



Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences

Department Leadership Team Meeting

Minutes

Date: Wednesday 12th January 2022

Part 1 Attendees;

Mike Burton (Head of Department)
Ann Webb (Deputy Head of Department)
Helena Gittins (Deputy School Operations Manager)
Cathy Walton (Chair of EDIA committee)
Katie Joy (Chair of Widening Participation committee)
Bart Van Dongen (Discipline Head of Education)
Gemma McCabe (PS Teaching and Learning Manager)
Gordon McFiggans (Discipline Head of Research)
David Polya (Line Manager)
Mads Huuse (Line Manager)
David Topping (Line Manager)
David Schultz (Line Manager)
Rhian Jones (Admissions)
Luis Garcia-Carreras (Employability)
Carl Jackson (PS Safety)
Rob Gardham (PS PA)
Rob Sansom (Forum Chair)
Russell Garwood (IT Director)

Apologies; Jon Pittman (PGR director), Scott Heath (Line Manager)

Summary Actions

Rolled over from December:

ACTION: Include Departmental WP fieldtrip equipment as a line item for the budget each year, specifically: line item for field gear and contingency fund (HG)

ACTION: Speak with Margaret Hartley to discuss microprobe capacity (MB)

ACTION: Advertise and recruit to PRDA mentor role (MB)

ACTION: Prepare guidance on how to get best students come March and process of super GTA advertisement, to send to SH, JP and MB before distributing (GM)

ACTION: Discuss how to advertise for volunteers for recruitment (RJ/MB)

ACTION: Hold meeting with staff and overseas universities to see how students get their information on the programme (RJ/DT to follow up)

ACTION: RJ to look into doing something similar to a virtual open day for 2+2 programme (RJ/DT to follow up)

ACTION: Discuss single point of contact for each of major refurb works (Ongoing, MB/HG)

ACTION: Staff have not received timetabling information yet (BVD to follow up)

ACTION: BVD and MB to include message in introduction to students at the start of the year that F2F and online lectures are not a repeat (BVD)

New from January:

ACTION: Highlight ‘top-down’ shortlisting issue on DKO to Ian Kinloch and Chris Hardacre (GMC/MB)

ACTION: Have a specific conversation about NERC DTP3 bid (JP)

ACTION: All staff to send any errors noticed on website to Russell Garwood to amend (All)

ACTION: Find out typical budget per UG project used in Physics and Chemistry (HG)

ACTION: Raise issue of relocation of student hubs at SSLC and Forum to take forward (RS)

Matters Arising

The minutes from the previous meeting were confirmed.

HoD Introduction and report

Mike Burton (MB)

New appointments coming up include the Lectureship in Data Science, 2 NCAS positions, Ecology Lecturer, and new Professor/Lecturer in Data Science stream in collaboration with Materials.

MB opened the Committee and summarised the Department’s status. During the middle of this planning cycle the priority is to plan for the next 12 months and deliver.

An Extended Leadership Team meeting will also be held in January, producing a ranked list of small and/or capital equipment, to be considered by RGLs and PGDirs.

DKO update

The shortlisting for DKO will be done by School, before being sent to Depts on 20th January for ranking. Any EES candidates will need to be returned by 26th January.

It was raised about the ‘top-downism’ of this approach which limits our input for effective candidates, as in Leverhulme also.

ACTION: Highlight ‘top-down’ shortlisting issue on DKO to Ian Kinloch and Chris Hardacre (GMC/MB)

FCM

The FCM rollout has received relatively few comments so far. This is not intended to be too prescriptive but merely one of a set of tools to determine staff workload.

MB outlined the process to match up teaching capacity and demand, culminating in ELT.

Reports – please refer to grouped report handout

Recruitment & Admissions Update

Rhian Jones (RJ)

Report submitted

It was noted that offer rates are down Faculty-wide, which was concerning, and highlights our vulnerability to shifts in the market.

The shift from Petroleum Geoscience to Sustainable Energy/Data Science was discussed, including a suggestion to change the data science pathway to an environmental and geoscience scope.

Teaching and Learning

Bart Van Dongen (BVD)

Report submitted

Exams are going ahead but invigilators are being instructed to keep their distance from students, so cannot record instances of mistakes etc.

