

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY

**Minutes of the Management Team meeting held on
Monday 12 March 2012 at 12.00 noon in room 4.20**

Present: Professor J C Whitehead (Chair), Professor P M Budd, Professor S Flitsch, Professor E J L McInnes, Professor D J Procter, Professor G Procter, Ms N Snook, Mrs C R Taylor (Secretary) and Professor S Yeates

Invited: Professor M A Anderson and Dr D Rozentals

1. Apologies for absence.

None.

2. Professor Mike Anderson and Dr Darien Rozentals on Research Excellence Framework (REF).

2.1 Professor Anderson and Dr Rozentals were invited to the meeting to update members on the progress of REF. The Research Excellence Framework is the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs). It replaces the Research Assessment Exercise and will be completed in 2014.

The main points of the discussion were:

2.1.1 The School is presently dealing with the REF Preparation Exercise. Each member of REF eligible staff have been asked to nominate their six strongest REF returnable outputs. These outputs are to be reviewed both internally and externally by Philip Mountford from Oxford (inorganic), Alan Armstrong from Imperial (organic) and John Seddon from Imperial (physical). The results from the review will be published to staff at the end of April/early May 2012.

2.1.2 A decision needs to be made on who internally will look at the results of the review? It was decided that this must be the Head of School along with the Head of Sections. Dr Rozentals was asked to arrange a meeting between these staff members to look at the results of the review before the grades are published to staff.

Action: Dr Rozentals.

2.1.3 It was noted that staff will have the opportunity to continue to add and subtract their choice of outputs until March 2013 as long as these appear online and are of an excellent quality.

2.1.4 The deadline for making a decision on which members of staff should not be returned in REF because they do not have a research profile is not yet known. It is expected that the Head of School and Head of Sections would work with these staff to improve their research profile over the forthcoming period and beyond so that they are included in the REF exercise.

2.1.5 The REF regulations state that staff will have to submit 4 outputs (which make up 65% of the REF return). Staff with extenuating circumstances can request a reduction in the number of outputs they submit due to maternity leave, leave of absence, etc. Dr Rozentals was asked to send round a reminder of this information to staff.

Action: Dr Rozentals.

2.1.6 Impact cases were recently reviewed by a Faculty Committee. Of the 10 submitted by Chemistry decisions on whether to develop or withdraw them was agreed upon. Those which are eligible to go forward will need to be worked on in April/May in time for submission to the REF Pilot Scheme. Faculty has announced that a meeting to discuss and give guidance on how to write a good Impact cases will be arranged. It was suggested that the cases for development should be forwarded to senior staff in the School for their opinion as well as members of the External Advisory Board for discussion at the meeting which is to take place on Friday 30 March 2012.

Action: Dr Rozentals.

2.1.7 The number of Impact cases that we will probably have to submit is 8 which are based on the number of academic staff returned in REF. Impact cases make up 20% of the REF return so it is important that our submissions will get us a good grade. Ideas for new Impact cases were discussed.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising.

3.1 *Actum 3.1* – laboratory accidents.

The School's annual accident statistics show the same type of accidents reoccurring each year, which happen mostly in the teaching and research laboratories. To reduce these accidents, it was suggested that we got a detailed breakdown of the accidents to help assess the situation.

3.2 *Actum 7* – library committee membership.

It was noted that Dr Cinzia Casiraghi has agreed to be a member of the School's Library Committee.

4. Report from Head of School.

4.1 The School 'Away Day' is to take place on Tuesday 15 May 2012. The venue is the Kanaris Lecture Theatre in the Manchester Museum. Suggestions for agenda items include third and fourth year curriculum review and the Research Excellence Framework (REF). Any other suggestions should be forwarded to Mrs Taylor so that she can compile the agenda for the meeting. The Directors of Teaching and Research were asked to report to the next Management Meeting as to how they proposed to fill their slots.

Actions: Professors Budd and G Procter.

4.2 The School Budget has been compiled and was put forward to the Dean for his approval at a recent meeting. A few changes were made to the budget at the meeting most notable was the increase in research income from £8.9M to £10.1M.

4.3 The decline in funding for postgraduate students is a concern as this directly impacts on the number of students available for demonstrating duties in the teaching laboratories. At the School Board meeting, Anna Valota asked if postdoctoral workers could be considered for

this duty. This matter was discussed with Management Team members and the conclusion was only if there is a shortage of postgraduate students would postdoctoral workers be approached but prior permission would first be sought from the individual's line manager. It was noted that no payment could be made for this work. Professor Whitehead said that he would feed back this decision to Anna Valota.

Action: Professor Whitehead.

