

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS
DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Departmental Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 9th October 2019, 9-11 am in JA 5.07**

Present: D Birch, T Briggs, R Cameron, L Caspani, P Edwards, B Eliasson, J Gillan, R Gray, E Haller, J Jeffers, A Kemp, M King, S Kuhr, W Li, F Massabuau, K Mathieson, P Moriya, K Munro, G McConnell, P McKenna (Chair), B McNeil, A Noble, G L Oppo, A Phelps, J Pritchard, E Riis, G Robb, O Rolinski, J Sutter, G Weir, M Wiggins, A Yao

Apologies: T Ackemann, A Arnold, R Bingham, Y Chen, A Cross, A Daley, M Dawson, P Griffin, J Hastie, O Henrich, J Herrnsdorf, B Hidding, B Hourahine, A Hurtado, D Jaroszynski, K Lagoudakis, N Langford, N Laurand, R W Martin, D McKee, D Oi, F Papoff, B Patton, A Rossi, K Ronald, Zheng Ming Sheng, M Strain, C Trager-Cowan, S Van de Linde, I Watson,

Minutes: C Cheshire

Paul opened the meeting and thanked staff for attending. He highlighted that his aim is to hold this format of Departmental Committee meeting, which will be open to all staff, at least once per year.

Paul welcomed an invited guest, Dr Alison Robinson – Strategic Research & Knowledge Exchange Manager (Physical Sciences). Alison attended the first 15 minutes of the meeting and gave an overview on her role and that of her colleagues in her team in RKES, and advised where they could help Physics researchers with research grant applications. Alison provided a contact list of the Research and KE Development Team which will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting and will also be made available on SharePoint.

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (22.05.19) were approved.

2. Head of Department Report

Paul reported that there were some changes to the membership of the DC since the last meeting:

Fabien Massabuau started as a Chancellor's Fellow on 2nd September and Johannes Herrnsdorf transferred to a Chancellor's Fellowship on 1st June. Paul welcomed both of them to the committee.

Paul also welcomed Rob Cameron as a research representative for the Optics Division and congratulated him on securing a prestigious Royal Society University Research Fellowship, which started last week.

He also reminded research staff that they have representation at all Departmental Committee meetings via Dr Adam Noble from the Plasmas Division and Dr Nicolas Laurand from the Institute of Photonics, who also has the role of KE Director. Paul advised that we would like to have a research representative from the Nanoscience Division and asked staff to please let Catherine or Gabrielle know if they are aware of any volunteers from Nanoscience.

He reminded research staff that they can raise issues that they would like discussed at this committee, either in person at the all-staff DC meeting or via the research representatives.

Two other new academic appointees Dr Peter Kirton and Dr Iman Roqan will start in January 2020.

In terms of members stepping down, Prof. Kevin O'Donnell left the Department over the summer. Paul thanked Kevin for over 34 years of service.

We still have a vacant position of head of the Electronics Workshop to fill. There will be more details of this in due course. Paul asked that if anyone knows of a potentially suitable candidate to please let David McKee know.

GTAP:

The latest round of the University's Global Talent recruitment drive is well underway. The timetable for this is as below:

- Applications process has closed
- Sifting and shortlisting will be done at Department level, with a senior representative from each division involved in the initial sift and the PAG involved in the short-listing.
- Deadline 17th October to return the shortlist to the Faculty
- Interviews in November/December.

Leadership roles:

Since the last meeting, Brian McNeil has officially taken over as Director of Teaching with Alison Yao as Deputy Director of Teaching. On behalf of the Department, Paul thanked Nigel Langford for his 16 years of service in this role.

Paul also thanked Nigel for his four years representing the Faculty in International Recruitment. At the last DC, it was reported that we were in the process of reviewing and revising our strategy and implementation plans around international student recruitment and that there was an opportunity for a member of staff to take on a leadership role in taking this forward. Stefan Kuhr has accepted this important role and is now our International Recruitment Coordinator.

