



KE Meeting 4 Minutes

Date: 10th December 2018
Time: 1830 hrs to 2040 hrs
Venue: KSU Betsson Common Room

Attended:

Jean Claude Scicluna	Naomi Attard	Luke Abela
Omar Chirchop	Yasmine Ellul	Chiara Vassallo
Beppe Galea	Nico Muscat	Charlotte Axisa
Anne Camilleri	Matthew Gauci	Nicola Kirkpatrick
Matthew Xuereb	Matthew Vella	Celine Cuschieri Debono
Denise Gatt	Yacopo Baldacchino	Bernard Micallef
Nathan Grech	Gabriel Mallia	Sean Ellul
Amy Christina Slater	Sabrina Abugrin	Elisa June Campbell
Owen Grech	Gabriella Sutton*	Edward Degabrielle
Naomi Deguara		

Excused:

Carla Galea	Martina Tabone	Eman Haber
Sean Grech (GUG)	Eunice Bonello	Clint Meli
David Mallia	Jillian Spiteri	Matteo Camilleri
Michelle Cortis		

Absent

Adam Pace	Jason Micallef	Michael Piccinino
Anabel Muscat	Jean Karl Micallef Grimaud	Naomi Baldacchino
Anthony David Brincat	Julian Demicoli	Nicola Camilleri
Anthony Rizzo	Karl Andrew Schembri	Nigel Micallef
James-Nicholas Grima Delia Spiteri Cornish	Kyle Mangani	Noemi Said
Damian Cuschieri	Lara Attard	Gail Axiag
Daniel Formosa	Laura Cuschieri	Robert Tabone
Duncan Muscat	Maria Azzopardi	Robyn Vella
Francesco Refalo	Yvette Farrugia	Roderick Baldacchino
Generoso Seychell	Mattea Fenech	Nathan Gatt



1. Approval of Agenda

All in favour.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Previous minutes to be re-approved as the document was not opened by all the members within the meeting in the next KE meeting.

All in favour.

3. UM Collective Agreement

The Malta Union of Teachers and University of Malta Academic Staff Association and the University of Malta signed this document on the 6th August, 2014.

Point to be discussed is 28.6.

28.6 All members of academic staff shall ensure that all assessment and examination results of study-units are submitted to the respective Chairman of the Board of Examiners as follows:

- January session – by the end of the third week of March;
- May/June session – final year results by not later than two working days prior to the final year degree classification board but in any case not later than end of the third week of July; other results as early as possible but not later than the end of the third week of July;
- September session – by the end of the third week of September.

The Boards of Examiners should meet to confirm the results and should submit the finalised results to the Registrar by not later than the end of the months indicated above.

Health Standing Committee

Head of standing committee, Gabriella Sutton, presented the points that were discussed during the standing committee meeting.

I will be mainly talking about the faculty of health sciences as Naomi and Edward were present in the meeting, however I look forward to hearing the feedback from other members. Most of the courses of the faculty of health sciences require to undertake practical sessions as exams.

The results of these exams are immediate; however, they still take long to be published. On the other hand, the result of final years are a priority and we think that this should be done for the practical sessions too.

May/June Session: Final year agreed. Practical/placement results are published within one week after the final year result publications.

In the case that the practicals are staggered over a number of days, then the results should be published one week of the end of the practical/placement period.



Yearlong study unit with multiple assessments during the January and June examinations, must have the result of each component published as an unofficial mark on esims with the stipulated deadline of the examinations session it is held in.

January Session: The exam results should be published within 4 weeks of the last examination date of the respective department within the faculty.

June/may: final year results should be published not later than 3 weeks of the last examination date of the respective department within the faculty.

Other results must be published 4 weeks within the last examination date of the respective department within the faculty.

September session: Results must be published 2 weeks within the last examination date of the respective department within the faculty.

Assignments: With regards to the compilation of portfolios the deadline for submission would be 3 weeks from the first day of placement session.

With regards to assignment, deadlines which coincide within the examination period should be either given 2 weeks before or 1 week after said period, or 2 weeks from the last exam date of the course.

