



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Department of Veterinary
Medicine

Notes

Graduate Education Interest Group: 4pm Wednesday 25th June 2014, SCR

Present: Raymond Bujdoso, Abbe Crawford, Thora Karadottir, Olivier Restif, Fiona Roby, Colin Russell, David Sargan (Chair), Andy Strakova, Tom Monie,

DS introduced the meeting by explaining the need for the Graduate Interest Group – to assist with making decisions pertaining to graduate education, the responsibility of which has historically been shouldered solely by the Director of Graduate Education. It was agreed that the meetings should be held once a term – future dates to be arranged.

Items on the agenda for the meeting were:

- BBSRC DTP Studentships
- Development Training Grants
- Induction of New Students
- Code of Practise for new Students

1. BBSRC DTP studentships

DS thanks all those that were involved in the recent BBSRC DTP selection process – in putting forward projects or ranking the proposals.

RB brought up the problem of BBSRC students not being prepared to come to the Vet School because of its out-of-town location, and suggested that ways to encourage them need to be considered. One way of increasing Vet Med DTP students was to point candidates already interested in Vet Med PhD in the direction of BBSRC DTP funding (rather than waiting for them to come through the system), and also to ensure that rotations were carried out in Vet Med.

2. Development Training Grants:

Money is available for ‘generic’ skills training; potential activities we could run to take advantage of these funds were discussed.

(a) The student representatives (AC and AS) considered that it would be very useful to have further training in Presenting skills.

Initial thoughts were that there would be some training sessions with professional science communication experts, and following that there would be an active day where students would present 3 minute blitz sessions to each other, and other scientists. The aim would be to learn how to communicate more effectively with other scientists from their own, and other disciplines. The added bonus would be that there would be a wider knowledge of what work is being carried out across the department. Refreshments would also be available as an

inducement to take part, to make the event more enjoyable and encourage an atmosphere conducive to communication and networking.

Action: TM, who has run this sort of event before will get contact details of potential trainers.

Action: AC and AS will draft a wish list of how they see the event.

Action: DS will take responsibility for formally applying for funding.

(b) TM suggested that something similar should be done for scientific writing skills: writing theses/writing papers/writing grants. It was noted that Clare Bryant is running some research workshops in this area in reference to grant writing.

TK suggested that both events (a and b) could be run under the wider umbrella of 'Research Development Training' and run across the whole department.

(c) TK reminded us about the £1400 still remaining in the pot for Researcher Development activities for current academic year, it was suggested that it could be put towards the Poster Session at Christmas.

Action: FR to check whether we can keep the £1400 if not used in current academic year.

3. Induction of New Students:

DS reported that the Graduate school induction sessions that we have historically sent our students on is changing format to a more interactive one, and he is wary of how useful new format will be, and asked should we develop an in-depth induction of our own.

AC said she had been on both styles of Grad School induction and thought the new version is quite useful and possibly better than the old style one. It was decided that we could therefore continue with the main induction being through the Grad school, with our own specific information being available on the website and through leaflets.

4. Code of Practise for new Students

DS briefly went through the revised codes and confirmed that we are already complying with these.

OR asked if the Acquiring of transferable skills should also be included in the code of practise – DS agreed but doubts this will happen due to difficulties in measuring and therefore enforcing this.