At the last DC we acknowledged that Alison had won Best in Faculty award at the Strath Union Teaching Excellence Awards. Alison has since won the first annual Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in the category of Teaching Impact, with her excellent work on developing the undergraduate curriculum cited in the award announcement. Paul congratulated Alison on this latest very well deserved award.

Grant wins

Paul reported that there have been several large (multi-million pound) grant wins since the last DC, which Gail will provide details of as part of the Research report.

Electrical noise issue

We are experiencing electrical noise issues in the building, when the SCAPA lasers are running. Several groups' experiments are affected and various experiments cannot run in parallel at the moment.

Estates Services are working to resolve this together with the groups affected. Various tests have been conducted, involving re-routing new sources of power from another transformer (Colville/architecture building) and earthing arrangements, which unfortunately did not resolve the issue. An external consultant has been identified and Estates are engaging with them on the potential scope of their involvement. Meanwhile, very recent tests with UPS battery sources have shown encouraging results and plans are being put in place to scale this up to full power tests, with isolation transformers, on both SCAPA lasers.

It is hoped to have this resolved soon and Paul expressed his thanks to all who are working with Estates Services to pinpoint the source and transmission medium of the noise.

Teaching:

Paul mentioned that one of the issues that Brian will raise in his report is PDRA assistance in teaching. A few years ago it was agreed that PDRA's would be asked to help out with teaching, not only UG projects, but also tutorials and lab demonstrations. There are many benefits both to the PDRA and the Department. It helps researchers get experience in teaching, enhancing their CVs and teaching experience, which is considered in academic job recruitment. It also gives them a taster for teaching and informing their decision to choose an academic career path or otherwise. For the Department, it provides a very valuable contribution to teaching activities. Without this, academic staff will need to do more. The PDRA contribution to teaching is highly valued and Paul encouraged academic staff to help their researchers to understand the important role that this plays in the academic life of the Department.

REF:

Preparations for the REF have stepped up significantly in recent weeks. John will brief us on this later in the meeting.

Quinquennial review

Paul thanked staff who contributed to the self-reflection document that was submitted. A copy of the final version of the submitted document is available to all staff in advance of the review meeting on 30th October.

Paul asked that staff keep 30th October free to engage with the review. He stressed that this is an important event in the Department diary, happening once every 5 years, and asked that staff engage fully with the process and encourage group members to do likewise. He indicated that Gabrielle will provide more details in the Department Manager's Report.

3. Department Manager's Report

Quinquennial Review

Gabrielle reported that the timetable is currently being finalised for the visit, which will take place in the Department on the 30th October 2019. Gabrielle will be in touch this week to request specific staff to attend for certain timeslots. The holistic review will cover strategy, teaching, research, KE, internationalisation, and anything else that they want to explore based on the self-assessment document. They will do a short tour of the department and meet with students.

The self-assessment document was circulated to all DC members for comment prior to submission. The final version is available on the Physics SharePoint site.

The panel are:

- Prof Iain Stewart (Chair)
- Prof Mike Gunn, University of Birmingham (also on panel for our last QQR)
- Prof Marco Borghesi, Queen's University Belfast
- Prof Zoe Shipton (Civil and Environmental Engineering)
- Prof John Murphy (PAC)
- Dr Louise Kelly (M&S)
- Sandy Hall (finance)
- Ross Mackenzie (student rep)
- Bronagh Dallat (Faculty Office)
- Elaine Hurley (Faculty Office)
- Christine Dowds (Faculty Office)

Export Control Compliance Audit

Michelle Walton, Compliance Inspector from Export Control, Department of International Trade, is visiting on Thursday 10th October to audit our records. They currently consist of one export licence with associated paperwork.

The regulations apply to a variety of items including equipment, technology, software, data, etc. when shipped outside the EU, if they can be classed as 'dual use'. Although we are not exporting as a manufacturing company does, if we send e.g. a magnetometer to the USA for repair, we need an export licence. You may also need one if you are taking equipment or software abroad for a research visit.

A Standard Operating procedure has been circulated to all staff to raise awareness of this. There is an easy online tool (link on SOP) which will tell you whether you need a licence. The process is fairly straightforward. Please ensure your lab groups are aware of this requirement.

