

Oxford University Department of Materials Academic Committee

DMAC 23 Minutes of the Academic Committee held at 2.00 pm on Monday 7th May in the first floor Committee Room of 21 Banbury Road.

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

In attendance: LJFJ.

1. Apologies: AC

2. Report from the Chair of the JCCG (MW)

This item was held over until DMAC 24, 7th June 2004.

3. Report form the Chair of the JCCU (MM)

This item was held over until DMAC 24, 7th June 2004.

4. Minutes of DMAC 22. The minutes were accepted. (DMAC 23/1)

5. Matters arising – that are not specific Agenda Items

From DMAC 22, 1st March 2004

From Minute 3 Matters Arising:

*Minute 6b Workshop Hours – extended hours are now running.

*Minute 10 3rd Year Option Review This matter is held over to DMAC 24

*Minute 16b Industrial Visit Marking – this matter has been referred back to the EMS SC.

From the main agenda:

*Minute 6 Working Group on Capital 3 Grant. The working group has been set up and consists of: CRMG, AOT, SGR and GT. The Practical Class staff will be consulted after the initial quotation stage.

*Minute 8 Proposal for “Centre of Excellence in Maths” for UG teaching This bid was not put forward for funding by the University.

[In the Divisional Undergraduate Advisory Panel Meeting, the Division and Dr Richard Earl (Mathematics) agreed to try to identify alternative funding sources for this bid. AOT on behalf of the Department of Materials expressed their interest at remaining involved.]

*Minute 10 Policy on Lecturing Arrangements In progress.

6. Divisional Academic Committee Report (GT)

The Divisional Academic Committee meeting of week 1 had been cancelled, consequently there are no items to report.

7. Laboratory Class Reorganisation (JPN) (DMAC 23/2a-c)

After discussion concerning the “ownership” of practicals by specific senior demonstrators, JPN, with the assistance of AOT, agreed to circulate the information (DMAC 23/2b) to all relevant staff members for comment / agreement. This document will be accompanied by a letter

covering the SD responsibilities including such matters as the minimum time a SD should be in the Teaching Lab when his/her practical is being run; a reminder that general and specific safety information should be given out at the start of each practical plus information on what should be included in the practical report. This information will be circulated imminently with responses to be back with JPN by the end of 25th May. There was further discussion over the numbers of TAs required, and how these would be selected. JPN/AOT agreed to discuss this matter out of Committee.

Action: JPN/ AOT

JPN has flagged possible changes to lab layout following the running of practicals in the batch system to the Departmental Safety Office, Dr Mike Jenkins, and to the Area Safety Officer, Mrs Linda Curson.

JPN informed the Committee that he was drawing up a new practical for first years "Introductory Microscopy". This would give the 1st year students a hands-on experience of materials at the start of the year. JPN agreed to bring syllabus of the proposed new practical to DMAC 24, and to provide all senior demonstrators with syllabus descriptions of all practicals by the start of MT 04.

Action: JPN

Discussion moved onto the undergraduate SEM practical that has been a source of complaint from the UGs for a number of sessions. JPN was pleased to inform the Committee that an electrical fault had now been identified on the SEM by the EM Group. Mr Ron Doole, EM Group, will attempt to fix the fault in 7th week. It is unclear how long this will take. The future of the SEM remains unclear, if the repair is successful then the upgrade to the digital image capture and the new teaching assistant arrangements should address the problems identified by the JCCU. The Committee agreed to look at this in the MT.

8. General Scheme for 2004/05

The Committee agreed to the 2004/05 General Scheme as proposed, and that the following members of staff / outside researchers should be asked to cover the courses currently unfilled.

Subject	Lecturer	Hours per term		
		M	H	T
First Year				
Introduction to Structure of Materials	Prof. D.J.H Cockayne [<i>agreed</i>]	2		
Elementary Quantum Theory & Bonding	Dr P.R. Wilshaw (agreed)			4
Introduction to Processing	Prof. P.S. Grant [<i>agreed</i>]	4		
Microstructure of Materials	Prof. J.M. Titchmarsh		12	
Second Year				
2. Electronic Properties				
Tensor Properties of Materials	Dr J.M. Smith (agreed)	4		
Electronic Structure of Materials	Dr S. Dudarev [<i>agreed</i>]		8	
Third Year Options				
Origins and Stability of Microstructures	Dr I.C. Stone (agreed)	8		
Optoelectronic Devices	Dr J.M. Smith	8		
Bonding & Structure	Dr R. Drautz [<i>agreed</i>]		8	
Postgraduate Teaching				
Electron Theory of Materials: Bonding & Structure	Prof. C.R. Whitehouse* (AOT is asked to ensure APS & DGP have no specific requirements about the course contents/delivery.)	8		

* - It was also suggested that Prof. Whitehouse be asked to provide generic postgraduate skills training.

[*Secretary's note – agreed post meeting*].

Action: AOT

GT reminded the Committee that it had been planned that the delivery of Options for MEM students will be changed so the Materials Option courses taken by MEM and MS students (currently Paper 1) was taught in the HT only. This would enable MEM students to take all their Options in the HT of the 4th year. This change will not be implemented in the next academic year.

9. New MEM Course – Response from the Department of Economics

The Department of Economics have maintained their position that Introductory Economics and Microeconomics should not be examined in the same set of examinations. Consequently, the Committee reluctantly agreed that the preferred solution to this problem is to examine the Introductory Economics course at the end of the second year. This proposal is not without difficulties as MEM and MS students follow the same Materials core course in the second year, with a full load of lectures and practicals in the Trinity term. A variety of suggestions as to how to relieve the MEM students were discussed, however, the only consensus decision reached was to ask Dr Mike Jenkins and Prof. John Titchmarsh whether the TEM practical for MEM students could be taken earlier in the year – possibly the Hilary term.

Action: AOT

10. Review of Part II Project Allocations

The Committee agreed that the current system was working well and that no alterations were necessary.

11. Membership of DMAC

The Committee have 3 vacancies to be filled over the Long Vacation. PRW, currently due to resign at the end of TT04, agreed to remain on the Committee for a further 3 terms. The Subfaculty will be asked for nominations during the Long Vacation but it was agreed to ask RIT to stand in for HEA, who will be on maternity leave for MT/HT, and to ask JMT to replace AC who is on sabbatical for the next academic year. **Action: AOT**

12. AOB

Abolition of the Pass School The EPSC has, through the Division, asked us to consider abolishing the current Pass School qualification. It is felt that students covered by this system can be dealt with through the normal Examination Regulations and Conventions. However, the Pass Schools will only be abolished if the University as a whole agrees. The Committee agreed. *[At the Divisional Undergraduate Advisory Panel, representatives from the other MPS Departments also agreed to recommend the abolishment of the Pass Schools to their Academic Committees.]*

The meeting closed at 4.55 pm.

The date of the next meeting: **Monday 7th June 2004 at 2.00 pm in 21 Banbury Road.**