

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY

Minutes of the Management Team meeting held on
Monday 14 May 2012 at 12.00 noon in room 4.20

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

1. Apologies for absence.

Dr Armstrong, Professor Flitsch and Professor Yeates.

2. Minutes.

These were approved and Mrs Taylor was asked to add them to the Chemistry intranet.

Action: Mrs Taylor.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 *Actum* 4.3 – Postgraduate Society.

The Head of School would pursue the idea of setting up a Chemistry Postgraduate Society.

Action: Professor Whitehead.

4. Report from Head of School.

4.1 Recruitment statistics for this year's undergraduate and postgraduate intake were circulated to members. The UCAS deadline for applicants to make their University choice was 9 May so the statistics are the final figures. For undergraduate home, we have a total of 163 acceptances against a target of 195. We will have a shortfall of 32 if all 163 applicants get their grades but this is very unlikely. The Dean is holding firm that if we go into Clearing then we would not be allowed to drop a grade. It is very unlikely that we would find 32 additional applicants in Clearing with these grades though we would be able to accept applicants who achieve ABB grades on to our BSc course. We are also down on our undergraduate overseas numbers. We have a total of 8 accepts against a target of 24. The majority of our present overseas students come through Clearing so it is essential that we go into Clearing for these students.

4.2 A point to note. Each home undergraduate student is worth £10k. So, if we under recruit by 50 students then we will have a half a million deficit which we would need to recover by some other means.

- 4.3 So far we have 57 acceptances for our taught MSc Chemistry course against a target number of 25. We do not expect all 57 applicants to come to Manchester due to a variety of reasons but this figure is very pleasing.
- 4.4 Home postgraduate research numbers are 35 set against a target of 56. This number is set to increase as there are still some vacant studentships to fill and there is hope that staff members will get money from industry to fund a student.
- 4.5 From the statistics, overseas postgraduate research accepts are 14 set against a target of 26. The Admissions Team is very optimistic that we will meet our target.
- 4.6 The Admissions Team have been set an objective to get more applications in. Action being taken to reach this objective is the improvement of our recruitment pages on the internet and the mail out of School material to schools and universities across the world. If anyone has any ideas on how we can increase our applications, please let Dr Pritchard know.
- 4.8 Dr Berrisford is working on 2+2 courses with two overseas universities with the aim of a small intake of students in September 2013.
- 4.9 The Brazilian Government has launched a Scheme to place postgraduate students across Europe and North America but these places will have to be subsidised by the University by £5000+ per annum. The Associate Dean for Internationalisation, who is helping to build relationships with top Brazilian universities, is coming to the School to have talks with Professor Whitehead and Dr Rozentals about this matter.

5. **Report from Head of School Administration** – see Appendix 1.

- 5.1 The School's Web Group met with Mr David Benko and his co-workers to discuss the update of the School's outward facing web pages. The main focus of the group's attention was the update of the international page in time for Clearing as this is the time when we secured most of our undergraduate international intake last year. Ideas for the new page include (1) a video of three talking heads on 'Why Do Chemistry at Manchester' and (2) a profile of past students on their career paths since graduation.
- 5.2 The Outreach page is now live on our internet. Please click on the link to view the page <http://www.chemistry.manchester.ac.uk/outreach/index.html>
- 5.3 The following members of staff have been awarded funding from the President's "Investing in Success" scheme. Many congratulations to them all.
- Stephen Mottley
 - Louise Natrajan
 - Christopher Robinson
 - Roger J Speak
 - Mark Whiteley
- 5.4 During Dr Armstrong's absence, Simon Holden did an excellent job in covering for her. We are very grateful to him for all his efforts.

- 5.5 The transfer of researchers from the fifth floor to the second floor teaching laboratory has taken place. All seemed to go smoothly. This is a temporary move to accommodate the necessary building works.
- 5.6 Mr Graham Booth is off sick and we wish him a speedy recovery.
- 5.7 Ms Angela Crolla has accepted a new post in Dentistry and has therefore handed in her resignation as from the 18 May. Permission has been granted to advertise for a replacement. We are also in the process of advertising for a level 5 post to support Ms Karen Charters.
- 5.8 The UK Border Agency is visiting the University and will have a base in the main building whilst they conduct their work. The main focus of their work is to ensure that all students who have been issued visas to study are actually registered and are complying with the '10 points of contact' rule. We are confident in Chemistry that all records are straight.

