



Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences

Department Leadership Team Meeting

Minutes

Date: Wednesday 9th November 2022, 2pm

Online Meeting

Part 1 Attendees;

Mike Burton (Head of Department)
Ann Webb (Deputy Head of Department)
Helena Gittins (Deputy School Operations Manager)
Mandy Edwards (Discipline Head of Education)
Cathy Hollis (Discipline Head of Research)
David Polya (Line Manager)
Mads Huuse (Line Manager)
Scott Heath (Line Manager)
David Topping (Line Manager)
David Schultz (Line Manager)
Jon Pittman (PGR director)
Rhodri Jerrett (Admissions)
Luis Garcia-Carreras (Employability)
Carl Jackson (PS Safety)
Rob Gardham (PS PA)
Romain Tartese (Forum Chair)
Russell Garwood (IT Director)
Sophie Nixon (Chair of EDIA Committee)

Apologies; None.

Summary Actions

Rolled over:

ACTION – Handover with new Fieldtrip Coordinator once appointed with Rhodri/Carl/Mike/Mandy – to ensure transfer of knowledge (RJ/CJ/MB/ME)

ACTION – Ensure all risk assessments on field trips are included in ILO activity (new FTC/PGDirs)

New:

ACTION: Rearrange DLT/T&L Committee/Offer Holder Day on 14 December (ME/RJG)

ACTION: Distribute organogram slides for tech review to staff (MB)

Matters Arising

The minutes from the previous meeting were confirmed.

HoD Introduction and report

Mike Burton (MB)

The FCM is working, with some issues having being resolved. Outreach activities can be recorded by submitting to the Outreach Committee for approval.

Discussion is ongoing about separating Widening Participation into a separate Committee, potentially creating a new Chair role.

The deadline for sabbaticals is 11th November.

The distance learning version of MPEC has NPP1 approval.

Reports – please refer to grouped report handout

Recruitment & Admissions Update

Rhodri Jerrett (RJ)

Report submitted

Recruitment on UG looks around the same as last year for this point, except ratio of overseas students to Home students is slightly larger. There is a 50/50 split between Earth/Environmental. MPEC applications are slightly up and Petroleum & Sustainable Geoscience MScs are 3x up.

ACTION: Rearrange DLT/T&L Committee/Offer Holder Day on 14 December (ME/RJG)

Employability Update

Luis Garcia-Carreras (LGC)

The first meeting of the External Advisory Board is being set up, currently suggested for the end of November/beginning of December.

Teaching and Learning

Mandy Edwards (ME)

Report submitted

A request from SSLC was to use subtitles in lectures to assist with learning technical language. RT pointed out that the auto-feature might not pick up technical language in this way and crib sheets were suggested as an alternative.

PGR Report

Jon Pittman (JP)

Report submitted

Please see report for further details.

Director of Research

Cathy Hollis (CH)

Report submitted

CH reported that whilst PPMS is being rolled out effectively for big pieces of equipment, LabCup is being explored as the place for everything including smaller items. Lisa Jameson is investigating and is linked with the tech review.

LabCup is a single point of reference of all University equipment with names of owners/leads, but is not a booking system.

EDIA

Sophie Nixon (SN)

MB introduced Sophie Nixon as the new EDIA Chair.

IT Report

Russell Garwood (RG)

RG highlighted that the route to IT procurement has improved massively over the last few months with many problems ameliorated. RG requested staff to inform him of any further/ongoing issues.

It was recommended to use the correct keywords when using findaphd, as biologically-bent EES courses tend to appear at the bottom of the search if not categorised carefully.

PS Update

ACTION: Distribute organogram slides for tech review to staff (MB)

Carl Jackson (CJ)

CJ requested line managers to share details of Earth inductions/COSHH training/DSE training with their staff.

Helena Gittins (HG)

There is a new Sharepoint site for Natural Sciences and the link will be in Ops staff email signatures.

The School is looking to arrange active bystander training for everybody. It was suggested to include this in the Away Day.

AOB

None.

Date of Next Meeting

TBC.