In the faculty, if we complain they will try and arrange the deadlines without any problems, and they will give us the deadlines after the exams.

Sciences and Structure Standing Committee

Presented by Head of Standing Committee: Yacopo Baldacchino

This is according to Faculty of Science and Engineering as the Built Environment did not get back to me.

Assignments- deadline of chemistry department, known at the beginning of the year, very feasible.

- Maths and statistics, few assignments and spaced out
- Physics the same
- Biology we have a lot of assignments and we need to give report 2 weeks after however the department are understanding



- Engineering report should be submitted 2 weeks after the practical session. With regards to the VIVA it is usually a month before however there might be an exception that it is 2 weeks before exams. Assignments are given a month or 2 months before the deadline

Practical sessions are corrected before the exams.

Exams - No specifications for revision of paper. Result of revision of paper of May examination was issued after the resit session, therefore the students still did the exam.

Matthew X.: There is an issue of short of staff that may influence the correcting process of the Revision of Paper.

Jean Claude: There is nothing in the collective agreement regarding the revision of paper. The points within the collective agreement should be abided to, although this is not the case at times, and therefore there is an issue of reinforcement. Payslips are according to the position of the lecturer, not according to their contribution of their time to correcting of revision of paper or exams.

Beppe: regarding the submission deadlines of the gozitans, should it be included in the collective agreement?

Naomi: that was discussed with the registrar and as KE, we will be proposing it. This will be discussed in the upcoming meetings.

Jean Claude: Duties and responsibilities of the lecturers should be included in the collective agreement, allowing better reinforcement. There is a clause on their voting rights within the department and other roles, however issues like revision of paper and corrections are not included. The fact that it is a contract, it is legally binding therefore, they should follow it accordingly.

Commerce and IT Standing Committee

Points presented by Head of Standing Committee: Amy Christina Slater

Comments regarding the Collective Agreement:
Institute of Linguistics and Language Technology:

- Assignment information: given at least a month in advance in all cases, though some lecturers give some general information at the beginning of the semester. Deadlines are always given immediately with the title.
- Exam scheduling with regards to assignments: some negotiation is possible with lecturers due to small classes, though most lecturers try to schedule their assignment deadlines such they are long before or long after the exam period, one in particular setting a deadline for the latest possible day (end of first week of June) to deliberately avoid all exam conflicts.



- Improvements to assignment and exam scheduling: Assignments given earlier would be preferable as if all units give a month for their assignments, students end up with clashes and sudden increases in workload.
- Exam results: many units' results are given at once, any late ones are usually due to having a late deadline set. No changes need to be made, students are content with the current timing of results.

Faculty of ICT:

- Assignment information: given at least a month in advance, deadlines given with titles. Assignment deadlines often set during revision week
- Exam scheduling: No conflicts, fixing clashes is easy
- Results: usually late because one of the departments is always late with their result submissions, both assignment and exams. September session results always late, often after the beginning of the academic year
- Overall: Students are content but quicker exam results would be preferable. Having past papers with model answers would be helpful

FEMA:

- Assignment information: full assignment handed out very early with discussion starting a few weeks before the due date. Deadlines up to 1 week before exams
- Results: large delays with releasing results due to slow part-time lecturers and apathy from lecturers
- Improvement: more communication with student reps and orgs re result publishing. Deadlines set from further before

Humanities and Education Standing Committee

Head of Standing Committee: Owen Grech

Nothing to present, as standing committee meeting was not held.

Naomi: Past papers are always an issue especially for MCQs as they reuse the same questions and that is why some faculties are reluctant to give out their past papers. With regards to correction of exam papers by part time lecturers is an issue that the Faculty of Law has previously faced.

Celine: The faculty of Laws set up deadlines for the issuing of results however they are not abided to. The results of the resit session of last year was issued during freshers' week. We don't know if it is because of apathy from the lecturers, however the faculty always points out that the lecturers are mostly part timers.

Denise: We had the same case with our faculty, in September the results were not issued and the new scholastic year had started, when we asked the faculty, it was because the board did not meet up.

