Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences

Department Leadership Team Meeting

Minutes

Date: Wednesday 8th June 2022

Part 1 Attendees;
Mike Burton (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)
Gordon McFiggans (Discipline Head of Research)
David Polya (Line Manager)
Mads Huuse (Line Manager)
David Topping (Line Manager)
David Schultz (Line Manager)
Jon Pittman (PGR director)
Rhian Jones (Admissions)
Carl Jackson (PS Safety)
Rob Gardham (PS PA)
Alison Smigova (PS Tech)

Apologies; Russell Garwood (IT Director), Ann Webb (Deputy Head of Department), Scott Heath (Line Manager), Luis Garcia-Carreras (Employability)

Summary Actions

ACTION: Send meeting link for Ecology & Evolution group on 23 June to Dave Schultz, for Josh Lynn to join (CW)

ACTION: Share link to Report & Support system to all staff (KJ)

ACTION: Follow up with Luis on progress with preparation for the External Advisory Board (MB)

Matters Arising

The minutes from the previous meeting were confirmed.

HoD Introduction and report
Mike Burton (MB)

Joshua Lynn has been offered the Global Ecology Lecturer position, to start provisionally in September.

ACTION: Send meeting link for Ecology & Evolution group on 23 June to Dave Schultz, for Josh Lynn to join (CW)

Onboarding with Zhonghua Zheng is in progress, as is the DKO Fellowship for Anna Joy Drury.

Chris Jackson has now left the Dept. As it relates to a grievance case details must be kept confidential, however the Dept. noted it was very saddened at Chris's departure. KJ advised of the Report and Support system which is available to all staff:
https://www.reportandsupport.manchester.ac.uk/

ACTION: Share link to Report & Support system to all staff (KJ)

There will be a Departmental Away Day for all staff in September.

Reports – please refer to grouped report handout

Recruitment & Admissions Update
Rhian Jones (RJ)
Report submitted

Please see report for further details.

Employability Update
Luis Garcia-Carreras (LGC)

ACTION: Follow up with Luis on progress with preparation for the External Advisory Board (MB)

Teaching and Learning
Bart Van Dongen (BVD)
Report submitted

There was a discussion about Unit Evaluation Questionnaires (UEQs) and their usefulness. The lower the response rate the less useful these are in teaching evaluation.

Related to this point, MB raised that the criteria between Faculty Promotions Committee and Department Promotions Committee for staff seem to misaligned, after a low number of this year's recommendations were taken further.

PGR Report
Jon Pittman (JP)
Report submitted

A meeting between Dave Johnson and Melissa Westwood regarding the NERC DTP has been scheduled.

GMC asked about the rollout of the pilot scheme for interviewing, and whether this would be standardised across all funding schemes. CW raised that the process should take account of students applying from non-Russell group universities to avoid bias and these students being left behind.

Director of Research
Gordon McFiggins (GM)
Report submitted

KJ raised the issue of environmental impact on lab sustainability. MB will bring this question to SLT.

EDIA
Catherine Walton (CW)
Report submitted

Please see report for further details.

IT Report
Russell Garwood (RG)
Report submitted

Please see report for further details.

PS Update

Carl Jackson (CJ)

Awaiting quotes and dates for the Mental Health and First Aid course.

CJ issued a reminder to report any accidents and near-misses – a couple of recent cases of Lyme disease during fieldwork were not reported.

There will be another induction next week to circulate to any new starters.

Helena Gittins (HG)

HG advised BVD to contact PS if needed for fieldwork meeting.

The new PhD space in Dover St is moving ahead for the end of July, and the refurb of 2.79 commences next week.

AOB

August DLT will be skipped and the Committee will reconvene in September.

DS shared good news about the EES Coursera course which has reached over 10,000 active learners and 1100 completions.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 13th July 2022, 1.30pm

DLT Grouped Reports June 2022

5. Recruitment and Admissions

2021 Entry, Scholarships

There was an FSE ceremony for holders of scholarships on 18th May. There was one EES award: Sanya Panda is the recipient of an FSE International Excellence Scholarship. She gave a very nice short speech on behalf of undergraduate scholarship holders.