DLT Grouped Reports November 2022

5. Recruitment and Admissions

2023 Recruitment and Admissions:

Open Days:

University open day was held on the 1st and 15th October. From the department perspective, displays were held in the student study room, and were well attended by staff from the department, and prospective students. Two one hour talks delivered by M B and Rhodri J was attended collectively by around 200-250 people on the 1st October. On the 15th October numbers were markedly, down, and number of attendees at the talks was more like 100.

Cecilia and Joe P have successfully recruited student ambassadors to make up for those lost through graduation.

A reminder that dates for further open days are 17/06/2023, 24/06/23, 20/09/23 and 14/10/23 for 2024 intake and 22/06/24, 29/06/24, 28/09/24 and 12/10/24 for 2025 intake.

Offer-holder days:

The first offer holder day of the 2023 intake has been confirmed for 14th December (Wednesday afternoon). Mike A and myself will now need to contact offer holders to attend.

The format of the offer holder days will be, in the first instance, as last year (appended). However, "Basalts with Mandy and Alison" will be replaced with "Dinosaurs with Phil M". We received some feedback from last year's sessions which Mike B, Mike A and myself will review to tweak the schedule and content.

Further offer holder days will take place in March-April.

UCAS interviews:

Reminder that interviews have been discontinued (at least for one year).

Explore Your Planet:

Katherine Harrison is leading on the EYP programme for the coming academic year. This is 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 is scheduled for the 9th November (date of this DLT). I will report on this event in the December meeting.

Other recruitment: Joe Phelan and Jasmine Barrow are ongoing in their organising a pre-application lecture series set to showcase the role our subjects have in crafting a more sustainable future. It would be useful if staff from our department could deliver one of these at least. Joe and I are contacting potential staff to gauge interest. I will report on this in the December meeting.

Rhodri Jerrett, EES Admissions Tutor

Appendix

Plan for Offer Holder Days from march 2022

OFFER HOLDER OPEN DAYS MARCH AND MAY 2022

Schedule

- 12:00 – 12:30 *Arrival and Registration (all)*
- 12:30 – 12:45 *Welcome Talk (all) G.03*
- *Split into two groups*
 - 12:45 – 15:00 *Taster Sessions set around Williamson/campus tour (offer holders)*
 - 12:45 – 13.45 *Talk with accommodation, followed by 13.45 – 14.30 – tour to MECD (parents)*
- 15:00 – 15:45 *Q+As with Tea and Coffee (all)*

Parents (16th March)

12:45 – 13:00 Break into groups in G.03

13:00 – 14:00 Introduction to Earth and Environmental Science Degrees – Rhian

Accommodation – Paul Burns

14:00 – 14:30 Split into 2 groups for tour of campus – Rhian and Mike Burton

14:30 – 15:45 Tea and Coffee

Students (16th March)

12:45 – 13:00 Break into groups in G.03

Group 1:

13:00 – 13:30 Clouds, G.16, Paul Connolly

13:30 – 14:00 Tour of Williamson

14:00 – 14:30 Basalts, G.45, Mandy Edwards and Alison Pawley

14:30 – 15:00 Tour of Campus

Group 2:

13:00 – 13:30 Basalts, G.45, Mandy Edwards and Alison Pawley
13:30 – 14:00 Clouds, G.16, Paul Connolly
14:00 – 14:30 Tour of Williamson
14:30 – 15:00 Tour of Campus

Group 3:

13:00 – 13:30 Tour of Williamson
13:30 – 14:00 Basalts, G.45, Mandy Edwards and Alison Pawley
14:00 – 14:30 Clouds, G.16, Paul Connolly
14:30 – 15:00 Tour of Campus

7. T&L Update

Discipline Head of Education Report for DLT November 2022

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meeting

Our first meeting for the academic year 22/23 was held on the 26th October and was well attended with student reps from both programmes and all years as well as PGT reps from MPEC and Geoscience. The meeting splits into smaller groups so that specific matters can be discussed. The minutes are in preparation and will be disseminated to all students and staff. Overall feedback from the students was positive. A couple of concerns are the use of technical language in lectures, this was raised by both the PGTs and the 1st years. A suggestion is that subtitles could be added to presentations and videos. I see that this was also raised last year. The students also asked for the doors out to Brunswick Park to be open again during the day. We are following this up with Estates.

