

## SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES

UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022 AT 10-12AM, ZOOM

## Present

Adam Davis (he/him)	Charlotte Hooson-Sykes	Igor Larrosa	Marta Pina (she/her)	Sally Brown (she/her)
Agate Stranka	Cheonghee Kim	Ingo Dierking	Martin Attfield	Sam Hay
Ahu Dumanli-Parry	Chloe McDonnell	Inigo Vitorica	Martin Coram	Sam Ryder
Aimie Lambert	Chris Blanford	Jack Scott	Martin Gallagher	Samsung Galaxy S7
Alan Brisdon	Chris Hardacre	James Allan	mbxssnm3	Sandra Gogacz
Albert Zijlstra	Chris Muryn	Jamie Gooding	Meera Mehta	Sarah Cartmell
Aleksey Yerokhin	Christopher Conselice	Jane Deakin	Merren Jones	Sarah Wright (she/her)
Alex Cook	Claudia Henninger (she/her)	Janine Dixon (she/her)	Michael Garrett	Sasha Grigorenko
Alex Eggeman	Connor Dempsey-Riley	Jay Taylor	Mike Birse	Scott Kay
Ali Gholinia	Conor Fitzpatrick	Jeff Forshaw	Mike Burton	Sean John Freeman
Alice Bowen	Cristina Valles	Jen Lockhart	Mike Shaver	Segun oke
Alison Pawley	Damindi Jones	Jian Lu	mumsuan2	Shan Lin
Alison Smigova	Dan Scotson	Jiashen Li	Nathan Owston	Simon
Allan Matthews	Daniel Shipman	Jitesh Gajjar	NF Morrison (he/him/Neil)	Simon Cotter (he/him/his)
Amanda Aspinall	Darren Shepherd	Jo Cartwright (she/her)	Nick Weise	Simon Holden
Andrei Golov	David August	Jo Williams	Niels Walet	Simon Webb
Andrew Gordon	David Hall	Joao Fonseca	Nikesh Solanki	Sophie Downes (she/her)
Andrew Hazel (he/him)	David J. Lewis	John Warren	Odile Masia	Sophie Jones
Andrew Horn	David Johnstone	Jon Lloyd	olatunji Johnson	Stefan Söldner-Rembold
Andrew Pitt	David Leys	Jon Masterson	Olga Tsigkou (she/her)	Steve Hayes
Andrew Regan	David Silvester	Jonathan Bagley	Oliver Jensen	Steve Pettifer
Andrey Kretinin	Debbie	Jonathan Redfern	Pamila Sharma	Stuart Christie
Andy Elvin	Delia Vazquez	Jonathan Skelton	Paul Johnson	Stuart Lyon
Ann Webb	Dirk Engelberg	Jonny Blaker	Paul McNaughter	Sue Tizini
Anna Humble	Diyaco	Jordi Bures	Paul Walmsley	Susanne Shultz
Anna Scaife	Donald Robertson	Josh Snape	Penny Bartlett-O'Boyle	Sylvester Boon
Anne Davies	Doyin Mansell	Judith McGovern	Perdita Barran	Theodore Papamarkou
anthony green	Ed	Julie Thompson	Peter Quayle	Thomas Malcomson
Aravind Vijayaraghavan	Emily Sayle	Kai Prince	Phil Manning	Tom Kempton
Artenis Bendo	Emma	Katherine Joy	Philip Withers	Tom Shearer (he/him/his)

Arthur Wilkinson	Emma Reilly	Katie Moore (she/her)	Philippa Browning	Toni Moran (She/Her)
Aurelie Le Normand	Eric McInnes	Keith Grainge	Ping Xiao	Vicky Coker
Barbara Waters (she/her)	Francesca Moss	Kevin Jackson	Rachel Parker-Strak	Wendy Flavell
Beatriz Mingo	Gareth Morris	Kristina Brubacher (she/her)	Raj Tandon	Xiaogang Chen
Bill Sampson	Gary Ingham	Kun Yan	Ray Burgess	Xiaorong Zhou
Bobbie-Ann Jones	Gemma Coleman	Laura Knighton (she/her)	Ray Comber	Xuqing Liu (he/his)
Brian Derby	Gianpaolo Vignali (he/him)	Lauren	Rebecca Cross	Yang Han
Bryony Quick (she/her)	Giles Johnson (he/him)	Lee Fielding	Rhian Jones	Yi Jin
Carl Poree	Gordon McFiggans	Lindsay Pressdee	Richard Winpenny	
Cas Burton	Guillaume De Bo	Lloyd Cawthorne	Rob Dryfe	
Catherine Walton	Heather Murphy	Lorna Dawson (she/her)	Rob Sansom (he/him)	
Cathy Walton	Helena Gittins	Louise Walker	Robyn Dale (she/her)	
Cecilia Medupin	Henggui Zhang	Louise Wood-Sanna	Romain Tartese (He/Him)	
Chamil	Hugh Gong	Marcus Tressl	Rong	
Charlene Gallery	Hugo Ricketts	Mark Bissett	Ros Le Feuvre	
Charles Darko	Huw Owens	Mark Coleman	Roy Wogelius	
Charles Walkden (he/him)	Ian Kinloch	Marta Blazquez	Ruikun Jiang	

