



HEADS OF UNIVERSITY CENTRES OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Minutes of meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15 November, 2016 at IBMS, Coldbath Square, London.

Present: Dr Craig Donaldson, Dr Sue Jones, Professor Kevan Gartland (President and Chair), Dr Linda Walsh, Dr Sue Jones, Professor Jacqueline McCormack, Professor Hilary MacQueen, Dr Claire Pike, Professor Valerie Randall.

In Attendance: Mr Alan Wainwright, Ms Jill Rodney

Apologies: Professor Yvonne Barnett, Dr Ian Locke (Hon Treasurer), Professor P Gerry McKenna (Hon Executive Secretary), Professor Julie McLeod, Ms Christine Murphy, Mr Merfyn Williams.

AGENDA

1. The minutes of the Committee meetings held on 18 May 2016 and AGM were noted and approved with minor amendments.
2. The President welcomed back Professor Hillary MacQueen as the HUBS representative in place of Dr Sandra Kirk.
3. Matters arising from minutes:
 - An update on the Healthcare Sciences degrees. Several have ceased and general feedback is that recruitment is poor and that these programmes are not

favoured by employers compared to Biomedical Sciences degrees. It was suggested by Professor Randall that successful courses are often nestled within Biomedical Sciences programmes.

- Stern Review has subsequently been published and will be discussed later on the agenda.
4. Chair's Communications: Professor Gartland acknowledged with thanks the financial support of the IBMS for the organisation of a workshop on Maths and Physical Sciences in Bioscience courses. This workshop is jointly supported by HUCBMS (£500), HUBS (£500) and IBMS (£500). A call for proposals to host the workshop will shortly be circulated via HUBMS and HUBS mailing lists.
5. TEF Update:
- Professors Gartland and McLeod have been appointed as Academic Assessors on the TEF pool.
 - It is still unclear what approach the devolved nations will undertake in relation to TEF.
 - The Undergraduate Engagement Survey by HEA in September indicated that half of undergraduates do not feel equipped for their course, however, a large proportion of them find their course engaging. (See HEA website for details of this survey and also details of a recent meeting of Deans organised by the PVC Network).
 - It is likely that there will be a pilot of a discipline-based TEF exercise next year with a view to implement it by 18/19.
6. REF Update:
- HEFCE have been re-commissioned to develop the next REF in the light of the Stern Report.
 - At this point it seems that the next REF will involve the inclusion of all research active staff; that there will be non-portability of outputs; a revised approach to impact; that there will be better information on research environment; an element of institutional level of assessment of impact and environment and a strong possibility of a change in the number of outputs submitted.
 - Some institutions are moving to have some staff with 100% teaching-only contracts.
 - In 2018 HEFCE's responsibility for block grant QR research funding will be taken over by UK Research & Innovation.
 - Concern was expressed over potential impact on post-doctoral mobility.

7. Brexit Update: Significant concern was expressed by members regarding many aspects of Brexit and in particular the potential impact for bioscience research.
8. Change in professional registration requirements in Ireland and impact on UK graduates: within the Republic of Ireland an organisation, CORU, has been established and is undertaking professional regulation of health professionals. The register for Biomedical Scientists (Medical Scientists) is imminently about to be established. This has implications for graduates who wish to work in the Republic of Ireland but whose degrees are from elsewhere. The details are still unclear but obviously have particular implications for students who are studying in Northern Ireland but who might wish to work in Republic of Ireland. There will be a series of articles in Converse over the next few months (professional journal from Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine which is the professional body for the Republic of Ireland).

<https://www.acslm.ie/publications/converse>

https://www.coru.ie/en/about_us/what_is_coru

9. *Irish:*

- There is a major review of pathology services currently out for consultation in Northern Ireland. NI IBMS branch representatives plus the IBMS CEO had a useful meeting with the Pathology Network Chair and several other senior members of her team.
- Ulster University is currently arranging a meeting of all colleges on the island of Ireland that have IBMS accredited degree programmes.
- Recently the funding of bursaries for clinical placements for students from Ulster University were cut and Ulster. Unfortunately, as feared by staff at Ulster, this has had a very significant impact on the numbers of students opting to do clinical placements this year (i.e. the integrated degree).

Welsh:

- There were no issues raised at the meeting.

Scottish matters:

- There has been a delay in the accreditation process and it has been decided to implement the new IBMS portfolio.
- Cessation of bursaries does not appear to have impacted the number of students opting to go on placement.
- The IBMS AGM 2017 is due to be in Scotland.
- For Clinical Physiology there have been some issues with Academy accreditation despite very positive feedback. It is thought that this is owing to the

Scottish 4 year degree model. Mr Wainwright agreed to send Dr Walsh some examples of other programmes that have been approved that do not exactly fit to the plan.