Further guidance will be issued for if students cannot attempt exams due to COVID. We should expect more mitigations cases to come through.

Outcomes from the Strategic Dept. Teaching planning meetings this week are being collated by BVD and will be shared with Programme Directors and then everybody.

Clarification was sought on the MSci projects for Biology, on the issue that they run for 2 years which causes increased workload. It was recognised that the Biology students are valued by us but we need to make sure these can be accommodated.

PGR Report

Jon Pittman (JP)

Report submitted

Please see report for further details.

ACTION: Have a specific conversation about NERC DTP3 bid (JP)

Director of Research

Gordon McFiggins (GM)

No updates since December.

EDIA

Catherine Walton (CW)

Report submitted

The Athena Swan application for Natural Sciences was submitted yesterday (11th January 2022), not November.

2 applications were received for the Aurora Leadership scheme.

We are looking at the possibility of training for fieldwork preparation to roll out.

IT Report

Russell Garwood (RG)

Report submitted

Please see report for further details.

ACTION: All staff to send any errors noticed on website to Russell Garwood to amend (All)

PS Update

Helena Gittins (HG)

Budgets will be done similarly to last year, any questions should be directed to Helena in the first instance.

There is an effort being made to split the calculation between labs for teaching use and those for research use.

It was asked how UG projects are funded and how this would be accounted for in budgeting.

ACTION: Find out typical budget per UG project used in Physics and Chemistry (HG)

Guidance on mitigating COVID costs and rules per country will be investigated.

AOB

DT summarised the relationship with Geography for Data Science: 1 lectureship which straddles both departments, contributing to Data Science and Urban Analytics pathway. Project supervision may require some reflection.

MB asked the DLT's opinion on Away Days and proposed not having any within EES.

ACTION: Revisit the possibility of a networking-focussed Away Day in 6 months (MB)

RS relayed information from the School Board about the relocation of student-facing Hubs. The Committee agreed that it was time to obtain feedback from academics/PS staff/students and review this.

ACTION: Raise issue of relocation of student hubs at SSLC and Forum to take forward (RS)

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 9th February 2022, 2pm.

DLT Grouped Reports January 2022

5. Recruitment and Admissions

2022 Entry, Undergraduate (UG) Recruitment

Total UG application numbers are currently similar to last year: 302 Home and 192 Overseas compared to 314 and 170 last year. Offers are also at a comparable level to last year for both home and overseas applicants. The main UCAS deadline is coming up soon, 15th January, so numbers are close to final.

UCAS interview dates this semester are:

Thursday 10 February (46 currently invited); Tuesday 15 February (40 currently invited);

Tuesday 8 March; Thursday 17 March; Thursday 24 March if needed.

An online parent information session will be held on 25th January. We are planning an on-campus offer-holder open day on Wednesday 9th February for students who were interviewed before Christmas. The status of whether this will run in the current covid situation is currently being reviewed. A second offer-holder day is planned for Wednesday 30th March.

Student Ambassadors (SAs): SA recruitment is now being handled centrally. In Marketing, Jez Lloyd is covering for Bee Mistry-Bhudia who is now on leave. We do not currently have many EES ambassadors. There will be a further call this semester and we need to work on recruiting more students, particularly since we will be having on-campus events this semester.

The dates for University-wide Open Days have now been confirmed: 18th June, 2nd July, 1st October, 15th October (all Saturdays).

Explore Your Planet (EYP): Katherine Harrison is leading on the EYP programme. This is primarily aimed at showing Year 12 students (first year of A levels) how various science A levels are used in Earth and Environmental Sciences. The first event was held online on 8th December. There were 26 attendees, one of whom was a teacher who was streaming to a classroom. Presentations from Chris Jackson (discipline overview), Katie Joy (Moon), Rob Sansom (Dinosaurs) and Simon Hunt (Plate tectonics) were recorded, and we are planning to make these available on a dedicated EYP web page within the Outreach page. A second (repeat) virtual event will take place in February / March, and there will be an on-campus event in June.