Jean Claude: without the board the results cannot be approved and published.



Celine: This is a chain reaction that is present at the Faculty of Law, the lecturers do not abide to the deadline the board will be done later and the results are published very late.

Edward: The collective agreement is very general. For instance FHS has practicals while other courses do not have. In the case of FHS as soon as you have a practical the result will be known there and then however the results still take long to be published. I do not think that there are

Denise: One size fits all system

The student representatives were divided into groups to discuss clause 28.6, 29 which are regarding the publishing of results and regarding the duties of lectures.

Jean Claude: The points that were discussed in the groups will be discussed again in the next KE meeting.

Amy: Part time lecturers take long to correct assignments, don't know regulations so they give short time deadlines for assignments and some will give just a week and should fall under the same regulations

Units with several part time lecturers with no coordination so assignments and exams are not defined

Assignment deadlines, consequences, exams, results

Earth systems placeholder marks C until exams are corrected

Basically semester 1 results and deadlines should be kept to semester 1 not pushed forward into semester 2

If a unit has both assignment and exam, assignment result getting before exam

Revision of paper able to do all the time not just within 5 days because we should be able to wait for full year to get the mark average and find out if a unit can be compensated before paying 60 euro to get a revision of paper as it might not be necessary

Placements

A placement should be set during uni hours not during holidays

Course on organisation and logistics

Deadline for semester 1 for end of feb not end of march or 3 weeks after last day of exams

Correcting week like mcast

Responsibilities of lecturers: publish notes and slides on vle

Nathan: Students are all given a C until the official results.

Celine: If the results of the assignments are published first then will the board of examiners meet up again? How will this be catered?

Amy: Sometimes, results do come out before the exams as sometimes it happens.

Celine: Ideally they will meet up however they might not see feasible.



Naomi: I think they should give an indication to students who have an assignment and exam, an unofficial mark.

Jean Claude: These clauses are very vague so the fact that we are going to be specific, different points will arise to cater everyone's needs.

Sean E.: Setting deadlines for lecturers to correct assignments and submit the mark.

Chiara: That way the student may know the assignment mark before the exam and for instance can prepare accordingly.

Matthew X.: It is better with a feedback mode

Naomi D.: In FHS when we have practicals they do not issue the mark before however they do tell you if you passed or not. They also provide a feedback paper which is signed by the examiner. If the study unit is divided into three, the result of part of the study unit will be issued as an unofficial result.

Jean Claude: We need to propose according to the type of study unit division and the processes.

Sean E.: The collective agreement does not state how long can the registrar take to publish the results. The competence of this agreement is when the lecturer who is correcting the assignments or exams should hand in the results.

Jean Claude: Registrar publish as soon as they receive the results from the faculties.

Beppe: Since the collective agreement involves the student, then the process should include the part when the students receive their results too. The process is not complete.

Edward: The problem the students are facing is that the results are getting to the registrar late from the faculties.

Sean E.: We should enforce the first step so that hopefully the process will follow accordingly.

Matthew X.: The student charter should be included within the collective agreement so that the lecturers respect the student charter and hence the students.

Naomi: That way they will abide to it and cause reinforcement with regards to students' charter

Celine: The students' charter does not have the specificity 29.1 which is in the collective agreement.



Matthew X.: UMASA must accept these policies and that is why they are very vague in order to have all the academic staff within faculties and institutes in one contract.

Jean Claude: We cannot be too specific in these clauses.

Matthew X.: Enforcement is what the contract needs.

Naomi: Although we can push for the enforcement, we cannot imply what they will do. Whenever an issue with the result crops up, we do give reference to the collective agreement and timeline that is stated, however they still ignore the contract.

