

Minutes of the Student and Staff Liaison Committee Meeting

Department of Statistics, Warwick

10:30-11:15am in the Common Room on 25th March 2015

Students: Christiane Görden (Secretary)

Staff members: Dr. Bärbel Finkenstädt (Director of Postgraduate Studies), Eleanor Ingram (Postgraduate Support Officer)

Absent: Pieralberto Guarniero (Chair), Apostolos Gkatzionis (fourth year representative), Giacomo Zanella (third year representative), David Kinmond (Programmes Manager)

Agenda item 1: Workspace in Senate House

Issue Feedback to Agenda item 1 of the previous meeting (October 2014).

Discussion Based on personal feedback the general impression is that people who moved to Senate House last autumn are reasonably happy with their new desks. Organisational issues like long working hours which collide with the hours in which access to the building has to be granted by security will be solved with the help of Paula Matthews (Department Administrator).

As of now it is unknown whether or not the Department will be able to keep the workspace in Senate House for the next academic year. It might be necessary to relocate people in order to provide desks for all new first year PhD students within the Department.

Agreed procedure The SSLC stays in contact and transfers information to students as soon as available.

Agenda item 2: Updated conference funding request form

Issue The form for applying for conference funding has been altered and sent out to PhD students via the phd@stats mailinglist. In particular, students are asked to provide more detail on their estimated travel costs.

Discussion There are a number of reasons for this and some points which claimants should be aware of.

- *Keeping a record:* The above mentioned form has to be filled in for any type of travel, even if not funded by the Department. This is because the Department needs to keep track of which conferences and workshops a PhD student attends, and it is necessary to know when TIER 4 students leave the country.
- *Transparency of estimated costs:* Students are asked to state which train/flight they are planning to take, in which hotel they are planning to stay, the price of the room, the number of nights, visa costs and an average price for meals per day. In the past only the totals needed to be stated, and this has caused extra work to comprehend whether given figures were realistic.
- *Funding is limited:* Students should be aware that future funding depends on the amount already granted. The less money is spent at any given conference, the more is available for other activities. The general rule is that everybody gets to attend one overseas and one national conference (as stated in the PhD handbook), though more conference travelling may be funded in individual cases where the claimant has been economising. APTS and the annual Gregynog conference have no impact on the total funding. Funding provided by the respective conference, if available, should always be applied for. Students should apply for funding from the Department as soon as they know they wish to attend a conference, this will allow for international flights over £500 to be booked via the Department. At the very latest the application for funding should happen at least one month before the beginning of the conference.
- *Presenting research:* Students are expected to present their own work at every conference, either in the form of a poster or a talk. The results should usually be available in time as a working paper/ manuscript or chapter of the thesis. Of course, this may be different for attending Summer/Winter schools. Also, whether funding is granted or not does depend on the individual performance in the intermediate reports (nine-month, fifteen-month, etc.) and supervisors or panel members are consulted for an opinion.

Agenda item 3: OxWaSP students to join soon

Issue This year's cohort of six OxWaSP students will be joining the Department at the beginning of term 3, in order to complete their projects with supervisors from Warwick. The students will be allocated to desks in the current three PhD offices within the Zeeman building, at least for the duration of term 3.

Agreed procedure Eleanor Ingram is going to inform the new students about the SSLC. There might be 'Monday morning cake' during the first week of term in order to introduce them as new members to the Department.