2022 Entry, Undergraduate (UG) Recruitment

The deadline for applicants to select their firm choice is 9th June so most decisions are now made. For undergraduate, the numbers are very similar to last year: the current total number of Accepts (Home + Overseas) is 124 vs 127 last year. 34 of these are "Unconditional Firm" (UF) meaning that they already have their entry qualifications and have accepted us as firm. This includes around 20 deferrals from last year. The 34 UFs compare with 17 at the same point last year.

For Home students, offers and accepts are flat compared with last year. While conversion is slightly down this year, the forecasting model currently has us meeting our Home target (100). For Overseas students, both applications and offers have increased, and the conversion rate is the same as last year. The forecasting model is currently showing that we are likely to be down 10-15 on the OS target of 37: this was a significant increase in the target from the 19 OS registrations we had in 2021. We still have some new OS applications to process, and we are still open in Extra. We will also try to increase this number in Clearing.

The numbers accepting us as Insurance have increased, largely for Overseas students. (Steady increase from 9% in 2019 to 20% in 2022.)

The number of direct Accepts to the EES courses with an Integrated Foundation Year has increased from 4 last year to 7 this year.

We have had several requests for students on other courses in Manchester to transfer to EES. However, so far only one has completed the process.

2023 Entry, Undergraduate (UG) Recruitment

Planning for the University-wide Open Days is progressing (Saturdays 18th June and 2nd July). Planning is being coordinated across FSE by Alison Evans. Joe Phelan and Jez Lloyd are assisting with

the EES display in Williamson. We will have a stand in the Schuster building, and our talks will also be in Schuster. A new printed EES Brochure is also being prepared for these events.

We have had a successful recruitment drive for a new team of Student Ambassadors (thanks, Cecilia) and should have plenty of help for the Open Days.

Joe Phelan and Russell are working on improving the Geology and Field Trips web pages.

Explore Your Planet: Katherine Harrison is planning an on-site EYP day, 30th June.

2022 entry, Post-graduate Taught (PGT) Recruitment

Geoscience:

Petroleum Geoscience applications, offers and accepts continue to decline on previous years, currently 34 accepts vs 62 last year. Last year's accept / registration ratio was 17% so we might expect around 6 registrations.

Geoscience for Sustainable Energy applications, offers and accepts have increased significantly compared with last year, currently 13 accepts vs 2 last year.

Subsurface Engineering has seen an increase in applications, offers and accepts compared with the same point last year: current accepts are at 39 vs 9 last year.

It currently looks like the Geoscience programmes will hit/exceed target. However, targets are low: Geoscience = 0, Geoscience for Sustainable Energy = 6.

MPEC:

There are currently 11 MESPOM accepts. The target is 5.

MPEC offers have now increased on the same period last year (346 vs 329 last year), although accepts are lower (currently 223 vs 277 last year, down 19%). Currently, fewer people have replied to offers compared to this time last year – this may be due to a delay in offers going out. Forecasting currently predicts we will be down roughly 60 on target for MPEC. The target is 129 (8 H / 121 OS). This compares with last year's target of 101 (5 H / 96 OS) and registration of 105. The accept / registration rate last year was approximately 33% which would predict 73 registrations in 2022 based on current numbers.

To help mitigate for this, the admissions team is now processing offers on those applicants for whom we were awaiting a reference, making the reference an offer condition. They have also extended the acceptance deadline to 30th June 2022.

We will be running conversion events for PGT offer holders: MPEC 15th June and Geoscience 20th (date to be confirmed).

There is still not much more clarity on the China situation. We hope to have further updates from the International Office but it is difficult to predict as the situation is constantly changing. The University has made a decision to reintroduce the online Pearson Versant test (in conjunction with a UoM test administered by the ULC), so that might reduce the China IELTS risk.

