

PG PT Tutor Liaison Committee – Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, 29th October 2020, 11 – 12pm

Room: Collaborate

Present 1

Esther Mijers – EM

Emily Rose Hay – ERH

Lucy Grig – LG

Ismael Casas –IC

Vicky Swann – VS

Tim Penn -- TP

Manuel Fernandez-Gotz – MFG

Claire Aubin -- CA

Ewen Cameron – EC

Fabian Hilfrich -- FH

David Ritchie – DR

Eilein Fraser -- EF

Monique De Pace – MP

Kelli Conley -- KC

Apologies

Kerry Penman

Anna McGauley

Stephen McDowall

Anna Gibbons

Wendy Ugolini

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

EM welcomed the committee and each member introduced themselves.

2. Approve minutes from last meeting

Minutes of last meeting were agreed.

About the actions:

-MFG checked demonstrators were using Osteoarchaeology Postgraduate programme and checked with the programme director and postgraduate director and the course convenor corrected the induction to the students and also estimated the allocation of hours.

-Networking meeting cancelled because of Covid – 19.

-Some adjustment were made to the induction.

EC nothing to add but thanked everyone for the huge effort.

EM agreed with EC.

3. Update on teaching in Semester 1 and Semester 2

EM suggested doing a round with tutor reps and see how the semester1 is going so far.

History

CA: majority tutoring face to face, with a few teaching online, including some self-isolating groups. CA has received feedback from tutors saying was being very difficult because of the amount of admin work, something that CA agreed. In addition, emails about self-isolating, organisation, advising about what to do, etc. which was a huge more amount of work that was not reflected in their contracts.

DR: teaching behind a desk felt more like a lecture and not a tutorial and has had few situations with students needed to self-isolate and suggested and update about the procedure.

ERH agreed with CA about the points brought up and the difficulties of lesson plans for face to face and online teaching as some tutors were struggling putting into action plans that they got on tutors notes in the handbooks and they would appreciate if they receive guidance from the course organisers on how to adapt tutorials and then, all students will have an uniform experience.

KC found challenging doing it this year as the rest of the tutors and also quite difficult to know if the students were understanding everything because of the 'lecturer style' tutorials and wondering if it was possible to get any kind of feedback from students.

Classics

TP: Agreed with History rep colleagues about the amount of time spent with admin work and also was teaching an isolating group and showed the concerns about the way this group works. Admin side of organising classes as some of the students have not been added to collaborate and is taken more time.

Also mentioned about the tutoring meeting and the 'lecturer style' and how that makes harder to have a conversation between students.

Archaeology

MP: Agreed with their colleagues. Also mentioned that induction was more focused on Hybrid teaching, collaborate, Teams but not on the Face to Face tutorials. MP also mentioned the amount of emails and admin work because some information, clearly covered on lecturer classes, is missed by students.

FH: responded to KC's concern on how to know if students were engaging, how much they have learnt, etc. School has done an engagement study about the attendance and it was comparable with last year. History has organised Q&A for pre-honours and honours students and they were really thankful for all the efforts and being really positive for all made by HCA School.

LG: LG wanted to mention that if tutors have issues running a tutorial that is something they need to talk to their course organiser. About the extra admin, if they have any problems adding students to the groups, they should contact with the contract administrator.

MFG: Agreed with all said by FH, LG and EM. MFG has contacted with some tutors for first year and they said student engagement tutorials on campus was good but attendance was not always great. If tutors and demonstrator need further support, contact the course organiser and, if the issue is not solve, contact MFG directly.

FH: He mentioned also about the amount of admin work that teaching directors and course organisers have already discussed about **running Q&A regularly with course organisers and staff** for answering some generic questions from students.

CA: concerned about admin work hours are not reflected in the contracts and several tutors asked to bring this issue to the meeting.

EC: mentioned the issue about students asking how to self-isolate and, although has received a good feedback from students about the tutor's work, the communication procedure may need to be improved. Following CA concern about the admin work, school budget may be reviewed with Anna Gibbons for Semester 2 and see what they can do about it.

MP said that one of the main issues in the Archaeology 1A course is that nothing in the course content has changed itself as some of the things that they have been told to do on the tutorial discussion questions are not guided to the new way of teaching and that were something to look into for next semester/year.

EM mentioned that they had meeting with colleagues to discuss the course contents and make sure these are updated. Each course should have a post-mortem team meeting. Until then, keep a note of those things that are not working particularly well.

MFG thanked and encouraged MP to send an email explaining the main issues and will be discussed with the course organiser for next semester.

ERH mentioned that they gave last year feedback in the Historian Toolkit course during the post-mortem meeting with specific adaptations to the course but none of those things have changed and are quite frustrated and asking if there are any reason, give a justification to them.

CA was wondering if they have information about the proportion of face to face teaching is being undertaken by senior staff members vs postgraduate students and early career researchers in terms of know the number and the possible distribution of risks.

FH tried to answer CA questions mentioned that one of the problems are the size of the rooms as currently only accommodate thirteen people (12 + 1 tutor) and there are only few rooms that accommodate any over honours teaching and most of the History tutorials are taken by tutors rather than senior staff so the distribution is not related with Covid, it is related with the size of the rooms. FH wanted to reassure that this is not related to pass the Covid risk on to tutors.

CA also wanted to ask about the expectations for tutors who have been teaching face to face and they have told to self-isolate in terms of teaching and moving to online or if someone is taking their tutorials. EC mentioned two possibilities: moving teaching online or swap around. If a tutor needs to self-isolate, EC encouraged to contact the course organiser and Head of department and see what arrangements can be made.

CA raised a concern from the third year PhD students and the possibility of having or not a contract in the fourth year. VS answered as contract renewed is based on what is needed in terms of tutors for any course and also how many students apply and it is not easy question to answer. **EC mentioned that it will take this up with Stephen who is taking this very carefully with the team office** as they knew that third year students are in a very particular position with the current impact of Covid-19.

EM updated about the semester two and the continuation of the hybrid teaching method but, always, following Scottish Government guidance. They have asked colleagues to fill in a form about their teaching prior for next semester and these will be look in a meeting in 13th November by teaching director and EM and any queries and changes will be look into them and processed in a normal way by VS. Teaching in semester 2 will look quite similar to semester 1 but issues raised during the meeting will considered carefully.

EM mentioned that she steps down at the end of the calendar year but will make sure that Catriona Pickard, who is taking over, will be told about all the issues raised during this meeting.

Action

FH raise to the Course Organiser about adaptations suggested by tutors from last year at post-mortem meetings.

4. AOB

Issues raised in an email by MP will be answered by HR outside the meeting.

No any other business.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 17th December 2020 11.30-12.30pm