Procurement

Any delays that staff experience in terms of getting new suppliers on to FMS, or resurrecting suppliers who have been taken off the system, should be funnelled through Gabrielle so that she can liaise with Sharon Griffin in Procurement. Sharon is working to improve the system and expedite any delays. Due Diligence is a particular sticking point that they are working on.

Staff should let Gabrielle know immediately if they encounter any problems with procurement so she can pass them on. We have found Sharon very helpful in sorting things out.

Cybersecurity Training Update

The University continues to monitor completion rates which were last reported in mid-Sept. 90% of Physics staff have now completed the training.

Gabrielle urged staff to remind their PGR students to do the online training if they have not already done so. Gabrielle reminded students to complete at the time of the annual reviews/submission process.

Photography

The Faculty is planning to get a photographer in to take new pictures across the Faculty. If staff have any thoughts on locations please let Gabrielle know. She will then liaise with the Faculty so we can arrange a programme for the visit to the department. This will include student labs but it would also be good to get some up-to-date shots of people in research labs.

Staff should contact Gabrielle if they would be willing to be involved.

4. Teaching

Brian reported that all PhD students must be paid for tutorial and lab demonstration. The cost of PhD teaching for 19/20, to be paid from teaching budget, is ~£22k. Brian reported that this is simply not sustainable. The Department will be asking Academics and, where possible, their PDRAs, to take on more of the tutorial/demonstrating load.

David McKee arranged approx. £10k sponsorship for 3rd year labs from Coherent in Glasgow. Both David and Brian visited Coherent to discuss further opportunities. These *may* include:

- a. Student visit(s) to Coherent Scotland
- b. Coherent input into lab skills training
- c. Project students, summer internships etc

Lab coordinators have formed a co-opted subcommittee to review the undergraduate labs to identify what needs to be done and solutions to these. It is proposed to report on the findings at the next Teaching Committee meeting.

1st & 2nd year assessment structure 2019/20

Under the new framework the core 1st and 2nd year classes (PH181-PH184 & PH281-PH284), 40% of the assessment is based on continuous assessment and 60% on an end of year exam.

The continuous assessment marks are broken down as follows:

- 10%: 5 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) per semester (4 questions, marked by Photo-Copier, answer sheets to be provided) randomly allocated throughout lectures to encourage attendance. Marks should follow the rubric: 0-1 correct 40%, 2 correct 60%, 3 correct 80%, 4 correct 100%, so that the students understand that there is benefit in attending. Questions should be conceptual, such as "which of the following is a conservative force", "what is the correct equation"... rather than formulaic
- 10%: Longer (10 questions) MCQ class test in December to consolidate 1st semester material
- 10%: Longer (10 questions) MCQ class test in week 6/7 to consolidate 2nd semester material
- 10%: Attendance at tutorial and completion of tutorial questions. Students are asked to indicate which questions they have completed and they may be picked at random to present their solution to the class
- Note that PH185 and PH285 are 100% continuous assessment

It was agreed that the quantum courses should be more streamlined and revised to include any missing topics.

A brief *preliminary* summary which sets out how we agreed to proceed is as follows:

1. There will be 2 x 20 credit classes in 4th year:

(a) Semester 1: 'Atomic Physics': This will cover hydrogen atom; atom light interactions etc - similar to PH459

(b) Semester 2: 'Topics in Quantum Physics': This will cover more fundamental quantum aspects such as Quantisation of the em field - similar to PH462

2. The theme of 1(a) will be completed in 4th year. The theme of 1(b) will be extended into two 'Advanced topics in Quantum physics' courses in 5th year Semester 2:

(a) More theory based - 2nd quantisation etc

(b) More matter/applications based - quantum computing, cold atomic structures etc

Andrew Daley, John Jeffers, Stefan Kuhr and Erling Riis are a sub-group who will, in consultation with the others on this list, build detail on the syllabus of each of the 4 new courses. It is hoped to put the new syllabus to the Teaching Committee for approval in December.

Similar work to be done for Complexity Physics (A Daley & Gian-Luca Oppo) and Solid State.

