

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY

**Minutes of the Management Team Meeting held on
Monday 17 January 2011 at 12.00 noon in room 4.20**

Present: Professor J C Whitehead (Chair), Dr E M Armstrong, Professor E J L McInnes, Professor J Micklefield, Professor G Procter, Ms N Snook, Mrs C R Taylor (Secretary), Professor E J Thomas and Professor S Yeates.

1. Apologies for absence.

Professor Flitsch.

2. Report from Health and Safety Committee and Estates Issues.

Received:

Verbal report from Dr Armstrong.

Noted:

2.1 The fire alarms were recently activated in response to a genuine fire on the third floor of the Chemistry building. This fire involved a rotary evaporator. The fire was extinguished by the use of wet laboratory coats but the fire re-ignited resulting in the use of a fire extinguisher. The fire alarms were activated to continuous and the evacuation of the building went smoothly, and no one was injured. There was concern that a lot of substance was stored on the floors in this area. Professor Whitehead was asked to speak to Section Heads about the storage of flammable material.

Action: Professor Whitehead.

2.2 The new Visitor Policy was approved by the Team and is to be circulated to staff and placed on the School intranet.

Action: Professor Whitehead and Mrs Taylor.

2.3 It is good practice to audit health & safety arrangements to be sure that Health and Safety information is being disseminated from the top downwards. The University is embarking on a five year project, HAZMAP, to audit each University Department. The audit team will visit the School of Chemistry in early March. This will involve interviewing members of staff and students.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes were approved and Mrs Taylor was asked to make them available on the School intranet.

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes that will not be addressed elsewhere in the agenda.

5. Report from the Head of School.

Received:

Verbal report from Professor Whitehead.

Noted:

- 5.1 The University is in a relatively strong financial position but government cuts will have an impact on all our activities. The grant letter from the Government's Department of Business, Innovation and Science (BIS) indicates that there will be a reduction in HEFCE teaching 'T' and HEFCE research income in 2011-2012 and a further reduction in HEFCE 'T' in 2012-2013. The University needs to make up this shortfall in income. The challenge is to increase our non-governmental income from other sources and improve our overseas student numbers.
- 5.2 Across the University, all departments have been asked to improve the quality of student intake and to abstain from going into 'Clearing' in August as this is seen as recruiting less qualified students; this is not actually the case in Chemistry as often we recruit good candidates who have been turned away from other Universities. The thinking behind this is that it will improve student retention, improve the National Student Survey statistics and employability though there is no evidence of this.
- 5.3 The target numbers for the first year intake in 2011/12 for undergraduate home students has been dropped from 200 to 195 and the international target has risen to 19. These numbers could change after the planning meeting with the Dean, which is due to take place in February.
- 5.4 The rise in A-level grades to ABB has not affected our UCAS applications.
- 5.5 The census data indicates that the cohort of students is
 - a. 682 undergraduates which is down on last year from 704
 - b. ?? postgraduates which down from 199
 - c. 11 postgraduate taught students. There is no corresponding data from last year as this is the first year for this course.
- 5.6 The Dean is to allocate money to the School for Capital Equipment (~£350 k). We will hear shortly which items on the list that was submitted with the 2010/11 budget are to be funded.
- 5.7 An article in Nature <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v469/n7328/full/469021a.html> by George Whitesides says that the current model for Chemistry is not appropriate in the 21st century and that Chemistry Schools should be embracing the grand challenges. The President (Professor Nancy Rothwell) has taken a keen interest in this article and

wants to know if Chemistry at Manchester is embracing the new grand challenges of the 21st century.

5.8 A meeting with the Dean is planned for Tuesday 8 February. This is to discuss the budget for 2011-12. Information from this meeting will be disclosed at the next Management Team meeting.

5.9 Last year's Chemistry Strategic Plan was circulated prior to the meeting. Staff are asked to examine it and recommend any changes to Professor Whitehead.

Action: Management Team Members.

6. **Report from Head of School Administration.**

Received:

Verbal report from Ms Snook.

Noted:

6.1 Since the departure of Mr Robinson, Ms Snook has been working on a new technical structure. Ms Snook and Mr Ashcroft (Human Resources Manager) had a meeting with technical staff to discuss this new structure. Ideas were discussed at the meeting and it was agreed a further meeting would be rearranged after technical staff have had time to reflect on the proposed structure.

7. **Report from Director of Teaching.**

Received:

Report received from Professor Procter.

Noted:

7.1 The School is still waiting to receive the draft report from the Periodic Review meeting. Once this has been received, Professor Procter will circulate to Teaching Committee and Management Team members so that it can be reviewed and amended (if necessary) before sending the report to the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee for their approval.

7.2 The Teaching Committee met on 10 December. Most of the discussion was about producing a draft plan for improving communication with students in the School.

7.3 Dr Coe (Careers Liaison Champion) attended the Teaching Committee to talk about his ideas to improve our first destination career statistics.

7.4 The Medicinal Chemistry programme is gathering momentum. The revised details of the programme are looking much better.

7.5 Dr O'Malley has been successful in winning a Teaching Excellence Award. These are very competitive and Dr O'Malley did really well to win one of these awards. Many congratulations to Dr O'Malley.

- 7.6 The migrating of information from Blackboard to a new version of Blackboard is to happen soon. Heads of Section are encouraged to allocate staff teaching duties by May so that staff can migrate material to Blackboard 9.
- 7.7 The National Student Survey is to be launched in February 2011. Professor Whitehead will brief students on this. Staff, at every opportunity, should encourage students to complete the National Student Survey.
- 7.8 The student submission to the QAA has a quotation pertinent to the School that puts the School in a bad light.

8. **Report from Director of Research.**

Received:

Report received from Professor Micklefield.

Noted:

- 8.1 The allocation of BIS science and research funding for 2011-2015 has been published. Further details are available at <http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2010/Dec/science-research-and-hefce-funding>
- 8.2 EPSRC will stop supporting project studentships on research grants. They will continue to support studentships through Centres for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Training Grants.
- 8.3 It is expected that tuition fees for postgraduate research and postgraduate taught will be increased in line with undergraduate tuition fees. Further news on this will be circulated when known.
- 8.4 The Research Profiling Exercise deadline is Monday 31 January 2011. Dr Fretwell is to be asked to remind staff of this deadline.
Action: Professor Micklefield
- 8.5 The Management Team and Research Committee asked to see details of all our postgraduate students for the last 4 years (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 starters) in a spreadsheet so that the sources of their funding can be examined.
Action: Ms Snook

9. **Any other business.**

- 9.1 The student questionnaires for Semester 1 have been completed and handed in to Miss Holly Knight. The questionnaire assesses the School on the quality of our teaching. The results have been collated by Miss Holly Knight. It was agreed that Head of Sections would feedback the results to staff.
Action: Heads of Section.

10. **Date of next meeting.**

Monday 21 February at 12.00 noon in room 4.20.

