

President's Report Hilary Term 2012

Report From Joint Domestic Committee

1. Accommodation charges:
 - Following the suggestion from last term that a deposit equivalent to three months rent and other predictable charges (e.g. utilities, insurance and telephones) would be paid up front, the college suggested paying a deposit and three months of rent in advance which would be used as credit over the three months.
 - The finance team were reminded that due to the differences in graduate funding and income, paying such a large sum of money, especially at the beginning of a degree would prove simply infeasible for many graduates. This was accepted by the college.
 - However, a substantial number of man-hours are currently spent preparing the graduate battels as they occur at a different time of term to undergraduates. It was suggested that the time of predictable charges be moved to be in line with the undergraduates, therefore reducing the workload on the finance team.
2. Disruption to Accommodation due to building work
 - The proposed building work in pump quad would cause approximately 40 rooms to be decommissioned for the duration of the construction. There were suggestions that some graduate rooms be used to house undergraduates.
 - It was pointed out that a large number of graduates come from abroad and their attendance is not confirmed until relatively late. This would make finding accommodation very difficult.
 - The committee agreed that the shortfall in undergraduate accommodation would not affect the graduate accommodation in any way.
3. Fire Inspections
 - The college has now scheduled a fire inspection by an outside contractor. This will take place in two visits, one in February and one in April.
 - The college also agreed to address some priority cases immediately.
4. MCR Telephones
 - Following the numerous MCR GM votes, the college has confirmed that graduate telephones will be switched off, hopefully at the beginning of Trinity 2012, if not, by the beginning of Michaelmas 2012.
 - The only exception will be the Mitchell building which is currently shared graduate and undergraduate accommodation. The JCR voted to keep their telephones in a GM.
5. Abolition of JDC
 - It was noted that many of the same members sat on JDC and JCC and that the distinction between the meetings was not clear.
 - It was proposed that JDC be merged with JCC. This was agreed by the committee.

Report From Joint Consultative

1. Accommodation Review
 - The college were very receptive toward the idea of an accommodation review and both approved the procedure and agreed to bring it up at the Domus committee, where it was also approved. It was agreed that several people would carry out the inspection, likely to be some combination of the bursar, accommodation manager, the Tutor for Graduates and the Dean, time permitting.
 - The college also expressed an interest in maintaining a photographic database of rooms, both to ensure that students could report problems that existed before they moved in and to reduce ambiguity if damage was found at the end of the year.
2. MCR Constitution
 - The committee agreed to create an Appendix and move certain parts of the MCR Constitution into it. Changes to the Appendix would not require approval from the full Joint Consultative Committee but would need approval from the Provost and the Tutor for Graduates.
3. Scout Service Description
 - This was provided by the college and will be circulated with an accommodation survey later this term.

Report From the Governing Body

1. The two Common Room Presidents are now invited to sit at Governing Body. The meeting will be split into reserved and unreserved business.
2. New staff to be hired: scout for Worcester House.
3. Building work and Renovation of Pump Quad delayed until at least the summer of 2013.

Report From President's Committee

1. A Post-Graduate Research focus group was held in Worcester earlier this term – thank you to all who took part. The OUSU VP for Grads will write up and distribute the results shortly.
2. Housing Campaign – this is aimed at discouraging estate agents from opening listings increasingly early. Currently listings open in November for the following October.
3. Student Community Leaders for University owned accommodation – the university have agreed to this to provide a point of contact for inhabitants. Some problems have been ongoing due to a lack of communication.

Report From Meetings with University Assessor and Proctors

1. Water is now allowed in exams without specific permission, as is medication and equipment for the treatment of diabetes and asthma. Students are encouraged to seek permission for medication in advance of exams.
2. The issue of trashing was brought up – the Proctors were pleased with the minimised disturbances during the last exam period compared with previous years. They thank the students for their cooperation with the new guidelines and rules.
3. The Grey Book is likely to be phased into an electronic copy with a single hard copy available in each college. This will be financially and ecologically more friendly.
4. The penalty for late submissions for Post-Graduate Taught students was brought up as it seemed unnecessary to incur both an academic and a financial penalty. The Proctors confirmed that the £50 fee was fixed across the faculties and was not intended as a penalty but represented the administrative cost of a late submission.

Report From Compliance Committee

1. The statistics published here confirmed that, compared to the university average, Worcester has been under recruiting female post-graduate research students as long as the statistics go back. It was suggested that research be carried out to find where this might be occurring.

Report From Accommodation Office

1. The college are attempting to rectify the situation of a lack of deep cleaning of graduate houses. The current proposal is to systematically deep clean houses every few years. To do this requires the house to be unoccupied, at least for the duration of the carpet cleaning.
2. It was agreed that disruptions to students should be minimised – the most convenient time would likely be in September apart from those with exams/dissertation deadlines.
3. For situations where the house would need to be vacated for 1 day, students would be allowed to move into adjacent accommodation, keeping their possessions in their usual room.
4. The office also agreed to be flexible as much as possible, moving people early or late to minimise hassle.

Report From Joint Welfare Committee

5. No matters arising as JWC was cancelled due to lack of urgent business.