

Oxford University Department of Materials Academic Committee

DMAC 22 Minutes of the Academic Committee held at 2.00 pm on Monday 1st March in the first floor Committee Room of 21 Banbury Road.

Present: GT (Chair), HEA, AC, PRW, JMS, AOT, APS.

In attendance: LJFJ.

1. **Apologies:** AC
2. **Minutes of DMAC 21.** The minutes were accepted.
3. **Matters arising – that are not specific Agenda Items**

From DMAC 21, 2nd February 2003

Minute 5b 2nd year Tensors course (AOT) – held over to DMAC 23, for discussion of the 2004/05 General Scheme

Minute 5c Optoelectronics Course (AOT) – classes have now been given and examination questions set.

Minute 6b Workshop (AOT/GT) – the matter is under discussion.

Minute 7 Minute 5 Membership of DMAC (GT/AOT) – elections will be held in the TT

Minute 7 Minute 7 Graduate Admissions Procedures (AC/AOT) AC/AOT briefed Subfac HT04. A paper will be presented in Subfac TT 04.

Minute 7 Minute 8 Accessibility of Practicals (JPN) – preliminary discussions between AOT/LJFJ/PT and JPN have been held.

Minute 10 Review of 3rd Year options (SGR) – this paper will be presented at DMAC 23.

Minute 13 Undergraduate Admissions Brochure (AOT) – some feedback had been received, thank you. AOT is preparing the final version of the brochure.

Minute 16b EMS Industrial Visit Reports (GT) – GT and SGR (as Chair of the EMS SC) have discussed this matter. It will be raised at the EMS SC in week 7, HT.

4. **Divisional Academic Committee Report (GT)**

University's Academic Strategy. The university aims to recruit 5000 new graduate students however, it appears that Colleges are unwilling to expand so uncertainty exists as to where these students would be accommodated.

Graduate Student Funding. The Department of Computer Science funds 2 students as Teaching Assistants for 5 years whilst they study for their DPhil, in a manner similar to the US model.

Conduct of Examinations. The Division “own” Examination Conventions not the Examiners. It should also be noted that all assessors should be members of the Subfaculty. It was suggested that the Chairman of the Examiners should write to the Proctors to investigate whether this includes Senior Demonstrators, who mark practical work.

Publication of Class List. It is hoped the University will rethink its current policy on giving students the choice of being on the public class/pass list. Many Departments find it an unwelcome additional administrative burden to produce a public and private list.

UGAP – no significant matters.

Materials Science withdrawal from Honour School of Natural Sciences. JAN is handling this matter, the withdrawal will take effect from the beginning of the next academic year.

Abolishment of Subfaculties. Following the changeover to the Divisional structure, and the cancelling and subsequent rebirth of faculties and subfaculties, it has now been suggested that the Faculties of Maths and Physical Sciences are the superfluous layer of bureaucracy and may be abolished. This would mean that subfaculties might be upgraded to faculties.

GSAP. The Divisional Graduate Symposium has received sponsorship from Nature and the New Scientist.

5. Laboratory Class records System

The proposed system was welcomed.

6. Laboratory Class Reorganisation and Capital 3 Grant (GT/JPN/AOT)

The funding for this project has been awarded, and consequently the Subfaculty has agreed to try the new system of batch scheduling the practicals with a review of the process after one year.

JPN presented a draft of the new practical system. The first draft was accepted as a working document by the Committee. During the discussion that followed the following key points were made:

- APS requested that the Electrode potential experiment occurred late in the term, and he agreed to be a reserve for the Piezoelectric effect and the Bubbleraft experiment.
- JTC and KAQOR should mark two practicals in TT (where practicals will still be run under the original system), SGR should be responsible for one batch-run practical.
- JPN agreed to circulate the scheme in order to identify first and reserve senior demonstrators for each practical. In addition, the Committee were asked to email any further feedback on the suitability of experiments and any other issues to JPN.

Actions: JPN and DMAC

The number of TAs that would be required under the batch running of practicals was debated. In the Subfaculty meeting HT04, it had been decided that the SD was to be responsible for training TAs for the practical(s) they were responsible for. However, it is unclear what number of TAs are required. JPN agreed to present a paper on this for DMAC 23. **Action: JPN**

The Chair announced that a Working Group will be set up to examine the logistics of the batch system and to oversee the ordering of equipment etc. It is hoped to consist of: JPN, PT, CRMG, AOT, GT and one other. DMAC suggested that SGR be asked to consider membership. The Committee approved this move. The Chair agreed to ask SGR. **Action: AOT**

7. New MEM Course

The new course was discussed.

8. Proposal for “Centre of Excellence in Maths” for UG teaching

AOT informed the Committee that HEFCE funds were available for the University to bid for innovative teaching developments. At the last UGAP, Dr Richard Earl, the Department of Mathematics schools Liaison Officer, suggested a joint bid between interested MPS Departments for a summer school in Mathematics to bring students up to Further Maths level before beginning their degrees. AOT has had talks with Dr Earl over supporting this bid and agreed to

keep DMAC informed of the process but warned the Committee that the proposal was in its preliminary stage and may not advance further.

Action AOT

9. Option Course replacement for Origins and Stability of Microstructures

AOT informed the Committee that there were still no lecturers to take this course. DMAC agreed that AOT should continue to investigate alternative lecturers for this course rather than replace it with an alternative Option course.

10. Policy on Lecturing Arrangements

AOT reminded the Committee that individual lecturers should not make lecturing arrangements on an *ad hoc* basis. The Committee agreed and recommended the GDWS be asked to send out a message to all lecturers on this matter. AOT agreed to request this.

Action: AOT

11. Damage to Microstructure of Materials Exhibits

The Committee noted with dismay the damage caused to KAQOR's materials exhibits following their display during one of the 1st year Microstructure of Materials lectures. KAQOR is withholding the lecture notes from this course until the culprit (as yet unknown) owned up and repaired the exhibit.

12. Any Other Business

There was no AOB.

13. Date of the next meeting – 2 pm Monday 10th May 2004, 21 BR CR

The meeting is ended at 3.55 pm.