Discussions have been held as to how to address the students needs to see model answers. The following should be adopted.

- 1) Students should be issued with a 'mock exam' in the correct format. This mock exam should not be a copy from any recent ones available on the library website. It could be taken from an earlier previous exam paper, adjusted as necessary to conform with the current exam format for that course. This should not take too much work and is hopefully a simple cut-and-paste exercise.
- 2) Full answers to the mock exam should be available to the students. These should be in legible, handwritten form, to let students know what is ideally expected from their own exam answers. A good method is to get students to try a question from the mock exam, whose content has been recently covered in class, as homework. The answer can be provided in a subsequent lecture or tutorial allowing questions/feedback for students. Answers should then be made available on myplace.
- 3) Previous exams on the library website should have numerical and 'pathway' solutions provided. These are not the full solution, but provide information on how to approach the questions or simply direct them to the lecture notes/tutorial questions as appropriate. An example exam and pathway solution answer-sheet is attached.
- 4) In Consolidation week, a lecture slot should be available for students to attend and ask questions about previous exam questions.

These changes will help us address some of the issues raised by students in a way that helps them in their studies.

Brian advised that the IOP accreditation visit is due at the beginning of February and Nigel Langford will be leading this.

Brian reported that some tutorial classes are using gender specific terminology in questions – 'he', 'fireman' etc. A PhD assistant pointed out we should try to phase this out.

PGT

Thorsten sent his apologies to the meeting and in his absence, Brian reported on PGT matters. The results of the PTES 2019 have been satisfactory to good and Thorsten thanked all staff involved for their efforts. In order to maintain and possibly increase standards, Thorsten stressed that staff should continue to:

- Give the students the impression of a sufficient contact time
- Communicate any changes in the course, in particular assessments, clearly and timely
- Provide timely feedback in the two weeks target window or manage expectations of students beforehand if that is not possible
- Ensure that the assessment of all PH9xx classes sharing teaching with Semester 1 PH4xx classes should be finished on Monday week 4 of Semester 2 (10/2/2020). If staff think that their assignment is suitable for a shorter deadline on 27/1 or 3/2, please contact Thorsten. The feedback policy also applies to these assignments

and the student feedback indicates that they were not too happy with that last year in some classes.

Recruitment has been very successful this year with 24 students expected and 3 further from the former cohort possibly progressing to project provided they pass resit exams. As before, interest is not equally distributed over the departmental research groups, there are a couple of projects in theory, 2-3 in plasmas but the majority are in nanoscience/solid state science, lasers, optics. This means that every academic in the latter areas will need to provide at least one project. Projects will be allocated earlier this year with a deadline for project proposals until December 9th and the selection process finished by February 2020. There will then be a literature survey supervised by the prospective project supervisors as part of the transferable skills class PH949 to prepare for the project. This will be a light touch (pass/fail, no mark) but supervisors must feedback on scientific writing, referencing and critical analysis.

International Recruitment

As mentioned in the HoD report, Stefan Kuhr has been appointed in the new leadership role of International Recruitment Coordinator.

Stefan reported that his role will be to review and revise our strategy and implementation plans around international student recruitment. Stefan will be revising our marketing activities, working on strategic partnerships, revising scholarship provision, working with recruitment agencies.

Stefan, with the support of Gabrielle will be liaising with Kylie Cowan – Head of International Student Recruitment and RIO to explore the different markets for Physics and what can be done to promote academic links and physics courses.

5. Research

Gail reported on research matters. She congratulated colleagues who had attracted research income since the last meeting. Special mentions to Jonathan Pritchard on his EPSRC Prosperity Partnership award with M-Squared to the value of £2.6M from EPSRC and to Robert Cameron for securing a prestigious Royal Society URF (£671,537).