2+2 programmes: Dave Topping has discussed a visit to NUIST, but current covid quarantines in China are prohibitive and this is not going to be possible. We are looking into online alternatives for recruitment. Kevin Taylor is in discussions with Jilin University regarding a new 2+2 agreement.

Scholarships: The agreement for the new Graham McKenna Mayes scholarship for WP students (in EES and Law) is now completed. Discussions on the details of how it will be advertised and implemented are taking place.

2022 entry, Post-graduate Taught (PGT) Recruitment

Overall, PGT applications and offers have decreased compared to the same period last year. Offers have increased significantly since the last update, now that the issues with the new system have largely been resolved.

For MPEC, applications and offers have decreased on the same period last year.

MPEC				
Fee Status	Apps	Apps	Offers	Offers
		last year		last year
H	2	1		1
O	242	290	121	193
Total	244	291	121	194

For Geoscience, the data in the Table below are an amalgamation of Petroleum Geoscience and Sustainable Energy applications. For Sustainable Energy, there are currently 23 applications (2 Home, 21 Overseas) and 4 Offers (2 Home, 2 Overseas).

All current applications have been assessed. Applications and offers have decreased on the same period last year. A significant number of applications are incomplete with references missing etc. All these have been chased. A significant number of applicants have also been out of education for some time. A large number of Sustainable Energy applications that have been referred have also been rejected as degrees are not in a relevant subject.

Geoscience				
Fee Status	Apps	Apps	Offers	Offers
		last year		last year
H	2	2	2	
O	77	108	18	47
Total	79	110	20	47

An on-site Open Day for PGT programmes is planned for 16th February.

Rhian Jones, Admissions Tutor

6. Employability Update

No updates.

7. T&L Update

Exams and Strike. As informed by email last week, on-campus, invigilated examinations will go ahead as published in the examination timetables circulated to all students. The advice from the Department for Education and public health experts is being reviewed daily by the University and is scrutinised at two University committees. Martin Schröder, Rachel Brealey and Peter Green represent the Faculty at meetings of the Major Incident Team (MIT) that meets weekly or more frequently when responding to updates to UK government advice. Chris Hardacre and Dani Murtagh represent the Faculty at weekly meetings of the Campus Management Group (CMG). In case we cannot hold on-campus invigilated exams during the pandemic, we have developed a plan b and we have received details of how to do this.

Semester 2 and fieldtrips. As informed by email last week we are expected that all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students return to on-campus study for Semester 2. Vicky has send all semester 2 unit coordinators a detailed checklist last week of actions for setting up and delivering your course next semester. This includes some additional information after feedback from students from semester 1. Easter overseas fieldtrips have also been discussed and it is agreed that there is currently no reason why we shouldn't proceed with all of them. We know that it feels risky but the government line is clear and until we see that change we have to assume all is OK.

Strategic departmental teaching planning document. These meetings are this week and I will give a verbal update during the meeting.

Timetabling. Although most of the timetables are finalised there are still some issues that need to be resolved as a matter of urgency. I have been working with Tom and Gemma to see how these can be resolved as soon as possible but some are quite complex. We are also evaluating the whole process and trying to understand why it is/has been so complicated this year and what can be improved to make the process better. It remains, for instance, unclear why departmental facilities in the Williamson building such as room 1.45 and 2.22 have largely been ignored, focussing the time tabling largely on central facilities, and why academics where not linked to certain units from the start. The latter causes substantial problems when added later. The cycle for the next academics year will start soon with a first two deadlines set at Friday the 25th of February (deadline for all academic staff to record/submit their flexible working/restricted teaching agreements via the Faculty Collaborative Timetabling website; email from faculty has been send to all academics recently) and the 4th of March (deadline for Departments to submit 2022-23 timetable data, scheduling precis and students sets). All academics will receive an email related to this this week or early next week.

Projects related workloads for 2022. The projects related workloads have now been agreed by the line managers and we have forwarded the spreadsheet to the programme directors. They are now working on decimating the information to the pathways, requesting projects titles from academics etc. For the undergraduate projects a detailed email will be send to all academics as soon as possible.

Programme director Environmental Sciences. Grant has returned from his sabbatical and returned to be the programme director for environmental sciences. Tucker and Rob are both thanked for covering the programme director and EECB pathway tutor roles while Grant was on sabbatical.

