

## School of History, Classics and Archaeology

### Minutes of Meeting of PG and PT Tutor Liaison Committee

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, Computing Lab 2.36, Doorway 4.

**Present:** Dr Esther Mijer, (Chair), Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Laura Allison, (Committee Secretary), HR Assistant  
Louise Todd, School Resources Manager  
Dr Mark Newman, Deputy Graduate School Director  
Dr Ulf Schoop, Head of Archaeology  
Dr Thomas Ahnert, Head of History  
Prof Gavin Kelly, Head of Classics  
Jeremy Piercy, History Representative  
Krysten Blackstone, History Representative  
Anita Klinger, Scholarship Student Representative  
Rosie Filipiak, Undergraduate Manager  
Andy Barlow, Archaeology Representative

**Apologies:** Prof Ewen Cameron, Head of School  
Dr Emma Hunter, Graduate School Director  
Ines Silva, Classics Representative  
Richard Kane, Graduate School Manager  
Jamiilee Twigge, Archaeology Representative  
Anna Gibbons, Director of Professional Services  
Roseanna Doughty, History Representative  
Iain Watson, History Representative  
Dot Longley-Cook, Classics Representative  
Pim Totterdell, Curriculum & Quality Assurance Officer

	<b>Action</b>
<p><b><u>1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</u></b></p> <p>Esther Mijers (EM) welcomed all colleagues to the meeting, and apologies were noted.</p>	
<p><b><u>2. Timetabling Talk</u></b></p> <p>Amy Partridge-Hicks and Ben Poots introduced themselves and gave a presentation on Timetabling. Presentation to be circulated</p>	<p><b>Amy Partridge- Hicks and Ben</b></p>

At the end of the presentation Amy and Ben opened up the floor to questions.  
Rosie Filipiak asked Ben Poots if any more rooms would become available in Estates, this year or the year after. to which Ben replied lots. It was shared that old College will be coming back into the mix with 14 rooms available, priority for those rooms will be given to Law but will be made available to everyone, once Law no longer need them.  
7 rooms from 7-8 Chamber Street, initial priority will be for ECA but will be available to everyone if ECA don't use them.  
As the University is rolling out decommissioning of teaching rooms with poor accessibility, a number of rooms in Buccleuch Place will likely disappear as teaching spaces  
Overall there may be more space.

Esther shared that every morning staff seem to be receiving emails to inform them that students on certain History courses have been moved. Esther requested clarification on what this actually means, as she understands students can move around, but this is still happening. Rosie explained these are automated emails sent because the students have moved groups and have already submitted work to their original group. The timetabling system cannot move the students from the original group, as this would then remove all the work they have already submitted.  
They will have been moved manually, so it is not the case that students are still moving around.  
It was confirmed that if this happens, staff can ignore the emails as they are about the same students each time. Amy has confirmed that she welcomes the feedback and will look into if it can be amended to only one notification.

It was queried what the logic is behind allocating students to their tutorial groups rather than letting them choose themselves. In some of the larger courses some students have had to be move tutorial groups because of the travel constraints/travel.  
It was asked if it would be possible for students to select their own tutorial group.  
It was confirmed that the current allocation model is a random selection. This model is used because it is quick and efficient, especially at the beginning of semester when students are moving courses etc.  
Taking on feedback from semester 1, where there seemed to be a large amount of changes, the TTU team have taken on additional resources to cope with any further issues.  
The 'group change request' form has also been updated to ask students their availability and what their preferences are regarding days and time slots. This will hopefully help to reduce the amount of reallocation.  
Rosie added this decision to have students allocated to their tutorials by TTU was made at College level and all CAHSS Schools follow this model. When allocating students to tutorial groups it is not possible to add location constraints as this slows the process considerably, which is why a manual process of running reports for this information has been adopted.

It was also highlighted that in some courses students are still being added in weeks 4 and 5. This would be okay if they are switching

**Poots to forward on presentation.**

**A P-H will look into changing.**

tutorial groups, but some students being added to courses during week 4 and 5.

This presented issues for courses where the first essay is due in week 6, which meant students needed to receive an extension.

It was queried if late student enrolments to courses with assignments early in a semester could be prevented. It was confirmed this is not possible as the course enrolment deadline is set centrally by the University for all students, and restrictions on individual courses would reduce the University's aim of maximising flexibility for students.

Amy noted that it would be useful for her to receive any feedback like the examples noted above, as she is the business lead on the student service excellence project for timetabling.

## **5. Issues from Tutor representatives**

### a. Contracting/re-contracting issues

Louise clarified that the school procedure is to tie contract end dates to either end of prescribed period (1<sup>st</sup> year to 3<sup>rd</sup> year) of study, or end of teaching if 4<sup>th</sup> year or above. E.g. if someone is teaching only in semester 1, we would provide a contract end date in January to allow for any eTime claims for marking.

It's been brought to our attention that a couple of colleagues had incorrect end dates, (end of semester 2 when this should have been the end of semester 1). We are currently working to address these issues with colleagues individually.

A couple of other colleagues have raised concerns about effects this has on increments in August, and whether the above approach effects this. We are currently in conversations with College HR, and identified a small group of individuals that may be effected this year, and will be in touch shortly to confirm.

This seems to only have been an issue for this year. We will put into practice going forward that should anyone have a break in service (for example not teaching in semester 2, and reinstated for semester 1 in the next academic year) we will honour the increment if 3 months continuous service is accrued.

We understand that this has been a difficult issue for the colleagues affected, and appreciate your patience, as it is a manual process to fix the issue. It was noted that if tutors or demonstrators have any issues with their contracts going forward that they come to speak with the Resources/HR team, as we would like to work with colleague's directly to resolve any issues.

<p>It was noted that the all the work that HR are completing to rectify the issue is appreciated. It was also suggested by tutors that would it not be easier for all involved, to provide a contract fixed term end date to reflect the full year? As regardless of the end date colleagues can only work the amount offered to them.</p> <p>It was agreed that this approach would be easier for the administration side of things, but unfortunately this is the approach that College HR want us to take, and ultimately the contracts won't be approved/ distributed by them unless we comply.</p> <p>It was agreed that Louise and Laura would ask college HR for the reasoning why.</p>	<p><b>Louise/Laura</b></p>
<p><b><u>6. AOB</u></b></p> <p>It was asked if the approach of advertising the vacant positions in semester 2 would be the approach taken going forward.</p> <p>Laura confirmed that we are currently trailing this method of recruitment, for semester 2 and it is looking likely that we will be using this method for next year.</p> <p>In the new policy it states that we need to follow a recruitment process for all Tutors and Demonstrators.</p> <p>We plan to communicate with Tutors and Demonstrators before the adverts go live for next year, to inform them of any changes.</p> <p>It is important that we mirror a real life situation as much as we can when it comes to applying for academic posts, to give Tutors and Demonstrators the same experience as all other employees.</p> <p>It is also to ensure that we are complying with employment law, with respect to declaring any criminal convictions and references etc.</p> <p>We also plan to start discussions soon regarding interviews, and if this is something that the school would have the capacity to support.</p> <p><b><u>Date of next meeting: Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017 3pm – 4.30pm, Computing Lab 2.36, Doorway 4.</u></b></p>	