Present: Prof Ian Colbeck (Chair), Ms Clare Birch, Dr Terry McGenity, Dr Michael Steinke, Ulric Abonie (MSc Cardiac Rehabilitation), Jigyasa Arora (MSc Molecular Medicine), Heather Baxter (MSc Tropical Marine Biology), Paul Cook (MSc Biotechnology), Sarah Powell (Masters in Environmental Governance)

In attendance: Miss Nicola Andrews

Apologies: Prof Elena Klenova, Dr Gavin Sandercock, Amalia Zervakou, (MSc Biotechnology) Michael Soltysiak (MMB Marine Biology)

MINUTES

01/13 The minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2013 were approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

02/12 Coursework Feedback

On-line coursework submission was currently being piloted for the Masters in Environmental Governance course and the coursework would be marked through FASer. If it proved successful, online coursework submission would be rolled out to the other MSc courses for the 2014/15 academic year. The Masters in Environmental Governance students had been asked to submit signed coversheets to the office within 48 hours of the on-line submission deadline.

09/12 Optional Modules for Masters in Environmental Governance Course

The Essex Business School module BE467-7-SP ‘Managing for Ethics and Sustainability’ had recently been introduced as an optional module for the Masters in Environmental Governance students. An additional Government module GV592-7-AU ‘European Integration and European Politics’ was a new optional module for the 2013/14 academic year. There had been a problem with the Government optional module GV591-7-AU Environmental Politics; however the module had been reinstated. Prof Colbeck advised that he would continue to look across the University for other relevant optional modules that could be offered to the Masters in Environmental Governance students.

Action: IC

22/12 Privacy for return of coursework

The students confirmed that they did not have a problem with the return of their marked coursework and it was agreed that the issue would be monitored.
24/12 Student Lockers

Prof Colbeck advised that there were some lockers in the Limehouse and the Lecture Theatre Block and he assumed that the Student Union were responsible for the issue of the lockers. It was noted that there were no additional lockers in the School; however some may become available during the Research Project period.

31/12 MSc Marine Biology Coursework Submissions

Miss Baxter advised that the current cohort of MSc Tropical Marine Biology students had not found it difficult to meet the 10.00 a.m. deadline for hard copy submissions. It was agreed that students should manage their time accordingly to ensure that they met their coursework deadlines.

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR) 2011/12

02/13 Prof Colbeck reported that the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) was a review of the 2011/12 academic year and looked at the quality of the MSc courses and the teaching. He advised that the Annual Monitoring Report had been submitted to the Faculty of Science and Health Board and was included in the agenda papers for students to note for information. It was noted that the Annual Monitoring Report had been renamed for the 2012/13 academic year to The Annual Review of Courses (ARC). The ARC would be reviewed by the Faculty Education Committee and brought to the Spring Term meeting for discussion.

**Action: IC**

EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORTS

03/13 The External Examiner Reports for the MSc Cardiac Rehabilitation, MSc Biomedical Science, MSc Biotechnology and MSc Molecular Medicine courses were noted. Prof Colbeck advised that two Exam Boards were held during the year. The purpose of the Interim Exam Board in June was to ratify the coursework marks and offer reassessment in order for the students to progress to the Research Project. The Final Exam Board in November was to ratify the Research Project marks and award the degree classifications. He explained that following the Final Exam Board, the External Examiners submit a report. The Masters in Environmental Governance and MSc Marine Biology reports had not been submitted and these would be brought to the Spring Term meeting.

04/13 The External Examiner for the MSc Biotechnology and MSc Molecular courses had raised that the courses were at the correct standard and in line with other institutions. However they were a little critical that academic staff were not using the full range of marks and the School would be working to ensure that staff would do this in future. The External Examiner had also expressed concern on the double marking of the Research Projects. Dr McGenity agreed to send a marking policy to the External Examiner in response to his External Examiner report.

**Action: TMcG**

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF THE POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

05/13 The summary results of the PTES were noted and overall the scores had been satisfactory. The School had received a 40% response rate which had been better than the previous academic year and the students overall satisfaction had also increased. It was noted that students experience problems with accessing journals. Prof Colbeck advised the Student Course Representatives to speak to their Course Director and they would liaise with the Library to obtain a copy of the journal.
However whilst the Library invested a great deal of money into journal subscriptions, it was not always possible to obtain copies of all journals and it was recommended that students e-mail the author to obtain a copy of the journal using their University of Essex e-mail address. It was agreed that the Course Directors would send an e-mail to their students outlining how they should access journals.