Nico:

General Comments

Deadlines need to be more faculty-based

Dentistry

1. Lab practicals could be anonymous (they're not at the moment)
2. Revision of paper of lab practicals
3. Assignment titles need to be given out at an earlier stage (1 month before deadline)
4. Lecturers don't keep up with deadlines of results

Arts

1. Exam deadlines need to be more department-based

Publishing of Results

1. July/September sessions-keep up with deadlines

Duties of Academics

1. Academics should follow timetable and course guidelines (don't promise things which aren't going to be done)
2. Lecturers should advise their absence beforehand (at least 1 hr before commencement of lecture)
3. Revision of paper should remain anonymous (we shouldn't waste time trying to know who is going to do the revision of paper)

Sabrina: Lecturers should tell us an hour if they are not coming or cancelling of lecture, not a couple of minutes before. Moreover, with regards to the revision of paper the fact that it is not anonymous, it might cause abuse.

Jean Claude: The administration is the intermediate and might not deliver the message to the students.

Sean E.: The students need to be educated about the collective agreement, so they are aware if a clause is not abided to and have the liberty and right to state that this clause was not abided to according to the collective agreement.



Matthew X.: Obligation of the lecturers to be supervisors in dissertations.

Denise:

2014-2018: A large percentage was in breach of collective agreement.

Only one point related to teaching within collective agreement.

Lecturers should: use VLE, prepare before lecture, record lectures, admission of assignments with clear deadlines, publishing of exam results (clear deadlines) especially before beginning of academic year, showing up to lectures.

Time frame of weeks rather than specific dates and these should be according to exams.

Revision of paper results: at least 3 weeks before beginning of resits in September.

Should be per faculty within a month of the exam date.

Yacopo:

- 28.6 needs to work in conjunction with 29 since to ensure deadlines are met, they need to be included in the duties and responsibilities. This means that repercussions are placed in 29.
- Deadlines should remain the same but they need to be published after a defined period from the last exam of the specific year has been held.
- Results of the revision of paper needs to be submitted 2-3 weeks after applying for it.
- There should be sub-sections that are Faculty by Faculty since certain systems would not work on a University-wide scale.
- Resit results must be published before the year begins
- There are no regulations on enforcements
- Attendance from lecturers needs to be enforced.
- They don't even inform at times so the faculty doesn't even know so there can be no enforcement. Proper notice before cancelling a lecture needs to be in the duties and responsibilities. They need to give a valid reason. For example, a case was brought up when the lecture was cancelled because the lecturer forgot their laptop charger. They need to inform at least by a day before (unless in extreme cases).
- If there is a chance that the lecturer might miss a lecture, they have the duty to reschedule the lecture themselves.
- Delays of FHS tend to be from administrative staff. In law there are mainly part-time lecturers so teaching is not their main line of work. This introduces more apathy. In the Faculty of Science, attendance from both lecturers and students is enforced strictly so there are no issues. There are cases when lectures are missed for invalid reasons but the lecturers reschedule themselves.
- The students always have rules and regulations, which are strictly enforced while the lecturers do not. We need to make sure that this is so before implying it.
- ECS study unit system is based on the lecture time so lecturers missing lectures would affect this system.
- Lecturers need to be in constant communication with the Faculty. Lecturers need to be reachable by the Faculty, if not at all times, at least in stipulated contact hours.
- There needs to be consequences related to failure to meet deadlines, lack of attendance to lectures and lack of communication. An issue is that we cannot be suggest consequences.



- Duration of the publishing of the assignment depends on the nature of the assignment and is different from Faculty to Faculty. This would then be included in the Faculty specifications

Chiara: They should have a clause that if the academic staff do not abide by the collective agreement, there should be a consequence.

Celine: We should push for specific consequences from a legal point of view, since this is a binding contract.

Jean Claude: The choice of reinforcement is not up to us.

Luke: If the collective agreement is already not being abided to, what guarantee do you have that the consequences will not be overlooked.

Sean E.: That is up to disciplinary board to decide.

Luke: We need to put the pressure on the clauses within the collective agreement not decide the consequence.

4. Any other matters

Matthew X.: An update on the engineering warrant issue: One of the clauses that was approved by KE was rejected. It was related to the ASIIN report and we will be having a meeting on this which might result in legal actions. We need to keep in mind that this will affect the integrity of the University of Malta as an institute.

Meeting Adjourned.