**In attendance:** Stephen Pettifer, University Academic Lead for Digital Learning

## DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Item No.	Item	Action By	Date Due
<b>1</b>	<b>Chair's business</b>		
<b>a</b>	Minutes from the previous meeting held on 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 were approved.		
<b>b</b>	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>Update from outstanding actions:</p> <p><b>CH to circulate wording approved by DASS that can be used to ask students to put on masks. <i>Outcome/update: Complete</i></b></p> <p><b>CH to Chase Student exemptions for mask wearing so that academics know which students are exempt in advance of the teaching: <i>Outcome/update: Complete. Staff and students are able to obtain a lanyard from Occupational Health to indicate they have got an exemption. A letter can also be provided.</i></b></p> <p><b>CH to arrange further communication to students about wearing masks. <i>Outcome/update: Complete</i></b></p>		

	<p>CH to ensure that signage on mask wearing is in place in all areas: <i>Outcome/update: Complete. Head of School has raised with Estates to ensure signage on mask wearing is visible in all areas.</i></p> <p>CH to arrange for the maximum number of students in each of the lecturing spaces to be sent to all of the Department safety advisor. <i>Outcome/update: Complete</i></p> <p>Question received on whether the moratorium on live online teaching also apply to PGR Courses. <i>Outcome/ update: Complete. CH confirmed that there was a case looked in to where online teaching in the Department of Physics and Astronomy for PGR cohorts was able to be moved online.</i></p> <p>Question received on how long the students have to 'sign in' to a session on the new Attendance monitoring system. <i>Outcome/ update: No update provided by AH</i></p> <p>CH to find out if the FLT and SLT minutes can be made available to staff in the School. <i>Outcome/ update: No update provided by CH</i></p> <p>The Chair invited any matters arising from School Board members. Key points raised in the chat function:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the university provide any guidance on mask hygiene? <i>The blue masks can be worn for up to 4 hours unless they get wet. Reusable masks are to be washed on a regular basis.</i></li> </ul> <p>Check guidance on mask hygiene is on Staff net and send out a communication. <b>Action: Chris Hardacre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the best method to raise that there are lot of empty mask boxes in building entrances? <i>Raise through Health and Safety Advisors or Deputy School Operations Managers</i></li> </ul>	CH	
2	<p><b>Head of School Report and Q&amp;A</b></p> <p>CH presented a verbal Head of School update, key points include:</p> <p><u>FCM Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The FCM has been released to all departments and inaccuracies are being addressed.</li> <li>The model shows allocated duties, research commitment, remaining time available and total commitments. Head of Department are to use the metrics to help understand loading across the Department.</li> <li>There is a change to the research commitment and this includes a research loading for individual grants and PGI supervision that were contractually obliged to deliver.</li> <li>The formula has increased time allocation for smaller courses and decreased time allocation for larger courses</li> <li>The project formula has been adjusted to include MSc project supervision</li> <li>Future changes to the model will be classed as major or minor. Major changes will impact multiple staff and the Department Forums will take a role in this</li> <li>Feedback can be sent to <a href="mailto:FCM@manchester.ac.uk">FCM@manchester.ac.uk</a> or Head of School</li> <li>There is significant flexibility in what the Heads of Department can include in the model and for individual circumstances are to be taken into account.</li> </ul>		