8. PGR Update

Admissions and recruitment:

The Dean's Doctoral Scholarship awards scheme has now gone live and details have been circulated to staff, and reminders will also be distributed. There is an internal deadline for nominations on 4 March 2022 and outcomes will be known on 8 April 2022. The department can put forward 3 nominations.

Project proposals are also now being invited for the Radioactive Waste Management second PhD bursary call (deadline on 14 January 2022 for proposals), the Natural Sciences interdisciplinary PhD studentships in Modelling, AI and Big Data (deadline of 17 January 2022 for proposals), and this year's round of IIT Kharagpur-UoM Dual PhD Award Programme starting Autumn 2022 (deadline of 20 January 2022 for proposals).

Other internal studentship calls that are closing soon include the UoM-Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC) studentships (14 January 2022 application deadline, 21 January supervisor nomination deadline, up to 6 candidates can be nominated) and for the President's Doctoral Scholarship scheme (31 January 2022 supervisor nomination deadline, up to 3 candidates can be nominated).

Staff have also been encouraged to submit project proposals for advertisement via FindaPhd.com and the department website to help attract applicants to these funding schemes and others. This includes attracting candidates who wish to consider the forthcoming 'super-GTA' scheme. It has been recommended that academic staff who are not teaching-focussed should be expected to be supervising (as main supervisor) 3 to 4 PhD students at any one time.

PGR working arrangements:

Following some concerns received from PGRs with regard to communication of information we have agreed to add all of the department PGRs to the EES-STAFF listserv as well as their own EES-PGR listserv (PGRs who are GTAs already were on the EES-STAFF list but this change now provides consistency). This has now been done and should prevent some communication gaps occurring at least within the department.

We shall also be introducing some changes to the timing and process of monitoring and information sent to staff and PGRs with regard to the end of year PhD progression submission and in order to improve the numbers of end of year progressions completed on time. This is to reduce the numbers of PhD students who are late in progression completion (which can be due to delays from the student but also delays/lack of engagement by a staff member), and which can also cause a delay in completing registration for the next year. As part of this we will invite supervisors to nominate/confirm internal assessors sooner. We are also now recording details of staff who act as internal assessor (and internal PhD examiner) each year in order to feed into the Faculty Contribution Model.

PGR roles:

Margaret Hartley has from this month begun her Deputy Head of PGR role and will also now be the department's representative on Faculty PGR Panel for consideration of special circumstances requests (extension/interruptions) and examination awards.

NERC DTP3 bid update:

We solicited some advice and feedback from members of the 2018 NERC DTP2 review panel to help in our decision making for the forthcoming bid. These were briefly discussed at a meeting (which included Jon Pittman and Dave Johnson from EES plus some representatives from SEED and MACE)

just before Christmas and will be used to perform a strength-weakness analysis of options with a view to make some initial recommendations later this month.

Key points raised by panel members on the shape of bids:

1. Most funded DTPs had partnerships with other higher education institutions (HEIs): the ethos of the DTP scheme is partnerships so this must come through strongly in whatever guise it takes.
2. Single HEI bids were not inherently seen as being weaker – the key is to highlight how collaboration within a single HEI can enhance DTP student experience.
3. Generally multi-HEI bids were better written and better able to express the benefits of the partnership and the mechanisms of how the DTPs worked compared to solo bids.
4. Multi-site proposals also tended to show more evidence of having done hard work on selection and training processes, probably because they had to get on the same page.
5. The “Oxbridge” factor was real – Cambridge’s solo bid considered to be weaker than others but swayed by other positives and clout of institution.
6. There was a view to try and fund DTPs that missed out previously (e.g. Aberdeen) – potentially good news for UoM in DTP3 bid.
7. Need to articulate how partnerships take NERC science training forward.
8. Use partnerships (inc non HEIs) to plug skills gaps, or links to industry etc).
9. Support partnerships with examples of working together.
10. Ensure mechanics of multi-dept/school/faculty/partner bids are worked through and fair (e.g. trade-offs in where students may be based/quality profile of students/dilution of cohort).
11. Adding “weaker” NERC partner HEIs can be highly positive: empowering PIs to engage with NERC science; broadening inclusivity of students (big thing); plugging gaps. Need to make sure all students can engage across the DTP. But it needs managing (e.g. all DTPs have shared supervisor).
12. The model of e.g. UCL of not having defined projects from outset considered very risky and suggest don’t go down this route.
13. Link to other DTPs positive.
14. Siloed DTP leadership (e.g. within a department, or single institution) must be avoided.
15. Unrealistic geography of partners an issue but panel mindful of north-south divide in terms of density of partner HEIs.
16. Number of DTP places allocated reflected ranking: e.g. University of Birmingham/CENTA2 ranked top.

