

BSc Medical Biosciences Staff Student Liaison Group
Minutes of Meeting held on 11 November 2020

Present:	Dr Ali Abbara, Prof Ian Adcock, Yuki Agarwala, Dr Toby Athersuch, Fran Bertolini, Katherine Bethell, Trish Brown, Dr Anne Burke-Gaffney, Dr Laura Canevari, Lisa Carrier, Jai Chapman, Dr Peter Clark, Dr Ana Costa-Pereira, Dr Charlotte Dean, Dr Jacqueline Dickson, Dr Kirsty Flower, Dr Luisa Garcia-Haro, Deanna Greenwood (Secretary), Nitya Gupta, Chris Harris, Dominic Haworth-Staines, Dr Chris John, Rebecca Jones, Aleysha Joseph, Dr Hector Keun, Dr Nicholas Kirkby, Rachel Kwok, Dr Harry Leitch, Dr Birgit Leitinger, Angellica Marta, Dr Alison McGregor, Muntaha Naeem, Kah Ng, Cristina Pinel Neparidze, Dorrit Pollard-Davey, Dr Andy Porter, Mabel Prendergast, Cristina Riquelme Vano, Dr Duncan Rogers, Dr Agate Sadza, Rebecca Sie, Elena Torrell, Zicheng Wang
Apologies	Dr Samuel Barnes, Prof. Charlotte Bevan, Josh Blacker, Dr Vania Braga, Dr Letizia Foroni, Dr James Jensen-Martin, Rumi Khanom, Dr Jia Li, Mr Martin Lupton, Vanessa Powell, Dr Brian Robertson, Dr Rebecca Salter, Dr Paul Strutton, Prof Terry Tetley, Natania Varshey, Dr Elizabeth Want, James Wild

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence	
REPORTED	The Chair welcomed members to the first BMB SSLG of the 2020-21 academic year.
2. Updated Terms of Reference	
AGREED	Approved pending minor amendments to be circulated with meeting notes
3. Minutes of the previous BMB SSLG	
AGREED	Minutes from the last meeting were approved as an accurate record
4. Matters Arising	
NOTED	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>4.4 – Dr Kirsty Flowers has been appointed as Head of Academic Tutoring in BMB and resources are being developed. The new programme has started in Year 1 and content provided by tutors including pointing towards centre for academic English for essay writing skills has been provided to other years.</p> <p>4.22 – Dr Nicholas Kirkby appointed as module lead for projects and Dr Ricardo Petraco Da Cunha appointed as module for project recruitment.</p> <p>5.4 – A paper is being submitted following discussion around BMA charter.</p>
5. BMB Welfare Rep Reports	
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-03 - Year 1 Report
NOTED	5.1 Due to the required move to online learning, students feel that they are not meeting enough people from the course and this is causing them to struggle.
	5.2 It was asked whether students were encouraged to keep their cameras on during sessions to promote interaction. Most modules do encourage this but depending on the bandwidth of student studying, this may not be possible. Personal tutors have also raised a concern that students do not have their camera on during one to one meetings.

	5.3	It was suggested that some non-academic activities could be timetabled, perhaps linked with Year 2+3.
ACTION	5.4	Welfare Reps and Welfare Team to discuss potential timetabled social activities
DISCUSSED	5.5	Students have also raised concerns about not being able to get to know the academic team. It was suggested that there could be office hours with bookable slots to allow students to receive feedback, or a "Get to know you" Q&A session. It was noted that being on campus for Lab Pod sessions will likely improve the sense of community between students
ACTION	5.6	Welfare reps to contact Chris Harris and Alison McGregor to discuss potential solutions regarding getting to know staff
NOTED	5.7	The feedback from students who completed the survey indicated that many students did not know who to contact if they were having welfare issues. It was noted that there is a confidential link in the BMB bulletins which students can use to contact welfare. FEO will continue to include this information in future bulletins.
	5.8	Students felt supported by the course regarding self-isolation due Covid-19. Welfare included an item in bulletins regarding how to report Covid-19 self-isolation. If anyone is unsure, they should be encouraged to contact the welfare team. It was noted that the welfare survey was circulated to students before the bulletin was sent out and that all students in self-isolation felt well supported.
ACTION	5.9	Programmes Team to coordinate bulletins schedule to ensure the first bulletin for all 3 years is sent to students earlier in term 1. This will ensure that students have full access to information as soon as possible
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-04 - Year 2 report	
DISCUSSED	6.1	There has been a noticeable negative impact on overseas students. It was noted that the issues regarding i-explore modules and their timing have been contributing to this. Any students who have concerns regarding i-explore should be encouraged to reach out.
NOTED	4.12	Students are fully aware of self-isolation procedures and support
	4.13	As with Year 1, students are missing the interaction with their peers.
DISCUSSED	4.14	Feedback has indicated that students are struggling to contact their personal tutors.
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-05 - Year 3 report	
NOTED	7.1	Similarly to the other years, Year 3 students have reported higher levels of stress due to lockdown and Covid-19 related issues. The Welfare representative is creating a booklet to help students cope with stress to help combat this.
	7.2	Welfare are working to ensure personal tutors are aware of students who are outside London, as well as students who are isolation.
	7.3	Students praised the Welcome Week sessions, and feedback that some of the information would be useful to them prior to the start of the academic year.
ACTION	7.4	BMB Year 3 Welfare rep to gather suggestions regarding improved communication prior to the start of the year following concerns raised around communication.
NOTED	7.5	There was a divided level of satisfaction on the subject of personal tutors. A large number had not been contacted by their tutor or would like their tutor to be in contact more regularly.