6. Report from Teaching Committee – see Appendix 2.

- 6.1 The University College vision has been approved by Senate and will commence delivery of teaching to undergraduates in September 2012. The College has been established to benefit all students who will be able to choose from a range of courses to acquire skills, knowledge and personal attributes. The first intake of students will be capped at 150. The number of courses to be set up in the first instance is 10. All will be level 2 courses (10 credits each). The timetabling of these courses is expected to be problematic.
- 6.2 EPS Teaching and Operational priorities were circulated to members. Any comments on this paper should be directed to Professor G Procter who will raise them with Professor Brown when he meets with him on the 5 June.
- 6.3 Staff are reminded that EPS are taking a stern line on mistakes on examination papers. Each School is expected to have effective plans in place to eliminate errors. Question setters are responsible for question errors and the convenor of the paper is responsible for rubric errors.
- 6.4 It was noted that Professor G Procter will be meeting with the e-learning team to have discussions on what they see are their operational priorities are for the next academic year.
- 6.5 It was noted that Dr Andrew Horn is making a lot of effort in contacting a wide range of companies to encourage them to take on undergraduates who are registered on the Industrial Experience course. This is very commendable.

7. Report from Research Committee – see Appendix 3.

- 7.1 The Head of School suggested that Ms Nicky Snook and Dr Christopher Muryn work with the Research Committee to look at equipment priority for the School. A priority list should then be put together so that we are ready to apply for equipment when a call is announced from the Research Councils.

7.2 Impact case studies should be based on work done during the census period (08-13) and it should be noted that credit goes to the School were the research work described in the case was carried out. So if cases are being written that link to the School we should be the primary owner of that case.

7.3 Update on Research Administrative Structure. In brief, there will be four new research support service teams in EPS. Each team will include pre and post award staff. The Physics/Chemistry and Earth, Atmospheric, and Environmental Sciences research support services team will be located in the Chemistry building and is expected to be fully operational by the 1 August 2012. Pre award staff will be line managed by the School HOSA and supervised by the Senior Research Administrator and a Management Steering Group. Post award staff will remain line managed by Nick Davidson though the School will keep a close eye on these members of staff.

European grants (pre and post award) are dealt with by staff in the European Office which is off site. These staff are line managed by Mr Mike Watson.

8. Any other business.

8.1 There was no other business to discuss.

9. Date of next meeting.

9.1 Monday 11 June 2012 at 12.00 noon in room 4.20.

Appendix 1 – report from Head of School Administration Ms N Snook

1. Web Project

The Faculty are reviewing and updating all school websites during 2012. A Project Board has been established to monitor progress, Chaired by Professor Hugh Coe (HoS, Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences). The original timeline expects that all school website content should be reviewed by July. Schools will begin to migrate to T4 CMS from July – December 2012.

I will be concentrating on updating our international pages before clearing to attract more undergraduate overseas students to the school. Last year we obtained most of these students through the clearing process. Our target is 24 and to date we have 5 total accepts. To take this forward I have arranged a meeting on the 16th May which will be attended by David Benko (Faculty IS Co-ordinator), Fran Halliwell (Senior International Officer), Zabina Khosa Ahmed (Faculty External Relations Manager), Peter Gorry (Admissions Tutor) and a number of school administrative staff. I have also provided David Benko with a list of last years graduating undergraduate overseas students and current undergraduate overseas students so that his team can work on providing student profiles.

Thanks to those academics who have provided me with details of past students who remain in touch with the school. We have contacted them and hope to receive some useful information which we can post on the website.

The outreach pages are now “live” from the main Chemistry page at <http://www.chemistry.manchester.ac.uk/> and the “about us” page.

2. Investing in Success

The President announced that a sum of £1 million was available to support University staff to develop their potential and contribution to the University through a discretionary grant of up to £15,000. Steve Mottley (electronics) and Roger Speak (research and analytical) were both successful in bidding for funds (Steve £15k and Roger £8.6k) for staff training activities in their sections.

3. PSS Update

Thanks to Simon Holden who has done a wonderful job standing in for Elaine Armstrong (in addition to his current role) whilst she’s been off sick. Graham Booth (teaching labs) is currently off sick and we wish him a speedy recovery. Angella Crolla will be moving to Dentistry shortly and her position is currently advertised (we will cover any temporary gaps in personnel with a temp.) We will shortly (we hope) advertise for a level 5 education administrator to support Karen Charters and our student support team.

4. Visit from the UKBA

The UKBA is scheduling a compliance visit to the University before the 8th June 2012.

