Present: Mr Nabil Alikhan (in the chair), Miss Kylie Agnew-Francis, Prof Melissa Brown (up to and including ‘Coaching for Abstract Registrants’ in Item 1), Mr Jed Burns, Mr Jacob Dulley, Mrs Chandhi Goonasekera, Assoc Prof Lisbeth Grondahl (up to and including ‘Coaching for Abstract Registrants’ in Item 1), Mr Hamish Kelly, Ms Rhiannon Mondav, Ms Katie Nichols, Miss Talia Pettigrew, Ms Sohinee Sarkar, Mr Mark Starkey (minutes).

Apologies: Mr Mohammed Alaidarous, Ms Lena Daumann.

Minutes: Minutes of the meeting held 29 June 2012, having been circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.

Business arising out of the minutes (not elsewhere listed):

**RHD Forums**

Lisbeth Grondahl reported that work was ongoing to develop Science- or SCMB-specific seminars.

Members said that Peter O’Donoghue’s recent presentation on how to give a talk (as part of preparations for the Three Minute Thesis competition) had been very useful.

**Making Turnitin available to RHD and Honours students – creation of RHD student community in Blackboard**

Lisbeth Grondahl asked members if they had received emails from her and from Blackboard about the new Bb community. Members said that they had not received the email from Bb. Lisbeth would investigate this and why the community was not appearing on students’ Bb home pages.

**Marking time allocations for tutors:**

Melissa Brown had mentioned at the 11 July SCMB staff meeting that, whilst course coordinators had been encouraged to contain tutor costs where learning outcomes for students are not compromised, they should be careful not to unduly reduce marking time allocations where this means students will receive inadequate feedback.

She encouraged members who were tutors and/or who were in contact with tutors to advise course coordinators of any concerns they had about time allocations for marking.

**Advertising of events of relevance to RHD students:**

Mark Starkey reported that the IT officer who had developed the School of Law’s events database had been contracted by SCMB to develop an equivalent version. Work had commenced and the end-product was expected to be available sometime during second semester.

**RHD Student Support Fund:**

Members noted that, further to the suggestions at the last meeting, FAQs had been devised and added to a web page which provided a link to the application form. The scheme had been launched via an email to RHD students and academic staff 24 July. Nabil Alikhan observed that he had found the FAQ answers useful.

**Engagement with secondary schools:**

Melissa Brown reported that the forum for which Indooroopilly State High School had been seeking speakers had been on the topic of sustainable energy, which did not coincide with the expertise of volunteer student ambassadors. The ISHS contact teacher had been directed to the Faculty of EAIT, but had been sent a list of the SCMB ambassador research areas for future reference.
Business arising out of the minutes: (cont’d)

Jed Burns reiterated that it would be good for ambassadors to visit schools in low socio-economic status areas. Melissa responded that a group of SCMB staff was currently working on professional development activities for school teachers and might have some relevant contacts. She also invited members to propose visits based on any contacts they had.

1. Annual SCMB Research Students Symposium:

Nabil Alikhan tabled an updated Gantt chart of preparations for the symposium. He observed that work was progressing well and that a number of tasks had been finalised or were close to being finalised. He paid tribute to Rhiannon Mondav for drafting the invitation letter to the plenary speaker and for helping him in seeking sponsors, to Lena Daumann for finalising the choice of catering, to Kylie Agnew-Francis and Katie Nichols for advancing the choice of venue, to Kylie and Mohammed Alaidarous for working on the templates for abstracts and posters, to the sponsorship sub-committee for attracting $4,100 from seven sponsors so far (more than the total attracted to the 2011 event), to the School Executive Committee for its financial commitment, and to administrative staff who had rendered assistance to-date.

Nabil observed that work needed to continue.

Venue

Katie Nichols reported that 50-T203 had been booked, but that a block booking had been made by another party on other centrally-controlled lecture theatres in the Hawken Building. Teaching Space Management Section was investigating if the rooms were actually needed by the other party. Katie would follow up.

The Engineering Learning Centre and Extension had been booked as the lunch venue. A $200 cleaning fee was payable as a condition of booking. Use of the atrium spaces for posters and sponsor tables appeared not to be a problem.

To provide tables and chairs for sponsors and in case additional tables and chairs could be added to the lunch venue spaces, the Podium furniture would be booked along with the poster boards.

Plenary Speaker

Members considered the list of suggested speakers and agreed that incoming Vice-Chancellor and biochemist, Peter Høj, be approached first, with Hugh Possingham and David Gally to be back-ups. Kylie Agnew-Francis undertook to initiate contact with Peter Høj using the prepared invitation letter.

Prizes

Nabil reported that Bruker had offered prizes of $250 each for best Honours poster, best RHD poster and best oral presentation. Members observed that at the 2011 event, there had been a number of first prize categories, which had tended to be won by the same persons. It was agreed that it would be better to have second and third prizes and that the Committee fund such prizes for best RHD poster and best oral presentation, as well as a people’s choice award for the best oral presentation. It was presumed that two parallel sessions for the oral presentations would enable fair competition.

Judges and Marking Criteria

Members discussed the need to attract postdoctoral fellows to assist with judging duties, so that academic staff were not overloaded. Melissa Brown suggested that contact be made with Makrina Totsika, chairperson of the Early Career Researcher Sub-Committee. Nabil would do this. Members were encouraged to approach the postdocs in their labs to volunteer as judges.

It was agreed that marking criteria be considered at the next meeting.
1. Annual SCMB Research Students Symposium: (cont’d)

Coaching for Abstract Registrants

Rhiannon Mondav suggested that coaching be offered in the lead up to the event in ‘how to run a poster session’ and ‘how to give an oral presentation’. It was agreed that Peter O’Donoghue could be invited to present a session covering both topics one to two weeks prior to the symposium. Jed Burns offered to approach Peter.

Advertising/Promotion for Abstracts and Registration

The poster calling for abstracts would be finalised once sponsor logos were available and the plenary speaker was confirmed. A separate poster would be devised to further promote attendance at the symposium.

Nabil suggested that there be separate abstract and registration forms, given that not all persons registering to attend the symposium would be submitting abstracts. Chandhi Goonasekera undertook to develop a registration form, possibly as a Google Doc to enable input conveniently by fellow members.

Kylie Agnew-Francis undertook to keep the symposium webpage up-to-date. Content changes could be passed to Jill Sheridan or Mark Starkey who had access to the webpage editing system.

Members felt that a Facebook group would be better than a Facebook page, as the layout was more conducive to interactions.

2. Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting be held 24 August. Mark would issue a diary invitation by email to members.

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