5. Any items that require action from Head of School Administration, Director of Teaching and Director of Research.

5.1 Head of School Administration – report attached – see Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Faculty IT are undertaking a review of School web sites with a view to a redesign of external pages. Ms Snook has convened a web meeting with key administrative staff to look at the content of pages they are responsible for to identify pages that need deleting or updating because the information is out of date or inaccurate. Academics that have group pages attached to the main Chemistry web page will be contacted directly by a member of staff from the Faculty web team. Once we believe that all pages are accurate, the material will be migrated to the new sites.

5.2 Report from Director of Teaching – report attached – see Appendix 2.

5.2.1 Student attendance monitoring was discussed and the idea of using a card reader to monitor student attendance at lectures and workshops was mentioned.

5.2.2 An idea from one of our undergraduate students was to introduce a course on 'formulation chemistry'. This idea came from his career aspirations. This proposal will be investigated.

5.2.3 The Curriculum Review Group met to incorporate changes received from Sections into the revision of the third and fourth year course structure. In addition, Professor Procter said that he would compile a list of all the biological topics that are taught and then use this list to guide a review of this area (and to guide meetings with relevant staff). The review of this area should produce a coherent set of courses that minimises any duplication and covers all the relevant topics.

5.2.4 Weekly meetings continue with year student representatives and issues brought to the meetings have been resolved or are in the process of being resolved.

5.2.5 The Head of School and Director of Teaching will be meeting again with all year students after Easter.

5.3 Report from Director of Research – report attached – see Appendix 3.

5.3.1 The University has introduced a change to PhD supervision as of 21 December 2011, which came out of a quality assurance survey. The expectation is that every student would have a co-supervisor (even if only at a nominal 10% level) unless a special case is made. The Research Committee recommends that the policy is implemented for all students commencing from January 2012 which means that co-supervisors will have to be appointed for these students and names entered on to

Campus Solutions. As this would cause additional work, it was agreed that the policy would be implemented from the issue of new offer letters.

The main supervisor would still be responsible for the bureaucracy, e.g. eprog which is the completion of a personalised progression record which can be seen by the student and also serves as documented evidence of 10 points of contact with an overseas student which is specified by the UK Border Agency. It was suggested that a link to eprog be added to the Chemistry intranet for ease of access. Ms Snook agreed to arrange for this to happen and let staff know the link when done.

Action: Ms Snook.

6. To consider any other items of business not covered within the agenda.

6.1 Professor McInnes was asked to make a case for a new post at the level of Lecturer/Senior Lecturer for the Dean's approval.

7. Date of next meeting.

7.1 Monday 16 April at 12.00 noon in room 4.20.

Appendix 1
Report from Head of School Administration
Ms N Snook

The faculty of EPS are reviewing the requirements necessary for refreshing the EPS school web sites during 2012 and their aspiration is to complete this by October 2012. Before technical work commences they are asking schools to proceed with reviewing and fixing existing site content so that migration to the new designs is simplified and enhanced. Therefore it is important that ownership of content is managed within schools with key academic and administrative staff engaged in the review and production of content. Where possible, text heavy sites should be simplified and the number of pages reduced. There are two phases to the project. Phase one would end with existing content being fixed and at least one site being completely migrated into T4 with new styles and designs applied by June/July. Phase two would consist of migrating the remaining sites over the following months.

This School of Chemistry has received a list of Chemistry web pages from the Faculty. Nicky Snook has convened a web meeting of the key administrative staff who are responsible for the content. Following this meeting we now have a list of pages that need deleting and an understanding of which pages need updating because the information is out of date or inaccurate. I would like to think that we could complete this phase of the project (i.e. list deletions and solve inaccuracies) by the end of March beginning of April. Academics who have group pages attached to the main Chemistry web page will be contacted directly by the Faculty during this review.

For the second part of phase one we need to consider pages which whilst accurate, we believe no longer meet the expectations of our audiences' e.g.

<http://www.chemistry.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/whymanchester/>

and specify areas for which we need to create new content. To proceed with this it would be very useful to convene a meeting with key administrative and key academic staff for each area of the website before the end of March:

Research: Peter Budd/Darien Rozentals; Undergraduate Admissions/International Undergraduate Peter Gorry/Christine Martyniuk; Postgraduate Admissions/International Postgraduate Robin Pritchard/Lorraine Onabanjo; Business and CPD Mark McCairn/Chris Muryn; About Us Christine Taylor

The Faculty of EPS is engaging some photographers to take photographs in the Schools. They would like to try and inform these photographs by the university's main brand values which are:

ambition, city of Manchester, size, global reach, different, Manchester made me/makes things happen, progressive, breaking down barriers. It is hoped that the result will be around 15 new photographs for the School. If you have any ideas for images that you think I could feed into this process I would be very grateful if you could forward them to me before Monday 19th March.