Teaching and Learning Committee meeting

MPEC DL programme specification – the programme level ILOS were modified following feedback from the Faculty and have now been accepted. The New Programme Proposal (NPP1) documentation has been approved and the development of the course materials is progressing well. The programme can now be advertised as subject to approval. As the planned launch date is Academic Year 23-24, the full design for the programme has to be submitted for Faculty approval by the end of February 2023.

School of Natural Sciences Teaching Learning and Student Experience Committee (SoNS STLSEC) meeting

SLATE is a new curriculum and content management system across the Faculty due to go live before the beginning of January 2023. This system will replace the CUIP system we currently use and will capture the links between ILOs, teaching and learning processes, assessment, and feedback. It has an ILO checker built in and individual ILOs are separated out for each unit. It will also keep track of the hours associated with each teaching activity for the student. DHoEs for each discipline are checking the new system now.

Professional Services (PS) resource issues: Currently the School has a recruitment shortage of 13.6 FTE from the agreed structure. Recruitment is taking place but there is still expected to be a shortfall in the number of people recruited to posts. This may mean that the next stage of the Student Experience Programme (SEP) does not go live in January. The PS team are very aware of the impact this might have on semester 1 exams and they are working hard to mitigate. There are issues relating to the retention of staff, and now the jobs advertised are permanent and not short term contracts. If staff are concerned about any issues, then they are asked to contact Steve Olivier or Lorna Dawson directly

Assessment feedback and student voice: The Board of Governors have directed each Faculty to address the issues of assessment and feedback and the student voice from the questions in the NSS survey. Each DHoE needs to produce and deliver an action plan for their discipline to address this with the intention of improving the overall experience for our students and therefore the results of the NSS scores. The individual disciplines will work with the other disciplines within the School to implement this.

8. PGR Update

PGR report Nov 2022 – Jon Pittman

Admissions and recruitment:

The final numbers for Sept/Oct 22 starters who arrived and registered in the department was 41 (30 funded PGRs, 11 self-funded PGRs). There are a couple of PGRs who are still delayed due to ATAS and visa issues who may be able to start in November or otherwise will need to defer. We are currently expecting 8 PGRs in January and so far 1 in July, although this July starter number will increase when the department studentships that are now advertised are allocated.

We have started collating data for 2023 entry (which includes January to September intakes). We currently have 73 applications (13 Home/60 OS), of which 9 offers have been made.

The call for the 2023 Chinese Scholarship Council nominations is now live. The deadline for candidate to submit application is Mon 14 January. There will then be an internal deadline of Fri 27 January for supervisors to put forward nominations and then these will be checked and selected if necessary to put forward up to 6 nominations to Faculty by Tue 7 February. The same strict eligibility requirements are in place (candidates must be Chinese citizens and residents but overseas Chinese students may be eligible, must have studied at one of the specified universities for at least one of

their degrees – this year does not include UoM, must have publications) as in previous years. Call details have been sent out to all staff.

Applications are also now open for the President's Doctoral Scholarship, Dean's Doctoral Scholarship and PGRTA funding schemes for 2023 entry. Nomination details and guidelines will be sent to staff shortly.

The Faculty PGR studentship funding page has been updated, which includes PDS, Dean's, PGRTA and the new School of Natural Sciences Diversity award, which - for the first time – now have similar application cycles. Website is: <https://www.se.manchester.ac.uk/phds-science-engineering/funding/>

Registration are now open to the Faculty PGR open day on Wed 16 November, which will include an EES presentation and opportunity to discuss with representatives from research groups in Williamson 2.22 from 3pm. All current MSc students and final year UG students have been informed.

NERC DTP1:

The NERC DTP1 training grant formally ended on 31 October 2022 although we have processed a no-cost extension until 30 June 2023 to allow for a small number of students who were granted extensions beyond the end of October (these are three University of Liverpool students). All other NERC DTP students have now either completed, submitted or are in their last few months of submission pending time. The quality of our NERC DTP students has been fantastic, resulting in excellent outputs and training/professional development opportunities, with the majority already gaining or have started jobs in academic or industry. We are collating the details of all NERC DTP student outcomes and achievements, which can also be used to build a supporting narrative for the future DTP bid in 2024.