	<p>The Chair invited feedback and any questions from School Board members. Key points raised verbally and in the chat function:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The formula is not visible</li> <li>• The Chair asked what the plans are to review the FCM. <i>There will be a formal review annually but it is a living model and reviews can also be done on a 6 monthly basis as duties and courses change</i></li> <li>• When will inaccuracies be updated? <i>This should be done continually as feedback provided.</i></li> <li>• Currently the funded hours in grants are shown whereas the formula says that the costed hours should be used and this is an issue in Nuclear Physics with STFC grants. It was raised that this issue also effects a number of different grants in all Departments and not just STFC. <i>CH confirmed that how they are recorded will be revisited and it is dependent on circumstances.</i></li> <li>• Will the FCM look at income on industrial funding that can come through P codes, rather than R codes? <i>Research Finance are making progress on this and are looking at which parts of P codes are associated with internal funding and external funding.</i></li> <li>• Allocation of individual research time for all academics, which was discussed at length in this forum, has disappeared. <i>CH confirmed that 20% for scholarship time is in the model but it is not as explicit and will be revisited.</i></li> <li>• Concern that decisions on workload are being made based on the FCM which is not complete. <i>The FCM is only one input and workload should be discussed with line manager.</i></li> </ul> <p>The Chair asked the Head of School to provide a written report issues on the FCM raised in the meeting, including those raised in the Chat function to which responses have not been given, and in previous feedback, with an update on issues raised to be provided in advance of the School Board in April <b>Action: Chris Hardacre.</b></p> <p>CH outlined a number of investments in the School since September including 2 Chairs in Fusion have been appointed; Chair in Advanced Materials is currently advertised; Chair in Quantum will be advertised shortly. The new Director for Dalton Institute is currently advertised. The new round of Dame Kathleen Ollerenshaw Fellowships has been launched and shortlisting will take place in January. £840k of Small Value Equipment has been invested in.</p> <p>A number of academic positions have been agreed by the Dean in December 2021 within the School of Natural Sciences including three positions in Data Sciences and three positions in NetZero. There are also positions in Maths, Chemistry and Physics and Astronomy. A lectureship in Materials and Device for Quantum Technologies will be discussed once the Chair position is filled.</p> <p>There have been investment in PS support including Graduate Interns and discussion are taking place for a Grade 6 Horticultural Technician. There has been investment in Other Operating Expenditure (OOE) across the School for Teaching and Learning, support for business engagement and post REF activities, support for SR and EDIA, support for Maths Interdisciplinary Research Interactions and an additional half a million pounds to support small value equipment. Heads of Department will be in touch with staff for small value equipment and capital equipment bids.</p> <p>A COVID relief fund has been launched to support staff who have been disproportionately affected by COVID. This will be ongoing for the next two years.</p>	CH	April 2022
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	<p>Applications are open for a Carers Support fund that helps networking and professional development.</p> <p>The budget timeline for 2022 – 2023 budget was outlined and the target date for the first draft is the end of January to allow time for review with the Heads of Department during February 2022.</p> <p>There was a reminder that the President and Vice Chancellor is visiting the School on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February and staff can sign up to the Open meeting on Zoom via Eventbrite by Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022.</p> <p>The Student Number Intake was presented for each Department including the figures for first year UG and PGT students, for home and overseas.</p> <p>The Chair invited feedback and any questions from School Board members. Key points raised verbally and in the chat function:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was highlighted that the use of acronyms should be avoided or reduced to be more inclusive</li> <li>• As part of the policy in managing and sustaining equipment, a single asset management system has been developed. This lists all equipment over £5k and should be checked before staff purchase new equipment. Staff should also speak with the Senior Technical Specialist to provide evidence that the equipment does not exist. CH noted that investment in equipment includes teaching and research and is for Academic and PS colleagues. Equipment purchased will need to be receipted by the end of the financial year in July 2022.</li> <li>• What plans are there to stabilise PS staff i.e. reduce turnover in the Departments? Is there any audit on workloads for PS staff? It seems to have increased significantly over the past couple of years. <i>There has been a considerable amount of change and we are looking at resourcing levels and workloads continuously across all areas of activity including technical staff.</i></li> <li>• Questions asked for details on the outcome of the COVID relief fund i.e. number of requests received, number requests funded, amount allocated so far. <b>Action: Chris Hardacre</b> to give an update on the COVID Relief Fund at the School Board in April 2022</li> </ul>	CH	April 2022
<b>3</b>	<b>Items from the Department</b>		
<b>A</b>	<p><b>Faculty Exam Board – Department of Chemistry</b></p> <p>Question raised on why the Faculty Exam Board is necessary. The previous year caused a delay releasing results to students. It was confirmed that this is a decision made by the Vice President for Teaching, Learning and Students. Lessons that were learnt from the last academic year will be addressed and the processes are now built in. The date of the exam board will not impact the date results released or graduation. It is not confirmed if the Faculty Exam Board will take place in the next Academic Year (2022- 2023)</p>		
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Timing of School Board meetings – Department of Chemistry</b></p> <p>A request to keep timing of the School Board to Wednesday afternoon. The Chair confirmed it was agreed to vary the timings of the School Board meetings for this Academic Year. A consultation with the Chair of the school Board and the chairs of the departmental forums will take place when setting the dates and time of the School Board for the Academic Year 2022 – 2023. <b>Action: Philippa Browning</b></p>	PB	September 2022

