IGC Staff Student Liaison Committee

31 May 2022

Present:

Academic staff

Val Brunton

Kathy Evans

Nick Gilbert

Catherine Naughton (Chair)

Pauline McDonald (Minutes)

Student Representatives

Lisa Backwell

Kelsey Tetley-Campbell

Hugh Wagner

Emma Yang

Fraser McPhie

Heather Love

Michaela Raab

Kitty Sherwood

Natalie Feeley

**1. Matters arising from previous meeting**

No matters arising. Apologies from Dasa Longman, Esme Bullock, Jesko Wagner and Breeshey Heiter-Roskams.

**2. IGC Gym Facility**

Students are keen to have access to the gym facility, however, NG confirmed that there is no access to the gym until building works are completed.

**Action:** PM to email Angela Ingram to ask for the IGC website to be updated to reflect this.

**3. Is student data populated on People & Money (to ensure adequate holiday is allocated)?**

The committee discussed the possibility of students recording annual leave, as only staff can request leave via the University’s People and Money system. Some students felt it would be useful to request/record leave on a bespoke system, as it can prove challenging to do this via supervisors. NG confirmed that the bespoke system used at IGC previous to People and Money would not be reintroduced for students, so we could explore other options i.e. buying in software.

NG confirmed that students should take at least 30 days leave per annum (and no more than 8 weeks), and this should be discussed during the annual student-supervisor meeting.

**Action**: - PM to update student handbook to reflect UKRI guidelines regarding leave.

**4. Pay disparity - existing students being paid less than new students**

NG reported that IGC follow UKRI payment rules and established that HGU stipends are topped up locally from core funding. However, following the upcoming submission of the HGU QQR, it may not be possible to enhance stipend levels beyond 2022 intake.

NG confirmed that no students being admitted onto programme in IGC should be paid less than UKRI stipend. Supervisors would be expected to top up to UKRI level if external funding does not match minimum UKRI levels. Paddy Hadoke (Director of CMVM PGR Reseach) monitors UK inflation levels and UKRI minimum stipend levels and reports back to College.

The committee discussed the recent exceptional payment for staff, and agreed that students should consider writing to the Vice Principal for students, Professor Colm Harmon, to lobby their opinion about students not receiving this payment.

NG confirmed that the University does have hardship funding, and encouraged students to talk to PG Directors if they are in dire financial need.

**5. Any other business**

Teaching programme - some students felt that introduction to biology sessions at the beginning of the year would be particularly helpful for students who have more of a maths/computational related background.

It was also suggested that it would be helpful to have more sign posting for computational resources/services. The committee discussed having an accessible document with quick solutions for basic code errors, particularly related to Eddie.

**Action:** NG to look at structure of teaching programme to explore possible biology based Q&A session.

**Action:** NG to check frequency of Eddie course and wiki, and signpost to IGC students

Social Committee – students asked about re-instating the social committee.

**Action:** NG to follow-up.

Student Q&A session – the committee discussed hosting another student Q&A session for students.

**Action:** PM and NG to organise.

Assessment Guidelines – update handbook to reflect that the first year review is at 9 month stage.

Action: PM to update student handbook.

Teaching opportunities – students should contact IGC PGR Directors or contact course organisers directly, if they are interested in undertaking any teaching opportunities.

**6. Date of next meeting**

November 2022