are currently on hold. In response to CV's request to do the certifications in September SdBR noted that while he will try to offer those after September, he advises students to take them in August, as September is the start of the new academic year where it is more of a challenge to tend to these activities.</p>
2019.140	<p>SR requested for modules to be accessible on QMPlus during module registration, as a substitute to students auditing modules while deciding which to choose. MP (DPTS) agreed that QM+ pages for elective modules should be visible to students whilst making their choices at the start of semester A and B.</p>
<b>2(g)</b>	<b>Student feedback (NSS/PTES/QMSS/Modules evaluations)</b>
2019.141	Nothing to report
<b>Part 3-Any Other Business</b>	
2019.142	<p>CV queried about numbers of students across degrees next year in the interest of maintaining high standards of teaching and learning. SdBR confirmed that applications are at good level, but that we will know final numbers until the new academic year starts.</p>
2019.143	<p>It was noted that reps should continue to seek informal feedback from students.</p>
2019.144	<p>CBV queried about how group work would be possible during lockdown/remotely. MP (DPTS) stated that the dissertation was meant to be individual work but that other elements of teaching or assessment could be made into group work. The committee was generally supportive of the idea of considering forms of group work.</p>

**Part 4-Date of next meeting**

2019.145	CBV queried about subsequent SSLCs and while reps suggested to have one after dissertation submissions, staff suggested a dissertation focused SSLC meeting prior to submissions, to account for any potential issues with supervision. This was supported by staff.
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**Action Sheet: Student-Staff Liaison Committee**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action status</b>	<b>Issue Resolved?</b>
2019.128	Pass along a firm message to all module organisers that SEMA marks should be delivered in SEMA.	MW	By semester A		
2019.133	Chase up the possibility of providing exam feedback to students.	SAR	ASAP		
2019.134	Send a clarification email to students about ECs regarding dissertations.	SAR	ASAP	Comms have been sent.	Yes
2019.135	Follow up potential issues with communications between students and supervisors. MP (DPTS) and AG to contact PGT students to check all is going well with their Dissertations.	MP (DPTS)/AG	ASAP		