

Minutes of the BLS PGR College Forum Held on: Wednesday the 24th of March

Present Members:

Jane Chukwu (JC) - VP Postgraduate

Tim Fry (TF) - Student Voice Coordinator

Sebastian Ripley (SR) - VP Heath Park

Emma Kidd (EK) - Dean of Postgraduate Studies (BLS)

Academic Reps:

Anya Tober - BIOSI

Sean Ashworth - OPTOM

Julia Marshall - MEDIC,

Mariana Sousa Leite – PSYCH

Apologies:

Kasia Parfitt - BIOSI

Issy Centeleghe - PHRMY

Philip Butler - PSYCH

JC thanked everyone for coming before commencing the session.

JC – Are there any issues that any of you guys picked up from your cohorts?

SA – From our lab everything is fine so we don't have any issues really.

AT – I know at the start of the pandemic we had a bit of a supply shortage, but I believe that is all solved now

EK – Yes, I believe that was due to Covid as we had to divert the supply to the NHS but it should all be resolved now

JC – Awesome, thank you. Any general comments specifically regarding support for you guys?

SA – The transition to Covid style teaching has been very smooth there has been lots of support and I mean it has been quite seamless. The team is really amazing in making sure teaching is Covid secure.

EK – have you received the Information from your schools regarding the Advanced HE Associate Fellowship? Has that been sent out?

SA – Yes, it has been sent out and I have keen to get involved. I have to see if I will have enough time.

EK – it really is not onerous at all it is meant to just compliment what you are already doing and I think it is a great opportunity so definitely look into it.

JC – In regard to PGR focus groups, there are more groups looking into getting student feedback from focus groups. They are looking for students to participate and are looking at improving student engagement. If you are interested, please look at more info in my newsletter that I sent and then also please contact me or the contacts on the newsletter. Any comments on the library and its services? I mean do you use the library often?

SA – To be honest very, very rarely

AT – I used it a couple of times and it was really amazing. I got help with systematic reviews and they helped me learn how to research it specifically. My supervisor told me about it and I liked it so maybe if more people knew about it they would also love it.

EK – Your school should have mentioned it at the beginning of the year but yes, the library services are very useful for sure.

EK - Is there anything bothering you in particular?

SA - Nothing too much that I am aware of.

SR - Question regarding student safety on campus and generally in Cardiff: We want to hear from you about the ways in which the university can make you feel safer.

SA – I don't really have too much feedback.

SR - Of course, no worries, I just wanted to let you know that if you have any ideas we are a place you can come to and feel safe in discussing ideas with us.

Short discussion of the meaning of 'research culture', with various reps defining the what the term means in their opinion.

Short discussion on the Code of Practice and the reps understanding of the Code of Practice.

JC – In regard to communications from us, what type of things do you want to see? What would you look out for?

SA – I mean for me it is more just opportunities to get involved. I am quite happy with the communications we receive though.

SR – As restrictions get relaxed opportunities will definitely increase for sure. So, there should be lots of communications activities coming to you soon. But also, we want your feedback too so do please let us know.

SA – I did my masters in Southampton University and they had a society called 'Life Sciences Post Graduate Society' and it was mainly just a social thing, but it was also faculty linked and it really built a

community. I tried to start it here and it had good initial success, but I struggled to get it off the ground and then Covid hit and I just let it die since it was too difficult. But I do think in the future it would be nice if someone else tried to start it and really had the support to get it done. It is also because post graduate societies are different than undergraduate ones, so I do believe some rules and funding and stuff maybe need to be looked at to differentiate it maybe.

SR - This is great that you brought this up because we are looking into learning communities and how to help them. We are trying to now change direction a bit and facilitate things that have already been created instead of focusing on new things and new ways. But yes, I would love to have a conversation with you about that to learn a little more.

JC – Yes, I think they is a great discussion. I think we should set up a new meeting for this so we can discuss it and maybe involve some other people as I am sure our director of participation and engagement would love to be apart of as well.

SA – Awesome thank you. I mean it was really nice when it worked so I am happy to have this discussion with you guys about it some more.

JC – Yes, thank you for bringing this up I look forward to having this conversation with you. We are coming to the end of the meeting, but we really do have an open door policy so if you have any questions or issues or just want to chat please do get in touch we are here to provide help and information and resources for you all. Thank you all for coming.

Meeting ended