



The Department of Health Sciences

POSTGRADUATE STAFF STUDENT FORUM

Minutes of the Meeting held at 12.10pm on Wednesday, 12 February 2020
in Room ATB/271, Department of Health Sciences

Present: Lucy Beresford (AHR Y2 PT rep) Amanda Mason-Jones
Ji Gong (MPH Y1 FT rep) Elizabeth Powell
Janaka Jayawickrama Danielle Simpson
Mona Kanaan

In attendance: Di Stockdale

SSF/Feb20/01 Apologies for absence

Omara Dogar, Matthew Jacobs, Tracy Lightfoot, Roy Njuabe, Amanda Perry, Jo Rose.

SSF/Feb20/02 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2019 were accepted as a true record.

SSF/Feb20/03 Matters Arising

SSF/Nov19/05.02 Student rep VLE sites

It was reported that John Blase had now received the relevant information to enrol all student reps on the VLE sites. Details will be released on Friday, 14 February via email with guidance on appropriate use of the site. Any queries should be directed to either John Blase or Danielle Simpson.

SSF/Nov19/06 MPH issues - module feedback

It was noted that comments received from 2 or 3 students were not reflected in the module evaluation feedback. For future reference, it would be useful if student reps could indicate the exact number of students who had raised an issue of concern.

SSF/Nov19/10 Athena Swan

The information about Athena Swan had been circulated to all postgraduate students.

SSF/Feb20/04 Standing Item: Report on previous term's module evaluations

The response rate for some of the modules had been low, but this coincided with the industrial action which may have affected the response rate. Reminders to complete the online evaluation surveys had been sent to all students to encourage the response rate. It was anticipated that when the student rep VLE sites become

available, this should ensure increased communication between students and better engagement with module feedback.

With regard to distance learning, Janaka reported an improved response rate from the most recent intake of MIHA students. However, there was a need to encourage greater engagement with the PGCert Health Research & Statistics students.

SSF/Feb20/05 Standing item: AHR issues

There were no issues to report.

SSF/Feb20/06 Standing item: MPH issues

SSF/Feb20/06.01 Dissertation topics

Students have the option of either choosing their own project, or one of the staff-led dissertation projects. However, many of the staff-led projects require a student to undertake the 10-credit Systematic Reviews module as part of the required skills set. For any student who does not elect this module, it then limits their choice of dissertation topics. Students felt it would be beneficial if, at the start of the academic year, they could be provided with the choice of projects that may be available and guidance on which optional modules should be selected in line with their chosen topic.

It was agreed that this will be taken to the Postgraduate Teaching Committee (PGTC) for discussion and feedback.

ACTION:	BY WHOM:
Discussion at PGTC on dissertation topics and guidelines for students.	Programme leader

SSF/Feb20/07 Standing item: PGCert Health Research & Statistics Issues

There were no student issues to report.

It was reported that Mona Kanaan had now stepped down from the programme and Elena Ratschen was Programme Leader, with Noreen Mdege as Deputy Programme Leader. Students who were supervised by Mona will receive email notification of the change in supervisor to Noreen.

ACTION:	BY WHOM:
Email notification to all students affected by change of supervisor.	Di Stockdale/Noreen Mdege

SSF/Feb20/08 Standing item: MIHA Issues

SSF/Feb20/08.01 Student attendance

Janaka reported that some cohorts, particularly 2019/20 entry, engage well with the programme and module leaders. However, one difficulty can be Wifi access especially if a student is working in remote areas.

SSF/Feb20/08.02 Module assessment submission timing

Some students had complained about the January submission date for two of the module assignments, claiming it had ruined their Christmas vacation. The matter had been dealt with directly and Janaka reported that as this was the first time such a complaint had been received, the module submission timing would be reviewed if this was raised again.

SSF/Feb20/09 *Standing item: PhD Issues*

SSF/Feb20/10 *Accommodation*

Amanda Mason-Jones raised a problem that had been brought to her attention by a few overseas MPH and PhD students relating to racism and acquiring accommodation in York, but who did not wish to report it officially.

As a separate but related issue our overseas students have been unable to rent accommodation before arrival in York as they are regularly asked for a guarantor. Could it be possible that the department can provide a letter that students can use for this purpose to confirm that they are on our programmes? Danielle will discuss the matter with Matthew Jacobs to review ways we can help students.

SSF/Feb20/10 MSc Taster Day (March 2020)

Danielle invited any student reps who were interested in assisting with escorting potential applicants between east and west campus on the MSc Taster Day to contact Jane Milsom in Health Sciences via email.

SSF/Feb20/11 Any other business

There was no other business for discussion.

SSF/Feb20/12 Chairmanship of next meeting

Lucy Beresford volunteered to chair the next meeting.

SSF/Feb20/13 Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 19 May 2020 at 12.10pm in ATB/271.