C	<p><b>MECD working practices and space allocation – Department of Materials</b></p> <p>Concern on student welfare and crisis management in open plan offices. Staff have raised concerns about finding appropriate private space in the MECD Building when they are in open place office with a distressed student. It was noted that the welfare hub has private space available for but there is a concern that these situations cannot always be planned.</p> <p>The following views were expressed in a discussion on MECD Working practises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University strategy has been to reduce the number of student touch points across the University, and these have been reduced from 100 to 9. One of them is the Student Hub in MECD Building. There are three private rooms area available in this area for academic or PS staff with a student that are in distress</li> <li>• Concern about how easy it would be for students to access academics in MECD on an informal basis. Students will not have direct access to research team’s workspace on higher levels. All contact time will need to be booked in advance which is not always appropriate.</li> <li>• Chris Hardacre informed the School Board members that IT are exploring whether a communication tool can be installed at the points where the students don’t have access to help the students contact the academic. This is not yet confirmed.</li> <li>• Concern that students may not want to walk into an office with multiple people to find the academic and then walk back through to find a private room.</li> <li>• Concern that when a review takes place on working practise that nothing will change and this is a serious issue for student welfare.</li> <li>• Teams calling will mean that phones cannot be installed and this will mean that student cannot contact academics in meetings. There will be no visual cues to see if a student needs your help now they cannot knock on office doors.</li> <li>• Concern that NSS will suffer because of this decision, and will impact students feeling part of a community and accessing staff when required. It was noted that the building has been shaped to be easily configurable so will look at the review. Concern that students may get a different experience of how they can access academics compared to other Department and Schools.</li> <li>• Highlighted that this was raised as an issue during previous consultation and the plan has been objected and staff feel ignored.</li> <li>• Item raised by Student Rep that electronic communications at contact points for open place offices might make students feel uncomfortable typing in case it is saved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Chris Hardacre to raise concerns raised at the School Board at the MECD Project Board and Committee. <i>Chris has raised with members of the project committee. It has been agreed that the document that describes the student’s journey will be reviewed.</i></p>	CH	Complete
D	<p><b>Student Hubs – Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences</b></p> <p>Concern raised that the closure of student facing hubs in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences has not gone smoothly and we need to review that decision based on the student and staff experiences. <i>The footfall in the centralised hub is reduced compared to what anticipated and number of staff covering hub has been reduced and more TLSE staff are back working in the Department. Difficult to evaluate due to impact of COVID. Hubs to be reviewed on regular basis looking at footfall and feedback from students.</i></p>		