Thanks to Lauren Davis and Michael Atherton for their help preparing the data for this report, as well as all the support from them and the rest of the Admissions Office throughout the cycle.

Rhian Jones, Admissions Tutor

6. Employability Update

External Advisory Board update

The last update I have is from 2 weeks ago. All people on the list have been contacted, and Ian was just waiting for a couple of people to respond. Some interest was expressed but nothing had been finalised yet. Ian is currently out on fieldwork, but I should be able to get a further update when he returns next week.

Luis

7. T&L Update

Discipline head of education (DHoE) report for DLT meeting May 2022

Semester 2 exams. Semester 2 exams have almost finished and the first year fieldtrip went well (see report below). Thanks to all involved to make this such a success. To date we have had a few incidences with the exams, including missing information related to the use of calculators on the front page, but these all have been dealt with. The staggered submissions of exam as was done in semester 1 is working. Please make sure you stick to the deadlines given and return the marked work on time. Regular weekly meetings have been set up that brings together PS (Francesca Moss, Eleanor Hough and Naomi Burke) and academic colleagues (Julian, Steve CC and Bart), involved with the exams and mitigating circumstances process to discuss and iron out any issues we come across during the exam period.

Important dates:

- 17-Jun   Final exam marking deadline
- 21-Jun   Moderation & Stats Board
- 23-Jun   Mitigation Board Part I
- 24-Jun   Mitigation Board Part II
- 27-Jun   External Examiners arrive
- 28-Jun   Internal Exam Board
- 29-Jun   Final Exam & Awards Board
- 01-Jul   Faculty Exam Board
- 01-Jul   Progression moderation Board
- 06 Jul   Progression Board
- 08-Jul   Faculty Exam Board (Progression)
- 21-Jul   Graduation

2nd Semester Unit evaluation questionnaires (UEQs). UEQ responses this semester were (extremely) low with a 14% response rate overall (only eight units with a response >20%) for undergraduate (UG) units and a 23% response rate (10 units > 20%) for postgraduate units. The UG units were the lowest response rates we received for many years. This makes them less efficient to use in teaching evaluation, preparation for the National Student Survey etc. In addition, the UEQs often contain errors

including missing academics etc. further complicating the situation. Considering the limited control over these, we are considering introducing 'end of year' evaluation forms that we would like students to complete. This would allow students to reflect on their whole student experience that year and (hopefully) will give us some useful information. We will discuss this during the next teaching and learning meeting.

First year fieldtrip and evaluation meeting. 119 students and 9 staff went away on a 3 day residential trip based at the Conway Field Centre on Anglesey. The trip ran from Friday to Monday, as this was the only time available for accommodation for such a large group. The working day was based around specific activities so all students were actively participating (no chalk and talk), building on from the practical skills leant back in Manchester and on their previous day trips to Alderley Edge and Castleton (Mam Tor). The group travelled during these days, using three 50-seater coaches, as one large group and Mandy arranged special permission to enter the localities (Cwm Idwal, Parys Mountain, Traeth Llanddwyn) with such big groups. We have made good contacts and received helpful advice from Natural Resources Wales and the National Trust. This trip was not directly assessed, but participation and engagement amongst the students were high. Removing the assessment that normally takes place at the end of a fieldtrip aimed to reduce the stress of being away in the field for the first time. It was emphasised that the experiences on the fieldtrip would help them with their practical skills – which were assessed by exam back in Manchester as part of EART11300 Practical and Professional Skills.

All agree the group size was simply too large to manage logistically. We were lucky this year as we found accommodation but this is a risk going forward. Moreover, the number of coaches and numbers of students mean that crowd management is an issue/risk at single locations, which affects the quality and smooth delivery of the teaching/learning experience. More staffing would not improve this root issue. Building and maintaining a sense of community in such a large group is also very hard work and involves a lot of staff effort.