**Action: MSc Course Directors**

06/13 The University would not be launching a Postgraduate Taught Experience during the 2013/14 academic year, however there would be a Student Satisfaction Survey and the Student Representatives were asked to encourage their peers to participate in the survey. Ms Birch advised that students would be sent a link to complete the survey and there would be an opportunity to win prizes (including an iPad).

**Action: Student Course Representatives**

**RESULTS OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF MODULES AND TEACHING FOR 2012-13**

07/13 The results of SAMT for 2012-13 were noted. Professor Colbeck advised the Student Representatives that the SAMT questionnaires would be circulated in the lectures and Module Supervisors would be asked to mark any irrelevant questions with Not Applicable prior to distributing the SAMT forms. The Student Course Representatives were asked to encourage their peers to complete the SAMT forms as they were important for the School to obtain feedback about the modules.

**Action: Student Course Representatives**

**STUDENT FEEDBACK ON TIMELINESS AND QUALITY OF FEEDBACK**

08/13 The Tropical Marine Biology students had found the audio feedback particularly useful, whilst the Cardiac Rehabilitation students were happy with the feedback and had found it to be clear and detailed. The Biotechnology students also confirmed that they were happy with the level of feedback.

**MATERIALS ON MOODLE AND IN COURSE/MODULE HANDBOOKS**

09/13 The Student Course Representatives confirmed that they found Moodle useful to access course material, however Miss Baxter reported that not all the Tropical Marine Biology lecturers placed their lecture slides on Moodle. The Student Course Representatives were advised to inform the Module Supervisor/MSc Course Director as soon as possible if the lecture slides had not been placed on Moodle in order that the problem could be rectified.

**Action: Student Course Representatives**

10/13 Mr Abonie reported that a module handbook was not available for the BS981 Literature Review and there was insufficient information about the module in the Course Handbook. He advised that he had met with Dr Sandercock who would investigate the matter.

**Action: GRHS**
OPERATION OF PGT SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

11/13 Professor Colbeck reported that the MSc Course Directors acted as personal tutors and the Student Course Representatives were advised to discuss any problems with the Postgraduate Taught Administrator or their MSc Course Director.

Action: Student Course Representatives

ITEMS FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

MSc Environmental Resource Management

12/13 Miss Powell raised that the MSc Environmental Resource Management student had found it expensive and time consuming to travel to Writtle College once a week to attend the lectures for the course. Prof Colbeck explained that information about the tuition at Writtle College was included on the School webpage, however the course information had been removed centrally as it did not conform with the University template. He advised that he was aware of the cost associated to the course and he had spoken to the student concerned. Prof Colbeck reported that it would no longer be an issue for future students as the course would no longer be running from the 2015/16 academic year.

Masters in Environmental Governance

13/13 Miss Powell enquired about the possibility of providing a single statistics class for those students who wished to progress and study the subject area further in order to obtain advanced knowledge. Prof Colbeck agreed to liaise with Prof Smith to find out whether this was possible.

Action: IC

MSc Biotechnology

14/13 It was raised that academic staff did not spend time explaining the assessment for the optional modules. Whilst the Postgraduate students were provided with a separate module handbook the information provided was not always sufficient and they would benefit from additional guidance from the Module Supervisor. Dr McGenity would be asked to look into this issue.

Action: TMeG

MSc Molecular Medicine

15/13 Miss Arora advised that a number of the Undergraduate students spent their time talking and listening to music in the optional module lectures which was extremely distracting for the Postgraduate students. The Student Course Representatives were asked to e-mail Professor Colbeck if it happened in the spring term lectures and he would address the issue.

Action: Student Course Representatives

16/13 Miss Arora enquired whether it was possible for a five minute session to be held at the beginning of the BS934 Protein Technology Practical explaining how the Molecular Medicine and Biotechnology separate practical sessions were inter-related. Dr McGenity would be asked to look into this.

Action: TMeG
MSc Cardiac Rehabilitation

17/13  Mr Abonie raised that the three hour lecture slots were too long without a break and enquired whether it would be possible to have some comfort breaks during the lecture. Prof Colbeck agreed to discuss the issue with Dr Sandercock.

Action: IC, GRHS

NOMINATION OF SSLC REP TO ATTEND SCHOOL MEETING

18/13  The Student Course Representatives were asked to nominate a fellow representative to attend the School Meetings and Mr Abonie confirmed that he would be happy to attend the Spring and Summer Term meetings.

Action: UA

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

19/13  The next meeting would take place in the Spring Term 2014, and would be scheduled by Miss Andrews.

Action: NA