Appendix 2 – report from Director of Teaching Professor G Procter

1. EPS Teaching & Learning Committee: Met on 24/04/2012, and the main topics were:

- a. **University College:** Most of the meeting was taken up with an update on the 'University College' by Dr. Peter Lawler (Academic Director, University College for Interdisciplinary Learning). Main points:
 - i. Aim is for 10–12 courses to be up and running by September 2012. These will be Level 2, 10 credit courses, capped at approx. 150 students.
 - ii. Eventual goal is for students to take 30 credits during their time at Manchester – 10 credits per year. The impression was given that this would not be compulsory.
 - iii. Timetabling is an issue – not sorted out yet. Suggestions included using a 5–7 pm slot.
 - iv. The Manchester Leadership Programme (MLP) is included in the University College and currently work is underway to improve the MLP – in particular to reduce the amount of group assessment and move to much more individual assessment.
 - v. Schools will be able to 'opt out' students from particular courses (e.g. Maths students can't take courses with significant maths content taught by other Schools).
- b. **EPS Teaching & Learning Operational Priorities:** A draft plan was tabled, and several changes/corrections were agreed. The revised draft plan was discussed in detail at a special meeting of the Faculty T&L Committee on 06/05/2012. See Appendix A. Most of the agenda items (Appendix A) were discussed at the meeting – Prof. Tony Brown will provide notes from the meeting, which will be circulated when received. The detailed plan is provided in Appendix B – if there are any comments/suggestions on these please let me know and I will forward them.
- 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. **Exam Papers:** Prof. Tony Brown led a brief discussion on the statistics for mistakes on exam papers and emphasized that all schools must have effective plans in place for checking papers and that reducing the numbers of mistakes is a high priority.
- e. **Exam Boards:** Prof. Tony Brown emphasized that all Schools must follow one of the approved methods for dealing with students with marks in boundary regions.

2. Teaching Committee: Met on 04/05/2012, 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 Prof. Garry Procter. This will be the main topic for discussion at the Teaching part session of the Away Day.
- b. **Exam Feedback:** Dr Kristy Turner led a discussion of appropriate exam feedback, and the Committee restated its opposition to the provision of detailed 'model answers' and mark schemes (other than those that appear on the exam itself). Dr Turner provided examples of 'exemplars' – actual answers, anonymized and annotated, so students can see real examples of what constitutes a 'good answer' in the actual exam. It was agreed to trial this with one course in the summer exams - Dr Turner will prepare the exemplars, and is being assisted by Dr Frank Mair and Dr. Jonathan Agger.
- c. **e-Learning:** Dr . Tim Wallace led a discussion of the problems that have arisen following the recent 'upgrade' of Blackboard 9. Blackboard 9 still appears to be unreliable, and this deters its use by staff, particularly in the area of on-line assessment (formative and summative). It was emphasized that these are not problems with the e-learning team, who do their best to help, but appear to be inherent in Blackboard 9, which appears to place files in 'unknown and unreachable places'.

d. Admission & Recruitment:

- i. Dr. Peter Gorry gave a verbal update on the current admissions figures, which are worrying, and at the moment to meet our target almost every student who has accepted an offer would have to get the required grades. Without going to clearing or being allowed to drop a grade we could be 60-70 students short of our target. There has also been a large shift from M.Chem to BSc.
- ii. Progression rules for transfer from B.Sc. to M.Chem. – This year students will enter the B.Sc. and M.Chem. programmes with different grades. This requires us to consider rules for the transfer from B.Sc. to M.Chem. at the end of Year 1. After significant discussion the T&L Committee proposes that any student who wishes to transfer from B.Sc. to M.Chem. at the end of Year 1 must have a minimum of 55% overall for Year 1.

3. Windows7 Migration: The head of IS and others will meet with Prof. Garry Procter in the near future to 'sign off' on the the School's list of applications for the student desktop and their compatibility with Windows7.

4. Tony Brown 1:1 Visit: Prof. Tony Brown will visit the School on 06/06/2012 for a '1:1 meeting' with Prof. Garry Procter – if anyone has questions/issues they would like me to raise at the meeting, please let me know.

Appendix 3 – report from Director of Research Professor Budd

1. EPSRC Strategic Equipment Fund

The [EPSRC Strategic Equipment Fund](#) seeks to support equipment that underpins a wide range of research under the EPSRC themes. This funding is for equipment valued over the OJEU threshold (net of VAT **£113,057**). The next deadline for submission of draft business cases is **Friday 8 June 2012**.

Strategic equipment is funded at “100% fEC”. However, we have been told that contributions from universities towards the costs demonstrates that the project represents an important strategic priority for the university. Such contributions are viewed favourably and indeed this has been a strength of several successful applications.

Mike Anderson has expressed interest in applying for strategic equipment for a high-resolution scanning electron microscope. Claire Evers is also considering applying for an independent strategic equipment case. Both of these would be submitted for the 8 June deadline (and may not be judged against each other as there are four different types of strategic equipment funding in this round). Lu Shin Wong currently has a case under consideration (large area scanning-probe nanofabrication platform).

2. Internal review process for EPSRC fellowship applications

The due date for internal drafts of EPSRC fellowship applications for review is 30th June 2012. However, as soon as each draft is received it will be forwarded to two internal reviewers, for advice, and to the Head of School, to prepare a hosting letter (*i.e.*, they won't wait until the deadline on 30th June to progress the review of the application).