



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Department of Veterinary
Medicine

TEACHING STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 12 November 2014

Present: Clare Allen, Katheryn Ayres, Jane Dobson, Judith Drinkwater (Secretary), John Gibson, Mike Herrtage, Gareth Pearce, Kate Smith, Alun Williams (Chair)

Apologies: Jackie Brearley, Murray Corke, Nicky Holdstock, Ian McCrone, Penny Watson

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2014

The minutes were approved.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

2.1 6th Year rotations assessment

KMA would circulate a survey to staff at the end of the Michaelmas Term to ascertain how they felt the new assessment format was working. This would form the basis of a discussion at a later date.

ACTION: KMA

2.2 Professional Studies (see also 2.5 below)

AW reported that he wished to convene a working group to develop a professional studies strand throughout the six years of the course. The current structure of electives / research project would be considered as part of this in order to achieve a co-ordinated approach. He proposed that the membership of the working group should comprise a number of colleagues with a broad range of experience, including experience of practice: himself, JCB, PJW, LCVA, Mark Holmes, Mark Reading, GPP, Milorad Radakovic. KMA would convene a first meeting, at which terms of reference would be agreed.

ACTION: KMA

2.3 40 week final year

Feedback sessions had been held on 31 October and at Hospital Users' Group on 7 November.

JSG reported that the session on 31 October had been generally positive. Some efficiencies could be made but these were planning issues that could easily be sorted out. AW said that it was clear from discussion that there was a need to tease out the issues relating to the 40 week final year, and management issues relating to the Hospital, JSG confirmed that the students he had spoken to were happy with the 2-3 student group size, although MEH had reported some students who had missed the support of their peers during rotations. KMA would circulate a survey at the end of the Michaelmas Term to gather student feedback.

ACTION: KMA

2.4 Nominations for Associate Lecturers

The Secretary had received a nomination forwarded by PJW. She would ask IM to forward a nomination that he had in preparation. AW would speak to NBH, who wished to nominate an individual.

ACTION: SECRETARY/AW

2.5 Proposal: Elective Project timetable, Years 4-5 of Final VetMB: see 2.2 above

2.6 Responses to External Examiners' Reports

AW reported that the Strategy & Executive Committee had asked for details about MCQ examinations in the Department to be supplied to the External Examiners in conjunction with the Department's response to their comments. MCQs were used in Cambridge in different ways to their use in other UK Veterinary Schools, but this was not clear to the External Examiners. JSG had prepared a draft document about the Department's examination philosophy, in order to put the use of MCQs in context and to explain the rationale for their use, and this had been circulated to the Committee. AW agreed to make suggestions for amendment to the document, and would ask Dr David Good, Director of Education, Faculty of Biology, to check it as well. It would go to the Strategy & Executive Committee for confirmation and to the meeting of the Faculty Board in January 2015.

ACTION: AW

2.7 Follow-up to the Report of the General Board Learning and Teaching Review 2013

AW had circulated an amended version of his response to the General Board's request for an update on progress on specific and general items following the Learning and Teaching Review in 2013. The Veterinary Education Committee had endorsed the response and Dr David Good had said that he would read and comment on it. AW would follow up with DG.

ACTION: AW

2.8 Strategic Plan 2015-2020

AW reminded the meeting that he had invited members of the TSC to submit any ideas they had for inclusion in learning and teaching strategy to include in the Strategic Plan. He was grateful to the three members of the committee who had provided their ideas. If any others wished to submit their ideas, he asked that they do so within the next week. He would draft a strategy for teaching and learning for consideration at the next meeting in January 2015.

ACTION: AW

4. EMS Co-ordinator report

AW reported on behalf of PJW that the RCVS had now received the document from the EMS Co-ordinators outlining the issues with the Student Experience Log. The EMS Co-ordinators had agreed that if the RCVS failed to resolve the issues, they might discontinue use of the SEL.

5. Clinical Skills Centre

AW reported on behalf of JCB that the Clinical Skills Centre was now in use. Equine haptic teaching had commenced, and KJS reported very positive feedback from students. JSG confirmed that bovine haptic classes would start in week beginning 17 November. The Secretary confirmed that a role of Clinical Skills Centre Facilitator would be advertised shortly.

6. RCVS Visitation, 9 – 14 March 2015

AW confirmed that he now had all except three chapters of the Self-Evaluation report in draft form and these would be circulated to the Committee by the end of November. An ad hoc meeting would be held to discuss the draft if deemed necessary. The document was due to be submitted to the RCVS by 23 December 2014.

ACTION: AW

7. National Student Survey 2014

The results of the NSS 2014 had been circulated. The Secretary explained that the NSS was launched early in the Lent Term each year, and that final year students only were asked to respond to it. The Department encouraged students to respond to the MSS by the end of the Lent Term, since after that point they were engaged in revision for Part III examinations. 83% of students had responded in 2014 (compared with 87% in 2013). This was an excellent response rate and made the survey results valid. It was clear from the NSS results that the two operational areas where the Department was

underperforming were assessment, and organisation and management. Low satisfaction with these areas had also surfaced in the 2013 results. AW noted that some of the student comments related to preclinical course, where changes had been made since the cohort who graduated in 2014 had started the course. Overall, however, there were some strong positive comments and the responses were well balanced.

AW would provide an analysis of the NSS 2014 results for the committee.

ACTION: AW

Dates of meetings 2014-2015:

All Wednesdays, 12 – 1 p.m.

2015:

14 January

25 February

22 April

27 May