There have been several large (multi-million pound) grant wins since the last DC. This includes:

4 EPSRC Quantum Technologies Hubs awards - approx. £6M in total

- approx. £3,400,000 for Sensing and Timing (Birmingham): Jennifer Hastie, Erling Riis, Aidan Arnold, and Paul Griffin
- approx. £1,400,000 for Quantic (Glasgow): John Jeffers, Martin Dawson, Michael Strain, Johannes Herrnsdorf
- approx. £500,000 for Computing and Simulation (Oxford): Andrew Daley, Stefan Kuhr
- approx. £500,000 for Quantum Comms (York): Daniel Oi

Gail thanked colleagues for embracing the new project costing tool via CPM so rapidly. She reported that pFacts are converging to zero. Gail thanked Kirsten for working with those submitting funding proposals and reported that there have been very few problems. Gail went on to say that some members of staff are not abiding by the 5 working day rule. Failure to adhere to the 5 working day rule means there is a real danger that they will miss an important deadline, but it is also disrespectful to Kirsten who has other work to do. If staff anticipate any problems with their costings, or they are working on something that might be a little unusual they should contact Kirsten and Gail in as far in advance as possible.

The proposal pre-review is going well. This was introduced in June 2019 and have had several proposals go through the cycle. Gail reported that she has received no negative feedback on the scheme so far: it is not meant to be onerous, and it seems to be working. It is expected that the next stage is that will be asked in the coming year for statistics on the success of proposals reviewed and funded versus proposals reviewed and funded that did not go through pre-review the previous year.

5.2 REF Coordinator report

John reported that it is 13.5 months to the submission date, which is the end of November 2020. We will be looking to have a finalised submission by summer 2020. The only tweaks will be in autumn 2020 (e.g. new, better papers).

REF2021 has 3 elements: Outputs, Impact, Environment. The relative percentages are 60/25/15 (which is the formula published by HEFCE. The publication of a similar formula for REF2014 is why we can say that we were first on GPA last time). Physics is UoA9.

The FTE Census date is 31st July 2020. The best estimate is that we will have 49.xx FTE including all Physics Department academics and Chancellor Fellows/research fellows. Outputs 49.6 FTE requires 125 outputs. There are no reductions for ECRs, but there may be reductions for those with complex special circumstances disclosed.

The University policy is no 2* outputs should be submitted. If staff have a new research output that they think should be considered for REF submission they should propose it on Pure. We will be doing a rolling review of all new proposed outputs from now to until submission.

All REF outputs must be at least green open access. Impact - we require 4 cases, if our FTE remains below 50. Environment is formally judged on two elements: environment data and an environment statement. Environment Data: Census date again 31st July 2020. Spend on research grants before then and PGRs completed (degrees granted but not necessarily graduated) count towards statistics. Environment Statement: Currently being worked on. ~ 10,000 words in length, 4 sections. (1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy, 2. People, 3. Income, Infrastructure and Facilities, 4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society). Staff will get to read and comment on this when it is in a nearer final form

5.3 PGR Report

Gordon reported on PGR matters.

PGR Recruitment

- Currently 29 new PhD students recruited for 2019/20 with an additional 3 expected at the end of the year.
- Figures are more or less the same as the previous year.

SUPA

The SUPA Graduate School Welcome event will take place on Thursday 17th October in the TIC building. Attendance is compulsory for all new PhD students. Staff should encourage their students to register for this event.

Data Protection

Gordon reported that last week we had a breach of data protection in which documents relating to an external examiner of one of our PhD students were inadvertently uploaded to the PGR examination SharePoint page after the viva. Data protection is taken very seriously by the University and senior officers were briefed about this case. An investigation has been carried out and we await the full recommendations for action at Department level.

To avoid a reoccurrence of this, the process within the department has changed. Convenors should now pass “all” viva paperwork (forms, reports, examiner expense claims, passport scans) to Audrey, who will then:

- upload the examination forms and reports to SharePoint
- make a copy for departmental records
- pass the examiner's claim etc, to Catherine for processing

Staff are encouraged to read the recent email circulated by Gordon with the updated version of the local guidance notes for viva convenors.

Gordon informed the committee that a resource site for PhD students has now been created on the Physics department's SharePoint site. A collection of useful information including induction materials, funding information for e.g. to assist conference attendance, PhD examination e.g. a specimen PhD exam report, thesis requirements etc will be uploaded onto the SharePoint site. Suggestions for useful additions are welcome.