10. HUCBMS Travel Fellowships: this item was referred to the next meeting.

11. Apprenticeships: Dr Donaldson reported that recent discussions with Shelly Heard have indicated the following:

- Apprenticeships are having an increasing importance owing to the impact of the levy. It may be that staff vacancies will be filled with apprentices rather than experienced members of staff in the future owing to cost. Highest salary likely to be band 5 annex U. Indications from survey of employers suggest potential of 400-500 HDA per annum.
- Level 6 standard - BIS was not happy with HCS and BMS in title as they thought the standard described two occupations. Shelley Heard has argued point back, but the standard has gone back to BIS with “Biomedical scientist” removed from title, although the profession is referenced in a footnote.
- End Point Assessments – now only for apprentices, although EPA will be incorporated into PTP Assessment programme. Students on the PTP will not be required to take EPA. Face to face time has been reduced as this was the resource expensive issue. Revisions from discussions at HUCBMS and PTP SIG teleconference have been incorporated. Trailblazer Apprenticeship programme would prefer HEIs to deliver it within an integrated degree, but to enable the EPA to be run outside the degree. Approval from BIS to do that even though it is outside their current model, with proviso employers are aware of the additional cost – and negotiate with HEIs over costs, or potential cost reduction for degree.
- To provide the education and run the EPA, an Organisation has to be on the Register of Training Organisations (ROTO) and the Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations (RoAAO). It was noted that whilst many HEIs are on ROTO, it is early days and none are yet registered with RoAAO.
- Apprentices must be in employment at least 30 hours a week, with 20% “off programme” to undertake education. There has been discussion on modes of delivery and how much can be delivered by distance or blended learning.
- Concerns were raised that those who complete the PTP in 3 years are FT students. Apprenticeships are PT so it was felt they could not complete in 3 years. Some will because they will be able to use APEL. but the majority of HDA are 4 – 5 years across the board. Members stressed the need to not refer to PTP

students as “full time” and apprentices as “part time” as individuals will progress at different rates.

- The level 4 apprenticeship diploma is being designed so students will be able to APEL into the level-6 HDA programme. Gill Manning is working with Pearson on the level 4 diploma.
- It has been reiterated that workplace/stakeholders need to be involved in discussion on the EPA and that the EPA should be within the workplace. It was confirmed that verifiers currently in place for the IBMS portfolio can be used as independent assessors, but that they will require some supplementary training around the situational judgement test. The Assessor needs to be the same person for all three parts of the EPA. So resource issues arise if EPA has to be in the workplace.

The IBMS CEO indicated that, similarly to HUCBMS, the IBMS was unable to sign the stakeholder letter of support.

12. Joint Workshop (HUCBMS, HUBS, IBMS, RSB): see point 4 above.

13. Report from meetings of IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee and other IBMS matters:

Professor Randall reported:

- There had been discussion regarding the portfolio review and standardization.
- The new board of the British Journal of Biomedical Sciences was announced. The aim of the revised journal will be to support and be a relevant service for IBMS members with a focus on diagnosis and management of disease.
- There will be a requirement for recipients of the President’s Prize to be holders of a first class honours degree.

Mr Wainwright reported:

- Degrees at University of Teeside and International Medical University in Kuala Lumpur have been accredited.
- HCPC consultation on SETs is ongoing – note especially the SETs around external examiners and training labs.
- Congress programme is currently being developed.
- The committee is keeping a watching brief on the developments in relation to apprenticeships.

14. RSB, report from Education Policy Advisory Group:

- RSB has responded to a wide range of government consultations recently. Currently there is one ongoing on “Schools that work for everyone”. There is one issue which may be relevant to colleagues – how can academic expertise be brought to bear on schools to increase attainment?
- Curriculum committee is undertaking a survey of first year undergraduates to investigate student perceptions of their own understanding of their biology specific content knowledge and skills.
- The curriculum committee hosted an event on the transition from school to higher education in July. The event was well attended with teachers from schools and academics attending from across the country.
- Gatsby is working with Durham University to investigate the impact of the reformed A-levels. Surveys are being conducted with Higher Education staff as well as staff in schools, technicians and undergraduate students. There will be a stakeholder group meeting in January. Ofqual is working on a practical skills measure to directly monitor students’ practical skills. This involves first year students being observed completing a range of practical activities. There are 6 activities for biology – which now includes an activity for fieldwork.

15. HUBS:

- The winter meeting will focus on Brexit.
- Early Career Lecturer Forum has been established.

16. To receive report from meetings of Council for Healthcare Science Education:

Academy HCS update:

- The Higher specialist scientist register has gone live.
- Medical illustrators’ registration is transitioning from Committee for the Accreditation of Medical Illustration Practitioners (CAMIP) and the Institute of Medical Illustrators (IMI) to the Academy.
- Academy is being approached by other registers wishing to move across and join Academy register.
- Discussions with RCCP have been taking place but movement slow. Aim to join at some point.
- A number of PTP students are coming off programmes but not applying to registers.
- Discussions about various registers. RCCP free in first year AHCS not. Many jobs advertise requirement to be on RCCP register with no mention of AHCS.