Appendix 2

Report from Director of Teaching

Professor G Procter

1. **EPS Teaching and Learning Committee:** Met on 6 March 2012, and the main topics were:
 - a. **Student Attendance Monitoring:** A lengthy 'best practice' discussion took place on School's approaches to monitoring attendance. This revealed varied practice.
 - b. **Student Barometer:** This will probably not run again this semester, but is likely to run again in two years time. Professor Tony Brown asked for any feedback on the usefulness of the data.
 - c. **Blackboard 9:** There is a forthcoming upgrade that could fix some of the problems. The Faculty eLearning Team will be testing this before 'general release'. A potential problem was reported regarding the security of using ABC in assessments and exams. It is possible that ABC might not be available this semester. Dr Tim Wallace is currently checking to find out if anyone in the School uses ABC.
 - d. **Student Experience Action Plans (SEAPs):** Professor Tony Brown reported that the University requires SEAPs and has been asked to gather opinion on how the format could be improved, and how to include them in the annual planning process. A template has been proposed, which did not garner much support or positive comment.
 - e. Professor Tony Brown reported that the new Degree Regulations would probably apply for new students starting in September 2012.
2. **Teaching Committee:** Met on 17 February 2012, and the main topics were:
 - a. **Curriculum Review Update:** A short verbal report of the (then) current state of the review of the Year 3 and 4 curriculum was presented by Professor Garry Procter.
 - b. **Windows7 Migration:** Professor Garry Procter reminded members of the committee that the list of applications for the student desktop needed to be completed by the deadline, if we are to ensure software compatibility.
 - c. **QAA and Student Feedback:**
 - i. The need to update the Periodic Review Action Plan was discussed briefly. Most actions are complete, and others either pending or have become not relevant.
 - ii. The minutes of the SSLC were presented and it was noted that all appropriate actions had been taken.
 - iii. The committee received an update on the semester one Teaching Survey.
 - iv. In response to comments from a member of staff the Committee discussed the University Policy regarding the number of past years' exam papers are available on line. Karen Charters is to find out who is in control of this and if there is a University Policy.
3. **Curriculum Review Group:** This group met on 7 March 2012 to incorporate changes proposed following receipt of comments from Sections. This has led to significant changes in the proposed course structure for the new Year 3 and 4. It was decided to continue the current pace of revision, and produce a fully detailed plan as soon as possible. This plan would then be implemented for Year 3 in September 2013 and year 4 in September 2014. This will allow time (2012-13) for thorough consideration, consultation (staff and students), 'testing' of the new course structure, and for the development of course materials. Professor Garry Procter will also call a meeting of all staff involved in teaching 'biological' aspects of chemistry, to review the 'bio' courses.
4. **Student Representative Meetings:** Weekly meetings continue, and all issues have been resolved, or are in the process of resolution.
5. **Programme Accreditation:** The RSC will grant 'interim accreditation' to our BSc programmes except for the Medicinal BSc programme, about which they had some questions (which have been answered). Their response is awaited.

Appendix 2
Report from Director of Research
Professor P M Budd

1. Changes to supervision policy for PhD students

The University has introduced a change to PhD supervision policy as of 21st December 2011, so that it now states:

“The main supervisor will normally be part of a supervisory team consisting of one or more additional academic colleagues or clinical/industrial partners acting as co-supervisor(s). If, in exceptional circumstances, it is more appropriate to appoint only one supervisor, a case must be put forward to the Faculty Associate Dean to request permission for sole supervision.”

The expectation is that all PhD students will have a co-supervisor (even if only at a nominal 10% level), unless a special case has been made. The co-supervisor will need to be entered into Campus Solutions.

It should be noted that at the student’s annual review meeting there should be at least one member of staff independent of the supervisory team, so a co-supervisor could not act in that role.

The Research Committee on 29th Feb. discussed the best way to implement the new policy within the school. The recommendation of the committee is that it is fully implemented for all PhD students first registering from January 2012. This implies that co-supervisors will have to be appointed for those students who registered this January.

Does the management team wish to proceed with this recommendation?

2. Advisors for PhD students

In addition to a main supervisor, a co-supervisor, and an independent member of staff, all PhD students should have an advisor who will provide pastoral support. The current Chemistry Postgraduate Research Students Handbook gives advisors based on the old research group structure. When the handbook is next updated, this information should be reviewed.

3. Chemistry website: staff search function

The academic staff page of the School website includes a new search function to “search for staff within research areas”. This is linked to staff research pages and is much better targeted than the previous search function. In order to maximize its usefulness, *all staff are asked to ensure their academic profile (accessed via the staff portal) is kept **up to date** and includes relevant **keywords**.*