

**The University of Manchester**  
**School of Chemistry**

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting Number  
held on Thursday 9 December at 12.00pm in 7.027/7.028

**Research Committee Meeting**

Present: Professor J Micklefield (Chair), Professor M Anderson, Dr P Budd, Dr A Fretwell, Professor E McInnes, Professor S Pimblott, Dr R Pritchard, Professor D Procter, Professor S Yeates, Mrs K Tarasova (Secretary)

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Professor J Thomas, Professor R Goodacre and Dr R Layfield.

**2. Minutes from previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous Research Committee meeting held on 7 October 2010 were accepted as a correct record.

**3. DTA Competition**

**a) Procedure of assessment and weighting of categories**

Professor J Micklefield reported that 21 applications had been received in response to the EPSRC DTA studentship competition which was announced by the School in October. All applications were collated into one document which was distributed to the Research Committee members prior to the meeting. The members were asked to score each proposal under the following three criteria:

- scientific quality of a project, novelty, and how well the proposal fits with the strategic priorities of the School
- benefit to the School, which includes the potential of each project to deliver high quality publications, as well as other benefits such as help to attract external funding, support for early career staff, etc.
- the School DTA studentship index as measured by the 'Morris algorithm', i.e. taking into account an individual's EPSRC funding contribution to the DTA grant for the year. Applicants were not asked to nominate a student at this stage

The ranking scores and comments of the Research Committee members were collated by Dr A Fretwell into a spreadsheet which was tabled at the meeting.

Professor J Micklefield requested that the Committee discuss the relative weighting of each criterion. Following the discussion, during which members of the Committee expressed their views, it was agreed to apply an equal weighting to the three criteria (1/3, 1/3, 1/3).

**b) Discussion and ranking of proposals**

Following Professor J Micklefield's suggestion, each proposal was discussed and assessed individually and the feedback for each proposal recorded and kept as confidential. It was decided that any conflicted member of the Committee would leave the room during the discussion of their proposal and would not be involved in the ranking. It was agreed that

feedback should be positive and constructive and made available on request from the appropriate line manager or member of the Research Committee.

Six projects were recommended for funding by the Committee; comments on other proposals which could be funded were also noted. The full ranking list with comments will be given to Professor Whitehead, for him to make the final allocation.

#### **4. Any Other Business**

**Research Profiling Exercise (RPE):** Professor J Micklefield reported that at the recent FRC meeting, Professor Hugh McCann, Associate Dean in Research, indicated that if a member of staff chooses not to participate in RPE, a minimal RPE return would still be generated and assessed by the RPE panel. This minimal return may be incomplete and could be inaccurate. It is therefore important that members of academic staff are encouraged where possible to check and update all the information that is recorded (particularly to update publication data). The input of papers into eScholar has been low across the EPS Faculty and the Dean has advised all staff to update their publication list as soon as possible.

**Professor Colin Bailey's Strategic Fund:** Professor J Micklefield reminded the Research Committee about the 20<sup>th</sup> of December deadline for applications to the Dean's strategic fund. To ensure that there are no duplicate bids, and to provide advice where possible, all staff will be asked to inform Dr A Fretwell of any plans to bid for this funding.

**Research Strategy Vision consultation document:** Professor J Micklefield reminded the Research Committee to send their feed-back about this document to Dr A Fretwell who will collate all comments so that a School response can be formulated.

**REF:** Professor J Micklefield informed the Committee that HEFCE has published panel reports from the REF pilot exercise, along with a number of case studies that the participating UoAs rated highly. The School must prepare to start collecting data of the broader impact of the School's research, teaching and other activities.

**Awards:** Details of awards and prizes have been circulated. Professor J Micklefield encouraged staff to suggest individuals for nominations, including self-nominations and to send these suggestions to Mrs K Tarasova who is collating this information and coordinating the process of nominations.

#### **5. Date of next meeting**

10<sup>th</sup> of February 2011 at 12.00pm in Room 7.27/7.28.