For next year we are hoping to have close to 140 students, which makes it unmanageable .The group must be split to manage logistics, derisk, and improve delivery of learning. How we could spilt the 1st year cohort (including pros and cons) are currently being considered. Options include:

- Split cohort in half (arbitrarily using for instance the already assigned practical groups) and maintain (but rotate) location/activities. This could include 2 accommodation sites, but with staff and students split into 2 groups, each doing the same activities but in rotation (groups in different places at different times). Pros: More manageable group sizes. Every student does the same thing but in rotation – i.e. common experience for all. Staff repeat activities at one location. Cons: Some students may want more degree-programme-specific activities (despite our philosophy of a common first year). Would require planning on how to rotate activities and staff them.
- Split group by degree programme and maintain (but rotate) location/activities. This could also include 2 accommodation sites, but with staff and students split into 2 groups (not necessarily equally sized) divided by programme choice, with each student doing the same activities but in rotation. Pros: More manageable group sizes. Every student does the same thing in rotation. Cons: Unequal group numbers. Requires students to have chosen a programme well in advance of the field trip (to have booking numbers for accommodation). Some students may

want more degree-programme-specific activities (despite the philosophy of a common first year).

- Split group by degree programme and run separate fieldtrip plan for each programme. This would require a new fieldtrip to be developed to suit each degree programme, and (possibly) a change to some activities on the current trip to compensate. Pros: More manageable group sizes. Students do programme-specific teaching. Cons: Staff workload – new field trip would need to be planned. Unequal group numbers (by programme). Requires students to have chosen a programme well in advance of the field trip (to have booking numbers for accommodation). Counter to the philosophy of a common first year (no common experience) and prescribes programme choice by this point (changes to programme thereafter, while typically only a few students, would mean divergence from the commonality of the first year).

To discuss this and other first year related issues, we will organise a series of meetings on the 7th of July. Invitations for these meetings will be send out soon.

4th year External Examiner (MEarthSci/MEnvSci). Considering that it takes some time for the appointment process to go through, we have started the process for appointing a new external examiner for the new MEarthSci and MEnvSci programmes. The names that so far have been listed are Clare Corkhill (Sheffield), Charlotte Jefferies (Liverpool), Clare Bond (Aberdeen), Janine Kavanagh (Liverpool), Ian Wood (UCL) and Richard Butler (Birmingham) and Clare Bond (Aberdeen). We are open to other suggestions but would like to start approaching candidates soon. Please remember that there is a push to ask female candidates first.

Timetabling code of Practice. Please find below the latest version of the 'Timetable Policy and Code of Practice' document. The current version already incorporate changes requested by Senate and the University and College Union and have also been approved by the timetable project board. Steve Pettifer has requested further consultation on the documentation – doing something fundamentally or philosophically different isn't really an option, and much of the policy already reflects changes in place via the student experience programme (SEP). Suggestions for improvements or identification of flaws etc are however very welcome. Any thoughts or comments should be send to me and I will make sure they get into the faculty feedback document. The faculty has to submit the comments/suggestions by the end of July latest but I have set the deadline for comments to be send to me at the 15th of July. An email related to this will be send to all academics soon.

Timetabling Code of Practice

1. Introduction

1.1. This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the University's Timetabling Policy.

1.2. In the case of a discrepancy between the policy and this Code of Practice, the Policy takes precedence.

1.3. Changes to this Code of Practice must be approved by the Vice President for Teaching, Learning and Students.

2. Teaching Availability Arrangements

2.1. The Teaching Availability Arrangement process provides a mechanism for a member of staff to request not to be timetabled to teach at certain times.

2.2. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate approved arrangements.

2.3. Requests for Teaching Availability Arrangements relating to immovable work-related commitments (such as research commitments, clinical duties, and institutional governance) or protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be given a higher priority than other Teaching Availability Arrangement requests.

2.4. The Dean is accountable for the effect of Teaching Availability Arrangements within their Faculty and for balancing the impact of TAAs and Flexible Working Arrangements in co-operation with the other faculties.