Notes on past UoM bid:

1. Mid term review had highlighted several important issues (against a background of positive points) that were not explicitly addressed in DTP2. Notably: lack of clear academic leadership, lack of inclusivity of partners in decision making process; inconsistent student experience between partners; limited engagement with non-HEIs.
2. UoM DTP2 bid was considered to be “A big Uni not playing the game”.

Feedback on putative ideas for UoM bid (based on DTP rules/guidance):

1. Solo bid not discounted.
2. Multi-HEI bid could build on existing relationships within N8.
3. Multi-partner Greater Manchester focused bid centred on inclusivity would receive favourable feedback.
4. Suggest UoM leads on a bid given NERC expertise.
5. The bid does not have to cover all remit but play to strengths and evidence base; i.e. reflect expertise of organisations.
6. Make sure mechanisms (inc politics) of multi partner bids sorted out up front (e.g. how DTPs distributed; financial contribution to DTPs)(these points include within HEI politics and mechanisms!).

7. Creation of a strong sense of 'place' important. Partnerships need to explain tangible benefits for cohort.
8. UoB led CENTA2 bid emphasises importance of partnership largely through shared training opportunities rather than shared research projects.
9. Consider expanding reach of UoM to increase diversity via other HEIs.
10. "Pain" in talking to other HEIs in advance led to very organised management and admin framework.
11. Projects given "points" system?
12. Dissemination of skills to DTP – what can the partnership offer NERC community?

Jon Pittman

9. Research Update

No updates.

10. EDIA

1. Funding for EDIA (& Sustainability) activities has been approved by the School. (See budget in Appendix I below). This funding needs to be spent by end of July 2022 so requests for how to spend this (within the budgetary headlines) are requested. Will make this information available to the wider department at the next forum.
2. Reminder: as per old Athena Swan, and new Athena Swan application, it is essential that we conform to our own rule on ensuring all departmental meetings are scheduled within core hours only.
3. Athena Swan application submitted in November.
4. There is budget at School level to support participants, in addition to the commitment at Faculty level, for the StellarHE leadership programme. Details provided below (and will be sent out to the wider department).

StellarHE leadership programme: applications now open

StellarHE is a leadership development programme for diverse leaders (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) in higher education

Our University is pleased to support this programme. This programme has been designed specifically to develop and implement leadership strategies that reflect the unique challenges and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic academic and professional staff across higher education.

StellarHE is targeted at Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals who aspire to senior leadership positions in higher education. The programme has been designed specifically to equip

participants with leadership competencies and strategies that reflect the unique challenges and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff across the HE sectors.

The programme is open to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Professional Support staff, Academics and Researchers at a middle to senior management level. Applicants must be ready to embark on an experiential leadership programme and available to participate in all activities during the programme.

For more information on the programme and links to apply, visit Staffnet <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=27430>

5. Staff were reminded of the COVID relief fund prior to the December deadline. Another reminder will be sent about the next upcoming deadline. This fund of £200K has been established with a view to helping to mitigate for the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on academic staff with caring responsibilities. Members of the department whose research was affected by the pandemic due to increased caring responsibilities were encouraged to apply. It is possible to apply for money to help with (temporary) reductions of responsibilities in certain areas, for example:

- 1) Reduction in supervision and/or tutorial allocation
- 2) A year's break from receiving new academic advisees
- 3) Help with marking duties

You could also apply to use this money in other ways to reboot your research, including:

- 4) Funding for research visits
- 5) Funding for a short extension of a postdoc's contract or recently completed PhD student
- 6) Small equipment that would have a demonstrable impact on your research

6. Fieldwork inclusivity. Following discussions at the Teaching and Learning Committee, as requested CW provided a proposed checklist for the pre fieldcourse meetings with students (see Appendix II below).