The PG student committee has now been re-instated. The dates of the meetings will tie in with the Research Committee meetings. One representative from each research division will be required to serve on the Committee. Gordon will be in touch soon regarding suggestions for this.

6. Knowledge Exchange

Nicolas Laurand sent his apologies to the meeting and in his absence Jens Sutter reported on KE matters. The KE report was circulated prior to the meeting and Jens highlighted a few points from this report.

The recent assessment of the Department's KE activities for the Quinquennial Review as well as for the annual Faculty KE audit showed that we are doing very well.

The most recent first quantum computing industry workshop at Strathclyde hosted by the Scottish Centre for Innovation in Quantum Computing and Simulation (SCIQCS) saw a great turnout from industry with leading companies in the sector including M-Squared Lasers, BAE systems, AWE, JP Morgan, Cognizant, Cambridge Quantum Computing, Violation and Scottish Enterprise participating.

Commercialisation

The Department's commercialisation is showing healthy progress. These invention disclosures show a healthy spread through the Department indicating an increasingly broad basis for our licensing and spin out activities.

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

These remain a very attractive option for joined business-University funding and with our involvement in the West of Scotland KTP Centre the applications maintain a very high success rate. Increasing the numbers of KTPs held remains a key target for the University. KTPs can be both in a technical sector; supported by EPSRC or in a biomedical area with support.

Events

Recent events that have taken place, FCAP/IoP symposium by Tom Baer on Engineering Sustainable Innovation held in September.

Supplier and Industrial Partner conference held in August.

If staff are aware of any future events coming up please let Nicolas or Jens know of this.

Open and upcoming Funding Calls

Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, "Commercialising quantum technology: large collaborative projects: round 1", closes 30th October 12 noon.

Responsive Mode BBSRC "Industrial Partnership Awards" (10% of funding must come from industry partner).

Keeping Department informed

With the great breadth of KE activities in the Department it often proves a challenge to keep track on all the good that we are doing. Jens asked that when staff engage closely with a company, when they organise KE events, attend prestigious KE events or apply for funding with a KE context, please inform Nicolas or Jens. This will allow them to build and maintain a track record of the Department's KE activities.

7. Operational Excellence

7.1 Safety

Adrian Cross sent his apologies to the meeting and in his absence John Gillan reported on Safety Matters.

John reported that the next fire safety awareness course will take place on 9th October at 2.30 pm in JA 3.26. The Departmental Safety Induction will take place on 23/10/19 at 2 pm in JA 3.27.

John reported that there will be an audit follow up meeting and staff should ensure that they have attended training in principles and practices of Risk Assessment, e-Risk and e-COSHH. COSHH Assessors and Approvers should complete Principles and Practices of Risk Assessment, COSHH Essentials online and eCOSHH Assessors training prior to performing and approving an e-COSHH Assessment.

Gabrielle has agreed to act as the mental health first aid volunteer on behalf of the Department. Gabrielle has signed up for one two day mental advisor training course. We are looking for volunteers to attend the following courses:

Mental Health First Aid Course – 15/10/19 and 16/10/19

Mental Health Awareness – 14/11/19 and 5/12/19

Mental Wellness for All – 17/11/19, 21/11/19, 11/12/19 (half day course)

At present there is no local rule or guidance on the use of gloves in corridors. However, instruction has been given that the best practice is to remove gloves when exiting lab areas into corridors/common areas as wearing contaminated gloves in these areas can potentially result in exposure to items, surfaces and other people. When transporting items to another lab then place items in a secure container. Once safely transported to another lab, gloves can be worn to remove the item from the container.

John reported that the Biological Safety Standard has been released and can be accessed via the Safety, Health and Wellbeing website.

New and expectant mothers (NEMS) – a NEMS Risk Assessment is required for any new expectant mothers. Guidance can be found on the Safety, Health and Wellbeing website.

First Aid identifiers are now in use. Department first aiders can now be identified by the use of green first aid lanyards and enamel pin badges.

The University has been developing an electronic replacement for paper based S19 forms. Safety Services are running demonstration sessions on the 18th, 24th, 29th and 31st October as well as 5th November 2019.