2.5. As best practice, acting on behalf of the relevant Dean, Teaching Availability Arrangement requests should be considered by a group comprising Heads of School, the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Officer (Scheduling & Projects), and the Faculty's People & Organisational Development Partner.

2.6. Each Faculty will annually remind staff to submit their requests for Teaching Availability Arrangements for the next academic year. Staff will be given at least <<time period TBC>> notice to prepare and submit their requests.

2.7. Decisions over whether Teaching Availability Arrangement requests are approved will take into account their impact on the timetable through consideration of:

2.7.1. the number of hours of teaching delivered by the requestor;

2.7.2. the overall number of students taking the courses taught by the requestor;

2.7.3. the number and variety of programmes whose students enrol on the courses taught by the requestor;

2.7.4. the availability and demand for the types of teaching space required by courses taught by the requestor.

2.8. Approved Teaching Availability Arrangements are valid for one academic year.

3. Priorities for the use of teaching spaces

3.1. University teaching spaces are a finite resource, and it is therefore essential to prioritise access to locations whose primary use is for teaching and learning.

3.2. There are other spaces used for teaching and learning which have different primary uses (e.g. research laboratories or staff offices). Such locations do not need to follow the priority list outlined below.

3.3. Prioritising access to spaces will mean that certain types of booking must wait for other processes to be completed before they can confirm room bookings.

3.4. Where a space's *primary* use is for teaching and learning, the following priority list will be followed when allocating space:

3.4.1. University examinations for credit bearing course units.

3.4.2. Teaching activities for credit bearing course units.

3.4.3. University open days and visit days.

3.4.4. Student bookings for study and/or watching online course materials.

3.4.5. Student society bookings.

3.4.6. Meetings involving university staff.

3.4.7. Conferences.

3.5. The following special exemptions are made in relation to the previous list:

3.5.1. During university welcome week (the week before the first week of teaching in semester 1), welcome week bookings have priority over all other activities.

3.5.2. During the main university examination periods, examinations have priority over all other activities.

3.5.3. During university vacation periods, locations agreed between the Central Teaching Spaces, University Scheduling, and Hospitality & Events teams will be prioritised for conferences and special events.

4. Timetable constraints

4.1. The timetable attempts to balance the needs of a diverse university community, and it is inevitable that schedules which are desirable to some individuals will not be desirable to others.

4.2. The timetable is scheduled to meet the hard constraints of the university – for example, avoiding clashes and ensuring individuals have sufficient travel time to move between locations.

4.3. The timetable is scheduled to maximise the soft constraints of the university – these are the design principles which we would like the timetable to reflect where possible, although this might not always be possible.

4.4. The soft constraints which will be maximised are as follows, listed in order of priority:

4.4.1. <<this section will be updated following the university wide survey to find out what staff and students value and want to prioritise in their timetables.>>

4.5. Reasonable adjustments from the University's Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) and any reasonable adjustments relating to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will take priority over other soft constraints on the timetable.

4.6. Programmes that offer students a variety of course unit enrolment choices may find that students enrol on combinations of course units that were not optimised at the timetable design stage. Students who make such choices may request that the timetable is adjusted to improve their experience but there is no guarantee that this will be possible.

5. Attendance Expectations

5.1. All Schools must make students aware of the attendance expectations and requirements of their courses.

5.2. As outlined in the Timetabling Policy, all timetabled activities must be categorised in line with their requirements for student attendance as *compulsory*, *expected*, or *optional*.

5.3. Where attendance requirements are not otherwise defined, *expected* will be the default.

5.4. *Compulsory* attendance means that all students on the course unit must attend the activity and attendance will normally be recorded at these activities.

5.5. *Expected* attendance means that students are advised to attend the activity, but students will not be penalised for failure to do so. Attendance may or may not be recorded at these activities.

5.6. *Optional* attendance means that students may attend the session if they wish to do so. Non-attendance will not be penalised, and attendance will not normally be recorded for the session.