Appendix 1 - SONS EDIA Budget

OOE budget request for Social Responsibility and Equality and Diversity, School of Natural Sciences

	Item	Expenditure and Justification	School/University Priorities	Budget requested
1	Athena Swan	Kick-starting the Athena Swan Action Plan 2022-27. Employing GTAs/student ambassadors to produce publicity materials and help run activities	Equality and Diversity	£10K
2	Two funded projects to support the School's contribution to University's interim EDI strategy	The university is about to launch the interim EDI strategy, which will focus on race and disability. There will be a greater emphasis on aligning the EDIA work of the faculty, and hence the Schools to this strategy. There is also a need to encourage all of us (at Dept/School/Faculty) level to feel we are working towards the same overall EDIA goals, and the recent race report has highlighted particular concerns. We will make a School-wide call for two EDIA project proposals, one related to disability and the other to race.	Equality and Diversity	£10K (i.e. 2 x £5K)
3	Outreach, engagement, WP	Enabling restart of department/discipline-level on-campus and schools based outreach and engagement activities. Several departments have	Outreach and widening	£15K (5 x £2k to support on-campus events +

		enquired about funding for this. To pay for catering, student ambassador costs, consumables; £5k included to fund an equipment store to be shared across the School.	participation	£5k for collateral costs)
4	Minority student networks	We will work with students from underrepresented groups (Black, Asian, minority ethnic, LGBTQ+, disabled), training diversity ambassadors, encouraging the formation of communities of students within SoNS, enabling and facilitating them in identifying and finding ways to address barriers to participation. Currently it is difficult to represent the students' voice as most students have a department-level viewpoint. The networks will ensure the SoNS EDIA committee gets a School-wide view of student EDIA issues and opportunities.	Equality and Diversity Student Well-being	£5K – budgets allocated to student groups to allow them to run activities inside and outside the University (incl. working with local schools) – travel, refreshments, publicity materials etc.
5	LEAF	To support roll-out of LEAF, including some expenditure on (environmentally sound) physical awards for successful lab groups, and a general pool to provide assistance with lab sustainability improvements where requested, e.g. low-value new equipment and consumables to provide measurable benefit, student ambassadors to assist with implementation and assessment.	Environmental Sustainability	£5k
6	Firs Botanical Grounds	Budget requested to run student and staff well-being activities at the University of Manchester Botanical Grounds in Fallowfield. We will run regular (weekly) drop-in sessions for UG and PG students who will be given the opportunity to participate in horticultural activities and exposed to internationally leading research in environmental and plant sciences. We will also offer team-building activities for staff groups.	Student and Staff Well-Being Environmental Sustainability	£10K – GTAs/student ambassadors, materials for activities, small equipment and PPE, publicity materials, refreshments.
7	Supporting underrepresented groups	Fund to support students (UG and PG) and early career researchers from groups underrepresented in their disciplines to attend meetings or professional development events	Equality and Diversity	£10K
8	Aurora/StellarHE	Support staff to participate in activities of the Aurora (x5) and the StellarHE (x2) programmes in 2021/2	Equality and Diversity	£15K – 2xStellarHE 5xAurora
8	Student Sustainability Groups	Budget requested to create a student sustainability group/ network at School level. This will allow students to develop and run ES-focused activities that are of interest to them and aimed at the student community. A school level initiative will also facilitate working across the disciplines, which may help generate ideas for cross-department dissertation/ project opportunities.	Environmental Sustainability	£5K – budgets allocated to student group to allow them to run activities (refreshments, publicity materials etc.)
9	ES in the curriculum project	Budget to run awareness workshops and support sessions with staff, to hire an RA for some data collection/ analysis for a pilot, and for dissemination and roll out. Budget to also liaise with student community to make sure outcomes align with their expectations and needs.	Environmental Sustainability	£10k
10	Air travel replacement support fund	Transitory funding to support staff wishing to replace their (already budgeted) air travel with a more sustainable alternative such as train travel. The fund will be used to cover the difference in cost between air and the alternative. Staff should provide details of their journeys to allow estimation of emissions savings.	Environmental Sustainability	£5k

Appendix II - Pre-Fieldcourse Meeting – guidance and checklist

As agreed at last T&L committee these meetings are to be mandatory for all undergraduate fieldcourses.