Student Placements OHS Standard was released in July 2019 and can be accessed via the Safety, Health and Wellbeing website.

Travel and Working off University Campus OHS standard was released in July 2019 and can be accessed via the Safety, Health and Wellbeing website.

Items containing radioactive materials can occasionally be found in departments. Staff should ensure that any radioactive materials are removed from service and sent to John Revie for disposal.

7.2 Equality and Diversity Report

Gabrielle reported that the first event of the year “Physics, we need to talk about....Resilience and Wellbeing” will take place on Wednesday 23rd October at 3 pm.

Dr Sara Shinton - Head of Researcher Development and Assistant Director of the Institute for Academic Development at Edinburgh University will speak. Dr Shinton has also developed the Institute of Physics “Resilience Toolkit”.

The panel will discuss questions from the floor and those posted anonymously. Panelists will include Colin Flynn, Wellbeing Manager, Jan Lee, Organisational and Staff Development Manager, Dr Marco Reggiani – STEM Equals Research Associate.

Staff are encouraged to attend (sign up via EventBrite page).

Volunteers needed:

Gabrielle reported that new members of the E & D committee, particularly research staff are required.

New volunteers for the EDEI team are also required as some of our PGR members will shortly be submitting their PhDs and leaving the team.

7.3 Disability

It was reported that Kirsten and Catherine had experienced access issues with Pegasus and it was uncertain if all disability students were visible to them.

Since then Kirsten has gone through the process manually and confirmed that both herself and Catherine can now view all undergraduate students. Unfortunately, there is still a problem with the visibility of Postgraduate students and Kirsten is working with the Disability Service to resolve this.

Staff should now have checked their classes and the recommendations for each disability student should now be in place. Kirsten urged staff to pay particular attention as to whether a student has a PEEP plan listed and ensure that they are aware of their evacuation plan in event of a fire. Kirsten reported that we have not received anything from the Centre or the Fire Safety Office regarding this. This could mean that there are none, but staff should be aware that this is an area that has fallen down in the past so she urged staff to ensure that they check this.

7.4 Finance

Kirsten reported that the new cohort of PGR students had now started. She raised concerns that we are still encountering some difficulties with securing some student funding in a timely fashion.

Staff should ensure that all funding processes are in place well in advance of the student's arrival in the Department to ensure that students can register and receive their payment on time. Kirsten reported that staff should be fully aware of the timelines of turning things around. Other institutions may be involved in the process and the Centre has to finalise the process, so staff should bear this in mind when submitting an application.

Kirsten reported that there have been many issues with adding new suppliers onto FMS, particularly high multi-currency suppliers. This is a problem that finance are aware of and Kirsten is liaising with Finance to see how improvements can be made. Finance have suggested that when new grants become active staff should at that point investigate which suppliers they would like to add onto the system and start the process. This would prevent any hold-ups further down the line.

7.5 Infrastructure

John reported that after 5 years of leaks and repairs to the roof the problem has now been found. This was due to drain outlets fitted without "O" ring seals. Eight outlets will be resealed to resolve the problem.

Electromagnetic Noise

Tests have indicated that most of the noise is coming from SCAPA. The earth cable of the John Anderson was connected to the Architecture building but there was no significant reduction in the noise levels. Estates Services have completed UPS testing on the 40TW laser and hope to upscale this in the near future.

The Sustainability group have organised a Groups and Societies Fair on the 29th October 12-2 pm in JA824 & JA825. All staff are invited.

The south lift is out of action with the same problem as last year – we are awaiting feedback from Estates Management.

8. Any Other Business

Tim Briggs reported on the recent internal audit relating to GDPR. He advised staff that this had generally gone well. He pointed out the resources on the Information Governance Data Protection SharePoint site relating to GDPR documentation and privacy notices:
<https://moss.strath.ac.uk/stratpolicy/infoman/SitePages/DataProtection.aspx>

If new projects or websites process personal data, it may be helpful to think about completing a Data Protection Impact Assessment to work through how to best protect and process the data.

9. Date of the next meeting

To be confirmed.