	7.6	Welfare noted that there was an issue with a tutor resigning immediately prior to the start of term. The reps and welfare have worked together to ensure all students have been assigned to a tutor.
ACTION	7.6	Welfare and Welfare reps to follow up concerns around personal tutors
	7.7	Head of Year 3 and Welfare representatives to meet to discuss training given to supervisors prior to the start of the year
6. BMB Academic Rep Reports		
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-06 - Year 1 Report	
NOTED NOTED	8.1	Students are finding on campus sessions helpful. As they are only invited to specific sessions it has been requested that the full schedule of sessions be made available. It was suggested this could be built into the bulletin. FEO to discuss further outside of meeting.
	8.2	There has been an issue with students who live far away not being able to make it to home on time for their horizons session.
	8.3	<u>Blackboard</u> Some module activities do not always show as completed – FEO to discuss potential solution with E-Learning. Students have asked if there can be a way for it to be obvious that a session contains no material rather than simply not showing a link – FEO to discuss with E-Learning. Students have been encouraged to flag any issues with FEO BMB.
	8.4	<u>STAT</u> Students have had some technical difficulties for this module. Kirsty Flowers noted that students can contact bmb.stat to organise a one-on-one to discuss any issues. KF will reiterate this in class. Students would appreciate more feedback regarding coding from the ICA. They feel peer feedback is not enough.
	8.5	<u>CBI</u> Students who have not studied chemistry are finding it more difficult. Course lead noted that they're trying to find a middle ground to keep all students engaged with the material despite the vast difference in experience level and that student will gradually become on a more even footing. It was suggested there could be some pre-degree materials for this module as there is with MBBS.
	8.6	<u>MCB</u> Students are finding the module complex and are struggling with concepts. They would like some sort of drop-in session or more resources to support them. It was recommended that students should contact the module team if they are still having issues. BL + Year 1 Reps to discuss this further outside of SSLG
	8.7	It was suggested that a syllabus be provided for modules. It was noted in the meeting that each module has a module specification available via Blackboard.
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-08 – Year 2 Report	
NOTED	9.1	Most students are happy with how classes are spread throughout the week. They would like to know the proposed plan for terms 2+3. It was noted that Lab Pods should be running as planned in January.
	9.2	Mixed feedback was received regarding online learning. Students prefer being able to ask questions via chat and being able to control slide themselves. Students feel they receive more support in in-person sessions and that online sessions can be impersonal.

	9.3	There have been some occasions where technical issues have affected T-RAT and I-RAT explanations and that students can sometimes struggle to access LAMS, which is particularly stressful for PHARMA which is assessed. Students should be advised to contact E-Learning with details of the issue.
	9.4	Students would appreciate a drop-in session to interact face-to-face with teaching fellows.
	9.5	PHARMA Students appreciate the additional support provided by the team. They feel there was not enough time for I-RATS and that they were difficult. Students raised concerns around the link between e-module materials and assessment as well as the difficulty of assessment. This is to be expected at the start of the module but should it continue to be a concern, the module team would be happy to discuss ahead of the next SSLG.
ACTION	9.6	Due to time constraints, academic reps will discuss module specific concerns with the relevant module staff
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-08 – Year 3	
NOTED	10.1	Welcome weeks was well received but it focused more on wet lab projects than other placement types. Students would appreciate project type specific sessions – this is being discussed by the programme team and will be implemented for next year.
DISCUSSED	10.2	Feedback from placements has been overwhelmingly positive: LABP – content is interesting and adapted projects kept students well informed of any changes. Some dry lab students reported struggling with coding and were wondering if there could be some coding resources/sessions made available via Blackboard WKBP – enjoying being out in the workplace and are hoping the buddy system will help support with issues concerning work/life balance. LITP – only 2 students provided feedback but they are both enjoying
	10.3	Relationships with supervisors are mainly positive. There is some inconsistency and students wondered if there should be a standard guidance for supervisors. Alison McGregor noted that supervisors have to adapt to individual students, and this can make it difficult to prescribe a 'recipe'. If students are struggling with supervisors they can contact Vania Braga or Nick Kirkby. Alison and Nick to potentially organise a drop-in focused on managing supervisors. Students would like students to check in more but there may also be some work regarding setting expectations for students to offset this.
	10.4	Buddy system- This is being organised by the FEO and will be implemented in the coming week.
ACTION	10.5	FEO to reiterate in bulletin who to contact regarding different issues and concerns
7. Update from Library Manager and Liaison Librarian (updated via chat due to overrunning of meeting)		
NOTED	11.1	Year One students have now completed their library student but not many of them submitted the feedback forms. It was noted that feedback would be appreciated.
	11.2	54 Year One students have not completed the plagiarism quiz and are being reminded to do so.
8. Any Other Business		
NOTED	12.1	The meeting overran due to the amount of feedback to go through. The chair thanked all who attended.
9. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 10th February 2021		