Purpose

Surveys (and no doubt the experience of many staff engaged in fieldcourses) is that many issues arising in relation to inclusivity on fieldcourses can be avoided or mitigated by engaging students in these **prior** to the fieldcourse. Please see associated report on meeting with the British Ecological Society that includes their surveys of LGBTQ+ students who had been on undergraduate fieldcourses. This provides a lot of insight into the student perspective so is actually worth a read.

It is important that the meeting is interactive in nature i.e. to get the students to engage in potential issues and how they may be affected rather than staff just telling students how it is.

Below is a checklist that staff should use to ensure all appropriate issues are considered at the pre-fieldcourse meeting. Suggestions to improve or add to this list are welcome.

Checklist for pre-meeting

Dos and Don'ts

Dos

Get students to engage and ask questions. Consider involving students from previous years.

Ask students to consider how they may be personally affected.

Ask students if they want a one-to-one confidential discussion following the session on any issues that they have concerns over.

Inform students that confidential information they may share with you that could affect their risk e.g. sexuality, mental health issues, will be treated as confidential and will be destroyed after the field course.

Don'ts

Students should not be asked to disclose information in the session (unless they want to).

Questions students need to consider concerning their risks at the fieldcourse location

1. Are you in danger (physical or mental health) as a result of any protected characteristic?
Think about:

sexuality – e.g. lesbian/gay?

Gender identity – e.g. female, transgender?

Ethnicity

Religion

Disability

2. Are there societal issues that might affect you?
3. How is your mental health and how might it be affected?
4. What is your understanding of the local culture and how might it affect you?
5. What alterations to your behaviour might be appropriate given the local culture e.g. public displays of affection, clothing, behaviour surrounding drinking alcohol?
6. How would you deal with any of the issues above?

Other issues to cover:

1. What is and is not acceptable behaviour with regard to other staff and students on the course.
2. Toilet access and how to cope with potentially limited access.
Provide specific information on accessibility so that students can plan appropriately and bear in mind that some students may never have been in such situations before. Engage students in the discussion of issues they may face and how to deal with them. Two particular issues should be covered:
 - i. Need to go to the toilet outside. As we all know, this happens even when toilet stops are planned as well as possible. Assure students this is normal and how to deal with it. Maybe this needs to be considered as part of the behaviour above. Male students in particular need to understand the differing needs for females and that they need to be respectful of ensuring privacy. Make it clear that any juvenile behaviour e.g. mocking people who need to attend to their biological needs will not be tolerated. Females may choose to take some group responsibility and look out for each other when having to go to the toilet in the field. Having these conversations up front and in advance of the fieldcourse may help in particular students who have little experience of these situations.
 - ii. In particular, menstruation needs to be dealt with – its just biology. It may be useful to involve if possible someone who has dealt with this before. Top tips: take plenty of sanitary products, wetwipes and plastic bags for disposal (at appropriate point), consider use of medication to reduce menstrual flow.

11. IT Report

Past:

- Had to scale back work on IT due to a teaching situation, will be catching up time this coming term.
- Using official route for all software installations for this year's provision seems to have worked, although much of the implementation was last minute. RJG to meet with Kofi and Emma to discuss impact on their time (which we hoped this would clear for other duties).
- Attempts from last year to find out how to feed back structural problems back to someone in IT that can actually address them have failed - there seems to be no structure presently through which we can highlight issues in ITS provision.

Ongoing/Future:

- A key challenge I would like to address this coming term is the last point - I would like to investigate further whether there are any structures in the pipeline to assist with feeding back on ITS structural issue, and if there are not, how we can highlight the need for such a structure.
- I'm planning an overhaul of website content in the coming few months, and will be approaching EES staff for assistance on this front shortly.

RJG 10/01/2022