Doctoral academy and PGR structure:

The first phase of the Faculty Doctoral Academy will begin on 1 January 2023 with existing PGR PS staff beginning their new roles. The FSE DA (and PS staff) will be based in 4th Floor, Core 4, Engineering Building A. To cover current gaps until current vacancies are filled there is sharing of workload across teams and appointment of temporary staff. The details of how staff and students can contact appropriate PS teams will be communicated in due course but for now Claire Erskine remains the current point of contact for PGR administration matters.

Issues with PGR stipends:

Issues regarding delayed stipend payments had been raised with various university teams and discussed at MDCSG. A new finance system is being launched in 2023 and the potential impact these might have for PGR teams / stipend payments is also being examined.

Jon Pittman

9. Research Update

Departmental Head of Research

1. The call for Pushing the Frontiers is open; deadline is 4pm on 17th Jan 2023. Anyone who will submit with UoM as lead institution must submit a full proposal via Cassy by 11th November. Feedback will be provided by 2nd December.

2. We had some success in the July Pushing the Frontiers round, with awards to Laura Richards and Paul Connolly. Currently applications remain below 2020/21 and 21/2022 levels, though awards for 2022/23 financial year (August and September data only) are above the same time in 2020/21.
3. I met with Alex Nielsen from UoM Innovation Factory to discuss potential future engagement with staff in DEES. UoM Innovation Factory assist with commercialisation of research conducted at UoM and have a call out for Impact Acceleration Awards to help find industrial partners for research spin-out. They are currently interested in projects that fall under the following areas: Climate Emergency Solutions; An Interconnected World and Healthy Futures. Alex has offered to come to talk to DEES at a time that suits us, either all together or by research group.
4. The call for proposals for DEES PhD studentships was sent to 15 pre-selected staff, chosen by RGLs to represent staff who were ECRs and/or had a limited track record of PhD supervision. Submitted proposals are now advertised on the DEES website and FindaPhD.com with interviews in January. The four studentships will be awarded to the best shortlisted candidates following the interview day.
5. I had a preliminary discussion with Russell Garwood last week about how we might upgrade the research pages of our website. I have asked Russell to come along to the next Research Committee meeting (30th Nov) so we can think about the next steps we want to take with this.

11. IT Report

- We have organised two talks about various parts of research infrastructure coming up for EES staff - one will provide an overview of the research data storage and dissemination facilities available to us, and the other research computing infrastructure to which all EES faculty have access - we hope this will aid EES staff in taking advantage of the tools that are already available to them.
- New researcher profiles are launching in the near future, and this will provide a good opportunity for faculty to check and update if required, their web presence
- Arising from the staff student liaison were a number of issues regarding the software required for some courses, and availability of 2.45 - these were fixed within 48 hours by installing the software on additional machines in the student study, and reporting the other issues to ITS.
- A number of pages on the website have been updated, including staff page and the STFC DTP. As ever, if something needs updating please let RJG know.

12. Technical Review update

Technical Review

Formal implementation date for the Technical Review Cohort 3 was the 1st November. All technical staff have now moved into the new structure and the new job descriptions adopted for those who were in scope of the technical review. Over the coming months staff who were deemed 'out of scope' will incorporate the new job title taxonomy and have job descriptions updated to align them with our new standardised version.

Faculty Workshops

Following a workshop stakeholder engagement session with DEES in June 2022, we successfully made a case to increase our workshop team in Schuster Workshop with the addition of a Technical Specialist (Workshops). Hugh Coe was on the recruitment panel along with Stuart McIntyre. Andrew Tucker was the successful applicant. Along with workshop based activities, Andy's new role will also see him working closely departments / academic staff to help manage and execute important research projects (e.g. reputational and financial), which require access to workshop provision. We will now work to backfill Andy's previous role within the Schuster Workshop team.