National school update

- STP and HSST induction day for this year with a record intake. STP and HSST will still be funded to recruit for 2017. No guarantee for support beyond. Currently under consultation with HEE.
- PTP funding on placement. This was raised last year for discussion but has been caught up in review of placement training for nurses and AHPs. It is anticipated that all will probably align and not be separate.
- Employers are looking for local engagement to identify future PTP level workforce, so apprenticeships appear a good option. HCS degree will draw back more money from levy for trusts than other apprenticeships. NSHCS sees apprenticeships revitalising PTP programmes.
- The issue of who “owns” curricula has been raised - with exception of HSST owned by royal colleges, NSHCS responsible for PTP STP, have appointed post to manage curricula, advertising higher post as Curriculum Manager
- PTP curricular review progressing. Completed just about every stage now. Mapping curriculum to AHCS standards of proficiency has held up a little. Will go to ETWG 21st November for sign off, but still waiting for EPA statement. NSHCS could circulate approved curricula draft by end of November on understanding that assessment element around EPA will still be added. There will be an appendix highlighting changes.
- Curricula now incorporate the learning guides although there has not been much progress on updating the learning guides as resource has gone into scientific content.

Placement providers, tariff

- HEE pay training tariff and the change in commissioning for nursing and AHPs aimed at expanding the workforce will impact on tariff. Tariff for training places over and above what has been previously commissioned may need to be paid by HEI. One other suggestion, amongst many, is to restrict tariff payments for professions that are struggling to attract workforce. Colleagues mentioned their Employer Liaison Group had heard that hardship funding for accessing PTP placements is likely to go. Members noted this will have a major impact on many PTP programmes and may result in some programmes folding.
17. HUCBMS 2016 (University of Plymouth, 6-8 September 2016)
- The Committee congratulated Dr Donaldson on a very successful and well organised HUCBMS conference in Plymouth.

- Dr Donaldson informed the committee that they keynote lectures have now been published on the conference website.
- Dr Donaldson informed the committee that he forecasts a surplus of approximately £1035.
- Professor Randall updated the committee with an update on the financial report from the Bradford conference in September 2015 noting that that once all the bills were paid there was £600 less surplus than anticipated.

18. HUCBMS 2017

Arrangements:

- The meeting will take place on 6 and 7 Sept 2017
- Refreshments will be available on arrival before the afternoon session then AGM followed by punting on the Cam with Pimms (weather permitting) and an outdoor BBQ with a bar.
- The conference dinner will be in Queens College in the William Morris Hall preceded by a drinks reception and followed by a céilí and pop-up bar.
- The website should be ready for March.
- A large 200 seater lecture theatre has been reserved for the conference with an adjoining inter-connected space for breaks and displays.
- It is hoped that the cost will be £375 for 2 nights including accommodation and meals plus conference dinner. There will likely be an early bird rate of £350.
- Accommodation will be in ARU halls. It will be possible to book in for a third night preceding the conference. Rooms are en-suite but it should be noted that towels and toiletries will not be available – although the organisers will seek a sponsor for a bag of toiletries.
- Dr Pike will seek other sponsorship

Discussion of academic programme:

- All suggestions should be forwarded to Professors Gartland and McKenna.
- Suggestions include: Tricia King (CAS); someone from HEFCE re TEF; preparing for REF post-Stern; ARU speaker; research impact; Brexit, European research; apprenticeships; student visas; taking our degrees abroad (franchises and dual awards).

19. Future HUCBMS conferences:

- Conferences were confirmed for Essex 2018 and DIT 2019

- There has also been a bid from Coventry to host a conference. The Hon. Executive Secretary will discuss the date with them. York St John has also expressed an interest in hosting a conference.
 - For the 25th anniversary the possibility of inviting past presidents to the conference was discussed.
20. Finances: Deferred to next meeting owing to Hon Treasurer's illness.
21. HUCBMS member institution contacts: The President intends to write to all HUCBMS contacts to see if they have any issues that they think that HUCBMS should be dealing with and if they are happy that the Executive is representing their interests.
22. Any other business:
- British Journal of Biomedical Sciences: Professor Randall outlined some issues in relation to the journal: the focus will not be on improving its impact factor (1.3 at present); the plan is to have prize for best student at BSc and MSc and to have their data published if appropriate; paper submission is encouraged although it is recognised that most university academics will be under pressure to submit to higher impact journals – perhaps it may be most appropriate for MSc students. It was agreed that Professor Randall will draft a letter to go to all members regarding the journal. Ms Rodney thanked HUCBMS for their input to the review of the journal.
 - 25th anniversary: Mr Wainwright suggested marking the event with a timeline of significant events and how HUCBMS started etc. It was agreed that Professor McKenna be asked to consider taking the lead on putting something together. It was agreed that Mr Wainwright would liaise with Prof McKenna and forward relevant IBMS material.

Jacqueline McCormack on behalf of Gerry McKenna (Hon. Executive Secretary)