6. Exceptions to the scope of the timetabling policy

6.1. The following areas are out of scope of the university's Timetabling Policy:

6.1.1. The Global MBA Programme within Alliance Manchester Business School.

6.1.2. Teaching spaces located within the Executive Education Centre building.

8. PGR Update

Admissions and recruitment:

Latest admissions data: we have so far received 262 applications (61 H, 201 OS), which have converted into 62 offers (17 H, 45 OS), and 45 accepts (11 H, 34 OS).

Three candidates (out of nine nominations) were put forward for the second round of the Dean's Doctoral Scholarships and will be interviewed over the next week. All five candidates who applied for the PGR Teaching Associate Scholarships were submitted to the Faculty panel. Interviews for these will take place during the start of July.

A Faculty Task and Finish Group has been established to develop standardised processes for interviewing and selection of PGR students to support improved EDIA. The group will capture current best practice that could be deployed Faculty-wide, and continue the development of an online system to support the processes. It is anticipated that the developed processes will be piloted in two departments, one in each School, during the 22/23 academic year and rolled out Faculty-wide the following year.

Funded studentship number forecast for 2023 and 2024:

Forecasts from Faculty for existing funded schemes available to EES (excluding EPSRC CDTs and BBSRC DTP, and various dual-award schemes):

EPSRC DTP: 1 for EES per year (with opportunity for 2 via 50% match funding)

School Scholarships: 6 (across SNS; aspirational target is to recruit 12 via 50% matched funding)

Faculty Dean's Awards: 40 (across SNS and SoE). Suggested that EES could put forward up to 16 applications (8 nominations per call).

PGR Teaching Associate Scholarships: Approximately 20 (across SNS and SoE)

President's Doctoral Scholarships: 3 or 4 (across SNS and SoE)

Melbourne Dual Awards: 3-6 (across SNS and SoE)

Singapore A*STAR: 5-12 (across SNS and SoE)

Chinese Scholarship Council: 42 (across SNS and SoE)

Jon Pittman

9. Research Update

DHoR Report June 2022; 7/6/22 Gordon McFiggans

REF: the results were officially released on 12th May. Excellent UoA7 results across the whole return; overall grading and every individual element improved since REF 2014 with consequent improvement in our ranking. Summary presented to the Department - we are the "most improved" UoA in FSE in terms of our ranking. Congratulations to all. Comms being centrally coordinated, along with dissemination of all 37 FSE publically available Impact cases and simultaneous preparation of THE return. FSE thankyou dinner on 20th July.

NERC calls: Pushing the Frontiers – DM applies, submission 19th July; All 6 from DEES in this current NERC round – far too low. Exploring the Frontiers – notification of intent was 10th May for 14th June submission; internal peer-review only, but no panel; 11 from DEES.

Research Applications: Email sent to LMs to "encourage" the fulfillment of the individual applications targets from the research expectations to be met, rebalancing the previous 3-year focus on teaching. Discussed at Research Committee where it was stressed that messaging must be right to ensure staff didn't simply feel pressure switching from one aspect of performance to another and that it was being positively encouraged through whatever measures can be taken at small group, research group and Departmental levels. Ongoing discussion with RGLs to be continued along with the necessary coordination with LMs.

UKRI news:

NERC Digital Strategy published (with Input from Dave Topping & Richard Kingston from UoM) and circulated to Department.

UKRI / NERC intel. (from Hugh):

1) NERC budget changes: -£3M in 2022/23, +£7M in 2023/24 and +£11M in

2024/25. Overall this amounts to approximately +11% in 3 years.

2) PhDs and Fellowships to move from individual research councils to UKRI. However the individual councils will contribute to have a role in deciding the allocation.

3) NERC will need to decide how to respond in terms of the proportions of its budgets under Discovery, Strategic and National Capability. There will be a paper to Council in June.

