

Board of the Faculty of Engineering

Dean's Report I

21 November 2006



Mr Dean (2006 – 2009)

≠



Mr Bean

21/11/2006

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Dean's job ...

- Teaching Quality
- Appointments
- Probations
- Promotions
- Sabbaticals
- Troubleshooting
 - Student appeals
 - Grievances
- External representation
- Miscellaneous odd jobs set by the boss

Dean's office ≠



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How did I end up as Dean ?



time

Cambrian Era:
Very long time ago Deans were elected by the Faculty

Tudor times:
Deans were elected by Faculty from a shortlist of one

Post-Thatcher Era:
"students are customers",
"university is a business"
and has "shared vision"

Deans appointed by the Vice Chancellor

→ "Dean is at your service, but not in return for your votes"

How did my wife agree?: "Dean does not control resources, which means
21/11/2006 I won't have any stress in this job 😊"

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Dean's conditions of appointment

"One day a week" $\left[\frac{1}{T} \int_0^T w(t) dt \right]$
"Without damage to research!"



Dean's pocket money £ 3,300/=

Compensation to the Department £ 10,000/=

- Buy out my teaching (+ some travel)
- No secretarial support
(mobile phone when # of contacts > 3)

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Dean's priorities (avoiding the term "vision")

"For NASA, space is still a high priority"



Dan Quayle

1. Teaching quality
2. Faculty committee structures
3. Laboratory provision
4. Academic sabbaticals
5. Student-staff ratios
6. Impact of PGT programmes
7. Space

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Dean's Priorities

1. Quality Vs quality assurance processes

- Several pages of forms to fill (e.g. in assessing a dissertation)
- AP, LTAS, ARLT, IET (→ slide 13)
- Propagation of best practices

- Modules that have been taught for 8 years with no change in lecturer or content ?
- Are professors teaching L1 and L2 courses ?
- Is our Maths teaching appropriate for the intake ?
- Over-teaching: do we maximise what we transmit to students, rather than what they can absorb ?
- Do we over-assess ?



"Quite frankly, teachers ~~are~~ the only profession that teach our children."

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ought to be

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Dean's Priorities

2. Committee Structure in Faculty

"The committee is not there to do things, Minister,
It is there to tell you why things cannot be done"

Old System

- Faculty Board
- Faculty UG Exam Board
- Faculty PGT Exam Board
- Teaching Affairs
- Teaching Quality
- Policy Committee
- Engineering HoDs dinner
- PGR Committee
- Staff Student Liaison
- Aerospace Steering
- Biomedical Engineering Steering

New System

- Faculty Board
- Teaching Affairs Committee
- PGR Committee
- HoD's dinner
- Staff Student Liaison



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Dean's Priorities

3. Laboratory provision

Is equipment (and space) up to date?

Are we able to design new laboratory classes
based on modern kit?

Is computing provision better than what students
can afford from their loans?

Visiting all teaching labs → ~ December 2nd week

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Dean's Priorities

4. Sabbatical for academic staff

Study leave is earned right not luxury holiday
read
write
think
update teaching
train in a new interdisciplinary area

Existence proof:

DCS - only 4 (out of 34) academics have taught for 8 years without taking a sabbatical (most sabbaticals have been full year September N to August N+1)

HoDs should manage the teaching programme in a way this is possible...!

...trade union should be raising this issue, not me – shame ☹️

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Dean's Priorities

5. Staff student ratios

$$\frac{UG + 1.5 \times PG}{Staff}$$



ACS	19
CPE	16
CSE	13
DCS	10
EEE	11
MAT	12
MEC	12



< 12 doesn't hurt research and keeps Department's budget healthy
(estimated by rolling forward resource allocation model in 2002-2004)

> 13 is generally bad

> 15 is totally unacceptable

... with respect to the Mission Statement of this University, and
the nature of the subjects we teach

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Dean's Priorities

6. Expanding PGT Programmes should not hurt research

Main (hidden) load on academic staff is project supervision;
happens in the summer and hurts research / conference travel / holiday

- PGT programmes should be closely aligned to research strengths
- Greater use of Teaching Assistants
- Students encouraged to do summer research with minimum academic staff contact

Project supervision for cross-departmental (UG & PGT) programmes:

Need greater staff participation

"My research is so boring that students don't want to do projects in this area"



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Dean's Priorities

7. Space



Lots of discussion on how to share existing space.

Space Committee: Ex PVC, Dean, 7 HoDs, 1 Admin

Not much on the quality of space

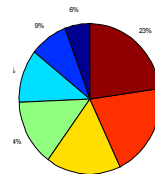


...nor on the total quantity of space

Exception →



Need a major building programme for the Faculty



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From Department XXX's LTAS:

"The Department encourages module leaders to use a variety of assessment methods, and while many use methods of assessment such as WebCT, poster presentations, creative portfolios and project reports, the Department would want to encourage greater use of appropriate learning focussed assessment methods in line with University principles and using best practice identified from elsewhere in the Faculty through liaison with the Learning, Development and Media Unit."

What I like to see:

"Method of assessment is determined by the lecturer"

Is the one on top actually leading to better quality?

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Department YYY's **Action Plan**:

Action plan:

1. To **discuss** our strategy at [...] Departmental [...] Committee;
2. To **review**, as a matter of urgency, departmental questionnaires [...]
3. To **consult** with module leaders in [...] feedback sheets used [...]
4. To invite all final year YYY students to a lunchtime **meeting** [...]
5. To **meet** (within the next month) with other [...] departments
6. To **meet** [...] with appropriate staff from TLSU and LDMU [...]
7. To **seek** advice on best practice [...] Southampton [...]

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