

## FACULTY BOARD OF PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY

A meeting was held on Friday 30th January 2009 in the Committee Room, Institute of Astronomy. There were present:

Professor R.T. Phillips (Chairman), Dr J.R. Batley, Dr S.M. Best, Professor G.T. Burstein, Mr J. Foerster, Professor G.F. Gilmore, Professor A.L. Greer, Mr R.A.C. Hay, Dr H.R.N. Jones, Professor R.C. Kennicutt, Dr W. Nolan, Mr A. Norman, Ms A. Quider, Dr J.M. Riley, Professor J. Robertson, Dr A.F. Routh, Dr D.M.A. Stuart, Professor D.R. Ward, Mr P.M. Aslin (Secretary of Faculty Board), and Mrs M Harding (Degree Committee Secretary.)

Apologies were received from Professor C. Abell, Ms J. Horsley, Professor W. Jones, Professor P.B. Littlewood, and Professor C.V. Robinson.

### MINUTES

09101 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th January 2009 were approved.

09102 Matters arising from the minutes

(a) Minute 08802 Examination Feedback

The Board received a paper from Andrew Norman, the student representative, seeking further alignment between departments on the policy of providing model answers to Tripos questions and course question sheets. It was reported that in the past there had been frequent requests from students for model answers to be made widely available but most of the Teaching Committees had resisted this because it was not felt to be in the best educational interests to provide model answers directly to the students. Model answers are provided by lecturers to supervisors, either routinely or on request, in full, in draft form or in discussion. It was acknowledged that more effort should be made to ensure all supervisors and students are aware of this.

09103 White Paper – Review of disciplinary, dismissal and grievance procedures

The Faculty Board received the White Paper review of disciplinary, dismissal and grievance procedures and had no comment to make. Some individuals had personal views on the subject but there was no overall consensus and the Faculty Board did not feel it could usefully contribute to the consultation with a concise representation of the views of the Faculty.

09104 Students' issues

No issues were raised.

09105 Any other business

There was no further business.

09106 MPhil in Scientific Computing

This item was considered on behalf of the Faculty Board and the Degree Committee. A proposal for a new course, MPhil in Scientific Computing, had been circulated electronically and a revised version of the proposal was tabled with a summary of the amendments. Robert

Hay presented the proposal on behalf of the Physics Department. A number of specific issues were raised and discussed but overall the Board felt there was insufficient academic case or detail on the course content for a proper assessment to be made. A particular concern was the apparent lack of academic staff commitment to take responsibility for delivery of the course and supervision of the students. The intention is to commence the course in 2010 and it was noted that, by the time the course had been approved by the University, it would already be too late for an entry in the printed prospectus for that year, however, there is plenty of time to be included in the on-line prospectus which is likely to carry more weight in future in any case. Therefore there is less urgency for approval of the course than had at first been assumed; so the Department were asked to bring back a more comprehensive proposal for consideration at the next meeting. The Secretary of the Degree Committee undertook to provide a list of the specific issues to be addressed in the revised proposal.