EPMA

Jon Fellowes reports that the probe is working (fingers crossed, touch wood, etc.). Jon is working through a large backlog. Alex Lincoln is now in his new post and will have more time available to support Lewis with DEES SEM training requests, which will in turn allow Lewis to spend more time with Jon on the probe (upskilling, provision of cover for Jon). Michael Faulkner is Alex' new line manager.

Ecology

Lisa Jameson and Faculty Estates have a meeting with some key ecology stakeholders to discuss the potential for a move to George Begg. The first step is to look at the number of staff, students and all associated equipment. This is still in its very early stages of appraisal and doubts remain as to its viability. More of an update will be circulated when available.

New Equipment in Williamson

David Neave is getting a new piece of kit - a furnace in a pressure vessel. This will require some serious work to get it into the basement of Williamson and will cause a level of disruption for users in the area. Lisa and Alison are working with Estates to figure out a way forward (literally!).

The Firs – Cost Recovery

Lisa Jameson is working with Giles to look at the best way for recovering costs, especially Oliver Hughes' salary. Oliver is now half a year through a two year contract – Faculty have made it clear that Oliver's contract will only be extended / made permanent if his salary is being recovered from research by that time. Oliver has excelled in his role at The Firs and the grounds look brilliant – a real testament to Oliver's efforts and dedication. The Firs is now very well engaged with other parts of the University e.g. outreach, volunteering, etc. Ultimately the plan is to start charging all users of the site therefore grant applications should contain an appropriate technical contribution towards Oliver salary and any consumables used (if applicable). Giles to communicate this widely to all users/potential users of the site. Lisa will be reaching out to other users of the site e.g. atmospheric, to discuss what arrangement could be put in place for them e.g. a smaller contribution to Oliver's salary for the work he does to maintain and secure the site.

Teaching Technical Team

Next week there will be interviews to appoint a new grade 5 Senior Teaching Technician, who will be working with Veronica. This person will be field trip-focused. When this person is appointed, we will have filled all technical staff posts in EES.

LabCup / Assets Database

There is a big push, being led by Perdita Barran, to get all equipment over £5k on to LabCup. This comes from a need to have a single point of truth for all items in the faculty (and for insurance purposes). Lisa Jameson has been facilitating some technical staff to do this, and it should have also been pushed through the Senior Technical Specialists.

Liquid Nitrogen

The liquid nitrogen tank is being removed from the loading bay. The account with BOC has now been suspended therefore there should be no further LN2 deliveries. Users will now obtain LN2 from Schuster. Users have been made aware. Carl Jackson has been involved in this project to ensure all H&S requirements are met.

(Attached slides below)

