

The University of Manchester School of Chemistry

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting Number 20
held on Thursday 27 April 2006 at 2.00 pm in Room 7.27.
Operations Subgroup

Present: Professor G A Morris (Chair), Professor S Faulkner, Professor D B Kell, Professor P O'Brien, Dr P L A Popelier, Dr S L M Schroeder, Mrs C R Taylor (Secretary, *vice* Fretwell)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Professor Hillier, Dr Morris, Dr Regan, Professor Thomas, Professor Turner and Professor Winpenny.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved

3. Matters arising

3.1 *Actum* 3 – Matters arising

Dr Fretwell is still pursuing the problem of the delay in grant award letters reaching the School from the EPS Research Office. Normal practice is for EPSRC to send announcement letters in triplicate to the Research Office who then should forward them on to the School.

3.2 *Actum* 5 – Web site content for School

Professor Morris reported that the School has agreed to pilot the new web site templates being developed by the Faculty.

4. Away days

Professor Morris informed the meeting that Professor O'Brien had asked the Committee for a view on whether the School should have its annual Away day and, if so, what form this should take. It was agreed that the following could form the basis of an Away day agenda under the general title "RAE and Beyond":

- A succinct briefing session on current School matters, including teaching and the RAE.
- A long breakout session of the individual Research Groupings to enable them
 - (1) to discuss the research strategy of each grouping;
 - (2) to formulate each grouping's contribution to the RAE RA5 ("Research environment and esteem") document;
 - (3) to identify opportunities for interaction with other Research Groupings and potential links outside the School.
- Plenary summary and discussion.

All attendees would be given copies of the Manchester and UMIST 2001 RA5 documents, together with those of a sample of peer institutions.

Members were informed that Dr Morris had been asked at the recent Management Team meeting to investigate the availability of funds from the Staff Training Development Unit for an Away Day meeting away from the School.

5. Planning for Research Committee Strategy meeting 25 May

The Research Committee held a general discussion of possible topics to include in a review of the School's long-term research strategy. These included

- exploitation of current opportunities (e.g. chemical genomics, cheminformatics, green chemistry, sustainability);
- identification of other major areas for investment on a 5 year timescale;
- how best to grow sustainable research strategies for individuals within groupings;
- the need for staff to consider growth areas outside their individual research fields;
- the need to communicate School research strategy effectively to all staff.

In addition, Dr Schroeder suggested that the School look at ways of becoming more efficient in its routine practices.

Action: Dr Schroeder to prepare a paper on suggested improvements.

6. Research Report brochure for 05/06

The meeting agreed that the School's Research brochure should be updated to include information on publications etc. up to the end of December 2006, with the preparation of accompanying text to start at the end of October. It was agreed that all members of individual research groupings should be involved in the latter.

7. Research database (GAM)

(Starred item)

8. External presentation (ACR)

A report (appended) from Dr Regan on progress to the recommended web site changes was tabled.

9. Any other business

10. Date of next meeting

Research strategy review: Thursday 25 May, 2.00pm in room 7.27.

Christine Taylor
12 May 2006

Report from Dr Regan:

As requested, here is a summary of recent progress on the School website, (mainly provided by Steven Liem):

- Ticker tape on Chemistry Home Page removed (the list of UG courses on the right hand side could be replaced with a box containing key performance indicators)
- "About School" page awaits a rewrite with new content.
- A "Online application / download application form" link has been added to the top page of Postgraduate programmes
- Download links to 3 sections of the postgraduate prospectus have been added the "Download Prospectus" page
- "Research Centres" is now part of the left-hand column in "Research Areas", added "Current Vacancies" to the left-hand column
- Research facilities pages (content wise, e.g. text, pictures) awaits writing of content.
- The current font size has been increased, and is comparable to the new University website.
- Links to academic's personal/group page will be listed automatically in the staff profile page, if supplied. These can be entered by editing the academic's personal profile (select name in "List people in school" page in staff-intranet, click "edit profile" to update information stored").
- List selected staff publications (see below).

New Developments:

- A trial facility has been implemented which enables academic staff to choose publications (held in the publication database) for listing in the staff profile page ("Select Publications for Staff Profile Page" which is available in "Academic Publications" under "Research / RAE" in the staff intranet).
- The publication database has been updated using data from WOK, a trial import filter has been developed to allow staff to update their own publication data using WOK export file
- The School website has been chosen by the Faculty to be the early adopter of the new web style (currently used by the main University site). Several schools within the Faculty volunteered, but Chemistry was chosen because we fit the requirements of using Dreamweaver for design and a Linux server for hosting. As Chemistry is an early adopter the Faculty promise to provide us with extra support (e.g. design and provision of Dreamweaver templates). Steven Liem will have a meeting with David Benko in about two week's time to find out the details and work may start in late May.