	<p>It was highlighted that in previous discussions with Heads of Schools on discipline related hubs it was raised that support at discipline/department level is vital and it was asked why this was not taken into consideration in the decision process. <i>The decision has been made as part of SEP which is an institution wide decision and there was a consultation process as part of SEP.</i></p> <p>There was a number of staff in the Zoom chat that had concerns about the student hub being remote and wanted support to remain in the Departments.</p> <p>Several members of the Board requested that a vote be taken on this issue. As no advance notice had been given, the Chair ruled that a vote could be taken but it would be informal. Informal vote as follows on motion proposed: ' Student Support should be at Departmental level'</p> <p>For 104/128 (81%), Against 7/128 (5%) &amp; Abstain 17/128 (13%). 128 out of 180</p>		
<b>4</b>	<b>Faculty &amp; Senate Committee Updates</b>		
<b>a</b>	<p><u>Implementation of Halpin Review of Governance</u></p> <p>The Halpin Review has recommended that there should be a clearer direct connection between Schools and Senate. It has been decided that the Head of Schools will become full members of Senate. A proposal is under consideration that School Board Chairs should also become Senate members, which would improve communication and accountability between School Boards and Senate.</p> <p>Faculty Committee have discussed hybrid working pilot, issues with FCM, student staff ratios. Dean has expressed a preference for items from the School Board to be raised through board chairs to elected representatives</p>		
<b>5</b>	<b>Head of School Operations Report</b>		
	<p><i>A report from Head of Operations had been received and circulated.</i></p> <p>It was highlighted that the Rewarding Exceptional Performance has been announced for PS and Academic colleagues.</p>		
<b>6</b>	<b>Head of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Report (Giles Johnson)</b>		
	<p>GJ presented a verbal EDIA update, key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School level Athena Swan application submitted on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022</li> <li>• Data showed that there is a trend of disproportionately fewer female staff, particularly amongst academics and technicians. The percentage of female staff consistently declined through levels of seniority.</li> <li>• Across the board there are fewer female staff compared to comparable institutions</li> <li>• Looking at staff overall there have been an increase in percentage of women across of the staff over the years and an improvement in percentage of female professors and lecturers</li> <li>• A Positive Action checklist for Recruitment has been put together and will feature in the action plan focusing on gender and underrepresented groups.</li> <li>• Amongst undergraduates there is a small improvement in the percentage of female students. Fashion Business Technology have increased the number of male students recruited over years following actions from their Athena Swan</li> <li>• Athena Swan action plan has been developed and the priorities will look at staff recruitment, student diversity though widening accessibility and embedding our people and our values and embedding an equal and inclusive culture</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The School will look at addressing issues of Race over this year</li> <li>• Number of funds are available including Covid Relief Fund, Carer's Fund and Training Fund</li> <li>• Fund also available to students and early career researchers from underrepresented disciplines to help them with career development and training</li> </ul> <p>Question raised about whether there has been guidance or information on how the pandemic has affected women including in the Athena Swan Application. <i>The COVID Relief fund, promotions and questions on parental leave are featured in the Athena Swan Application.</i></p>		
	<b>Items from the Student Reps (Student Reps)</b>		
	<p><u>Arrangements for exams/assessment</u></p> <p>It was raised that clarity is needed on self-isolation and what the application of guidance is applied in the exam halls from the Faculty. Students want a FAQ available to address these issues given the exam period is imminent. <i>It was confirmed that there is an FAQ being developed and should be released on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022.</i></p> <p>Student Rep thanked staff in Departments for answering a large number queries and questions on this matter that are causing high level of stress.</p> <p>It was raised that the open letter (added to the Zoom Chat and included as an Addendum to the Minutes) has been signed by a large number of students, raising concerns about the assessment process. Concerns were raised concerning an open book examinations and in closed book conditions in Department of Chemistry. Further clarity on this was requested.</p>		
	<b>Flexible Learning Strategy &amp; UMW (Steve Pettifer, University Academic Lead for Digital Learning)</b>		
	<p>Steven Pettifer and Daniele George are putting together the business strategy for Flexible Learning and it will be submitted to Senate by July 2022. Network groups have been set up for staff and students to discuss strategic themes including Accessibility, Assessment, and Space on campus, Training and Skills, Technology and Innovation. Staff can also contribute by completing survey or attending DLE Review Workshops, and students can contribute through PASS Leaders and other activities across the University. A Digital Learning Environment Review will be conducted by Prof Caroline Bowsher. Prof Ang Davies will review engagement with degrees that are not 3 years, e.g. apprenticeships stackable degree and micro-credentials. Dr Jane Mooney's theme will look at improving digital capabilities.</p> <p>This item to be discussed in the Department Forum Meetings and at a future School Board and more time to be allocated on to the agenda.</p>		
<b>9</b>	<b>Head of Education Report</b>		
	<p><i>AH highlighted part of the report submitted including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exam marking schedule is tight and markers are reminded to be prompt in returning script and marks. Assessment Communities of Practice, led by Niels Walet and Andrea Taylor has developed a streamlined process for both Schools.</li> <li>• In Semester 2 all programs, except for DL programs, will be on campus in FSE</li> <li>• The Attendance Monitoring Systems should work better in Semester 2 than Semester 1 as the WIFI and timetable systems are more stable</li> </ul> <p>A number of concerns highlighted in the Zoom chat from students on support for self-isolation and concern that students with COVID might choose to attend exams. <i>Andrew</i></p>		



	<i>Horn to discuss the questions raised at a meeting with SU and students reps and ensure they are included in the FAQ's scheduled to be circulated on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022.</i>		
<b>10</b>	<b>Head of Research Report (Ian Kinloch)</b>		
	<i>A report from Head of Research Report was circulated.</i>		
<b>12</b>	<b>AOB</b>		
	Late report from HR report was circulated and noted.		
<b>13</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022</b>		
	The Chair confirmed the next meeting will be in April 2022		