FSE Technical Operations – Key Contacts for DEES	
Head of Technical Operations (School of Natural Sciences) Kevin Jackson	Head of Technical Operations (Institutes) Chris Muryn
Faculty Infrastructure & Facilities (see slide 3 for more detail) Alison Senigova - Technical Operation Manager (I&F) Phil Oakes – Technical Buildings Manager	Teaching Martin Coram - Technical Operation Manager (Faculty Teaching) Veronica Buckingham-Bostock – Teaching Technical Specialist (DEES Teaching) Vacancy – Senior Technician (DEES Teaching)
Faculty Computing, Robotics and AI Christopher Page - Technical Operation Manager (Faculty Computing, Robotics & AI) Kofi Owusu – Senior Technical Specialist (Digital Systems Architect) Emma Finch – Senior Technical Specialist (Digital Systems Architect)	Earth Platform Lisa Jameson – Technical Operations Manager (Research) Michael Flynn – Senior Technical Specialist (Atmospherics) Lee Paul – Technical Specialist (Rock Deformation) Jordan Gaskell – Senior Technician (Earth Support)*+ Deryn Shaw – Assistant Technician (Bio-Geo)*
Faculty Workshops Stuart McIntyre – Technical Operation Manager (Faculty Workshops) Stephen Mottley – Technical Manager (Electronics Workshop) Darren Shepherd – Technical Manager (Schuster Workshop) Alan Hindley – Technical Manager (MECD Workshop) Andrew Tucker – Technical Specialist (Workshops) David Oliver – Technical Specialist (Thin Sections) Paul English – Technical Specialist (Welding) David Marshall – Technical Specialist (Glassblowing)	Physical & Elemental Characterisation Platform Ilya Strashnov – Senior Technical Specialist (Physical & Elemental Characterisation) Abby Ragazon-Smith – Technical Specialist (Physical & Elemental Characterisation - MAGU) Roseanna Byrne – Senior Technician (Physical & Elemental Characterisation - MAGU) John Cowpe – Senior Technical Specialist (Physical & Elemental Characterisation – Isotopes) Lydia Fawcett – Technical Specialist (Physical & Elemental Characterisation - Isotopes)
* Circa 0.3 FTE availability to provide further support throughout the Department + Primary contact for the Department's sample preparation laboratory	
Mass Spectrometry & Separations Platform Katherine Hollywood - Senior Technical Specialist (Mass Spectrometry & Separations)	XRD Platform Colin Levy - Senior Technical Specialist (XRD) John Waters – Technical Specialist (XRD)
Nuclear Platform Christopher Muryn – Head of Technical Operations (Institutes) Anthony Stockdale – Technical Specialist (RADAR)	Ecology and Evolution Platform Lisa Jameson – Technical Operations Manager (Research) Debbie Ashworth – Technical Specialist (Soil & Ecosystem Ecology) Ully Kritzler – Technical Specialist (Soil & Field) Oliver Hughes – Technical Manager (Firs Environmental Research Station)
EM Platform Michael Faulkner - Senior Technical Specialist (EM) Jonathan Fellows – Senior Technical Specialist (EPMA) Lewis Hughes – Technical Specialist (EPMA/SEM) Alex Lincoln – Technical Specialist (SEM)	Biochemical & Biophysical Sciences Platform Derran Heyes – Senior Technical Specialist (Biochemical & Biophysical Sciences) Christopher Boothman – Senior Technical Specialist (Geo microbiology)
Lasers, Optical and Electronics Platform Samantha Hardman – Senior Technical Specialist (Lasers, Optical and Electronics)	
Miscellaneous e.g. PPMS, LabCup, TRAC, cost recovery, technical support needed in grants... Lisa Jameson – Technical Operations Manager (Research) John Warren – Technical Operations Manager (Research)	

Other key Faculty contacts for DEES

Faculty Estates & Facilities Management

Michael Billington – Head of Faculty Estates

Faculty Health & Safety

Julia Cheung – Faculty H&S Manager

Infrastructure & Facilities Team – More Info..

The Infrastructure and Facilities team can assist with:

Installation of equipment (hook up to services, estates enabling works)

Compliance testing (Fume hoods, legionella, etc.)

Piped gas systems (Replacement manifolds, servicing, installations)

Gas depletion alarms (Engineer call outs, Servicing and installations)

Electrical testing (Portable/Fixed Appliance Testing)

Fume cupboards (Defects, repairs)

Escalating Unresolved Estates issue

The I&F team also manages the Allianz Statutory inspection programme for the building

Estates and Facilities are responsible for the maintenance of the building fabric and the upkeep of lighting, heating and ventilation systems. These issues should be reported by users directly to the estates helpdesk via the link below by selecting 'New Request'

<https://www.estates.manchester.ac.uk/services/msu/helpdesk/>

Once a job is reported, 2 emails will be received from the helpdesk, firstly, an acknowledgment and then an email which will contain a job number e.g. 6158988, this email should be retained for future reference.

In an emergency, the helpdesk should be called on **0161 275 2424** and out of hours Security should be called on **0161 306 9966**

Infrastructure and Facilities help can be requested in 3 ways:

The QR code can found displayed throughout the building, scan the QR and this will take you to the online form.

The link to the online form can also be at:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=88f5aU5hsUgBivA1n5kad9HGwNXVGZMBCHndzbUT8uM1c15ZTRUFYwUfZ5E1VC1p8MzF5WU7MNYQDQCN0PWw&igcode=true>

The form once submitted will be sent to the listserv that is monitored daily by members of the I&F Team. The Infrastructure and Facilities team can also be reached directly via FSI.inf@manchester.ac.uk