4) National Capability is likely to receive and approx £8M increase overall through the spending period

5) NERC do not plan to change Discovery Science again, given recent increases. Therefore the biggest part of the SR increase will be for Strategic Science. After a small dip in 2022/23, Strategic Science will see a rapid increase.

6) The Strategic Priorities Fund will end. Instead, there will be UKRI Strategic Themes which will be reflected in individual Council budgets (on top of the numbers above). These include "Building a Green Future (£185M)", the biggest part of which will go to NERC and a Technologies theme. The implication of this is that NERC will need to get better at leading and implementing cross-council programmes.

7) Horizon Europe. It becomes increasingly likely that the UK will not be included and will implement a domestic alternative. This is unlikely to mirror Horizon and will not therefore be a mechanism for UK projects

to parallel Horizon ones. It could mean a sudden increase - £1.5B – in the UKRI budget. Part of this could go to boost the themes above. Administering this will have a big impact on UKRI workload. Implementation during this SR period could be transitional. It is likely that part of the fund will be dedicated to large experiments.

8) Copernicus. Expected that the future is similar to Horizon. However Defra will administer.

Departmental Seminars

New programme suggestion rolled out by David Neave: 2 per research group per annum, with budget

PS Research Processes

Signposting document circulated by Cassy – many thanks. To be uploaded as a living document.

Research Finance

Problems recognised throughout UoM and working group established to consult on proposed remedy. First meeting 25/5/22 – lots of positive plans to address both medium term structural needs and short-term firefighting, with e.g. named RF contacts for projects and reinstatement of grant review meetings. The "soft" rollout of initial changes is the beginning of July, with an official rollout 4th August.

Faculty Research Awayday

Next one in planning. Need to come up with any "big ideas" to put to University SLT – if we don't others will. For example, could capitalise on the UKRI "Green Future" theme.

Technical

Alison sent around Technical Services team (https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/fse/faculty-support-services/technical-services/) and Infrastructures & Facilities (I&F) contact (FSE I&F contact and submission page) links in March. No more recent update provided.

Concern expressed around the thin-section quality and cost – being taken up via the respective Infrastructures lead in Tech team. Discussed in Research Committee.

10. EDIA

Feedback from School EDIA:

Training – most of this is in progress and will be publicised (hopefully) next week.

Promotions working party – we have a commitment to set this up. Need to report back in September if this has been set up.

Parental leave/support for returning parents – T&F group is to be set up at faculty level. Need to report back when this is done.

PGR recruitment – there is a faculty T&F group looking at learning best practice and agreeing a common way of working. Nothing to report on this yet.

Stories from Alumni – Can we use these to help with recruitment? How do we go about gathering stories. What do we want to do in this regard? Potentially the Uni alumni team (DDAR?) are willing to support this. They will contact people and potentially could interview them but could not process interviews to final videos or blogs. Examples they gave from our faculty: https://www.mub.eps.manchester.ac.uk/sees/category/the-next-step/ https://video.manchester.ac.uk/embedded/ffffffff-fc5f-394c-0000-0177ab7f9080.

Monthly cross-school EDIA 'discussion events (coffee mornings? Lunches?) across the University have been suggested. Is there support for this?

11. IT Report

-- There have been a number of reports that students have struggled computing power for their projects this year using the clusters in 2.45. RJG and BVD have discussed briefly, and are of the opinion that the second floor cluster with more powerful computers that was traditionally set aside for Pet Eng undergrads should be opened up to all EES degrees for students whose projects require better computers. If there are no objections, RJG will liaise with Kofi and Emma to figure out any implications, and how best to achieve the access required.

-- We now have an energy transition research subtheme that has been added to the EES website, with thanks to Kevin Taylor who has taken ownership of this

-- I note that Dave T is leading a charge in IT for special interest and users groups to help people communicate within these areas - The Computation and Data in Research community (CaDiR) is open to all, and RJG is planning to approach EES academics in relevant fields to highlight the opportunities the special interest groups present.