Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 June 2010 in Biology M023

Present: Daniela Barilla, Christoph Baumann, Gideon Davies, Anne Duhme-Klair, Gareth Evans, Paul Genever, Gideon Grogan, Jim Hoggett, Julie Lord, James Moir (Chair), Jennifer Potts, Michael Schultze (Secretary), Seishi Shimizu, Richard Swinnerton, Gavin Thomas, Jane Thomas-Oates, Daniel Ungar, Keith Wilson and Elizabeth Young.


10/01 The Minutes of the Biochemistry Board of Studies of 11 May 2009 were approved, noting that maths teaching would continue in much the same way as in previous years but that it had been formally incorporated into the Biochemical skills module. As part of Biochemical skills, biochemists will be taught some fundamental aspects of atomic structure and the basis for spectroscopy, which was previously delivered as part of the Foundation Chemistry.

10/02 The Minutes of the Biochemistry Executive Committee Meeting of 26 November 2009 were approved, noting that the Biology and Chemistry Planning Group had agreed that the October 2010 intake could have a combined home/overseas intake of 52 following A-level results in August (with the expectation of 2 post-A-level withdrawals).

10/03 The Minutes of the Biochemistry Executive Committee Meeting of 17 March 2010 were approved, noting the following:

Arising from 10/03: Tutorials in the modular programme had been built into the Biochemical skills module.

The format would be 3 x 3 x 1 (3 autumn term, 3 spring term and 1 in the early summer term) and the material covered would be similar to the current model. The Board discussed introducing a penalty system for missed tutorials but agreed to re-visit this in summer 2011.

Module 0320571 Biochemical reaction mechanisms: The Board noted that Anne Duhme-Klair would not contribute to this module in 2010/11 or future years and that Colin Kleanthous would not deliver his lectures in autumn 2010 (they would be delivered by Gideon Grogan). Anne Duhme-Klair, Gideon Grogan and James Moir agreed to discuss the delivery of the Anne Duhme-Klair’s lectures in autumn 2010.

The Board noted that from 2011/12 this module would merge with Protein form and function to create a 20 credit module (called Protein Chemistry).

10/04 Determining class borderlines and External Examiner vivas. The Board agreed to adopt the changes in policy in determining class borderlines at the Final Board of Examiners and noted that for this year vivas with the External Examiner would be recorded and two internal examiners (Gideon Grogan and James Moir) would also be present and would take part in the viva examination.
10/05

**Officers of the Board.**

James Moir confirmed that he had two more years as Chair of the Biochemistry Board and that the Secretary’s post (currently Michael Schultze) would be up for election in summer 2011.

10/06

**Annual Plan 2010-11.**

The Board approved the Annual Teaching Plan for 2010-2011, confirming the following:

(i) Alan Lowe (new appointment) would take over Jim Hoggett’s teaching in year 1 Biochemical skills and year 2 Molecular and biochemical methods and Dale Sanders teaching in year 3 Molecular machines. The Board noted that Colin Kleanthous was liaising with Alan Lowe over his teaching.

(ii) There would be no change to year 2 Protein form and function.

(iii) Christoph Baumann would deliver Colin Kleanthous’s lectures in year 3 Molecular machines.

(iv) The year 3 Enzymes module would be organised by Neil Bruce and had been re-named ‘Biocatalysis’. The Board noted that Biochemistry students taking Biocatalysis in the autumn term could not take the RNA world module in the spring term.

(v) There would be no change to year 3 Proteins and disease.

(vi) There would be no change to year 3 Protein-protein recognition.

(vii) Year 3 Protein nucleic acid interactions would be delivered by Christoph Baumann, Daniela Barilla and James Moir in 2011 and 2012 and would merge with Protein – protein recognition in 2013 to form a 20 credit module (called Biomolecular Interactions).

(viii) Bio-inspired Chemistry would be organised by Anne Duhme-Klair in 2011.

(ix) The duration of all final examinations would be 3 hours.

10/07

**Admissions.**

Gideon Grogan reported that Biochemistry had 88 firm accepts (including 5 overseas students) and that they were aiming for a class size of 52 (following A-level results, with the expectation of around 2 post-A-level withdrawals). On the basis of previous years figures Biochemistry would also expect to pick up 8 or 9 students through insurance offers.

Admissions applications to Biochemistry at York were up by 100% and it was hoped that this year it would not be necessary to go into clearing. It is thought that the increase in applications is the result of positive scores in National League Tables and the National Students Survey.
10/08  Year in Industry programme.
Paul Genever informed the Board that 3 Biochemistry students had placements for 2010/11. This had been a difficult year, the number of placements available to students had declined and some guaranteed placements for York students had been pulled in the autumn term.

The Board noted that the Biology Department were appointing a part-time Industrial Liaison Officer whose remit would be increasing the number of placement opportunities available to Biology and Biochemistry students. It was hoped that someone would be in post for the autumn term.

10/09  Year in Europe programme.
Michael Schultze informed the Board that in 2008/9 two Biochemistry students had spent their Erasmus year in Denmark at Aarhus University, they were the first two students to take up this placement and it had been a positive experience for them both. The University looked after the students very well.

In 2010/11 two students had obtained research placements at two Research Institutes in Strasbourg, France; the Institute of Cellular and Molecular Biology and the Institute of Genetics and Cellular Biology, some funding for this was being provided by the Erasmus programme. Dr Schultze noted that it had not been difficult to find these placements.

Another student was going to Jena University in Germany.

In the current first year cohort 2 students were earmarked for Grenoble in 2011/12 and a further three students had expressed an interest in the research placement scheme. The Board agreed that it should be possible for students to apply to both University and Research placement schemes if they wished.

Gideon Davies asked if anymore consideration had been given to introducing a 4 year Biochemistry masters programme; James Moir informed the Board that this was not being taken forward at the moment.

10/10  Any other business.
The members of the Board noted that the feedback meeting with final year Biochemistry students would be on Wednesday 23 June at 14.30 in M023. Staff are welcome to attend.

James Moir, July 2010