

School of Mathematical Sciences

Seminar organisation and Centres September 2023

This document sets out the proposed system for the running of research seminars under the new Centre-based structure.

Scope

We still intend to run the seminars that are funded independently of Centres. At the moment these are as follows:

- Mathematical Modelling for Biology, Health, and Environment
- School Colloquium
- Staff Mini-Colloquium

This document explains how Centre-specific seminars (to replace the current group seminars) should run.

Choice of seminar series

The essential idea is self-determination: we want each Centre to decide what seminars and seminar series they would like to run. In line with the current seminar provision, we would expect each Centre to have one or two seminars per week during term-time, with fewer at other times. But it is up to each Centre to decide what they would like to do: they might for example have a series that only runs in one semester. The members of the Centre should have a discussion well before the academic year starts to decide what they would like to do, so that speakers can be invited.

Seminar organisers should still try as far as possible to maintain a balance of speakers (in terms of gender, career stage etc).

Room booking

Once the Centre has agreed (at least for the coming semester) which seminars to run, the seminar organiser should then make room bookings on the local room booking site (or via timetabling@qmul.ac.uk, for rooms outside SMS). **Note that all seminars supported by the School must be within core hours and finish by 4pm.** The School seminar room (MB-503) is reserved for teaching for some of the week during term time, but set aside for seminars during specific hours. The hours are as follows during teaching weeks only (12 weeks per semester):

Monday to Friday:

- 9am – 12pm is reserved for teaching
- 12pm – 6pm is reserved for research

Please note that outside of teaching weeks the room must be booked via timetabling@qmul.ac.uk and also on the local booking system (<https://roombooking.maths.qmul.ac.uk>) due to the possibility of external events or conferences being booked into this space.

Seminar organisers and workload

It is up to the Centre to choose which member(s) will organise the seminars. The workload can be divided however the Centre wishes, e.g. with joint organisers, or different organisers in different semesters. The HoC is welcome to consult Deputy Head of School (DHoS) for advice on workload captured in the Workload Allocation Model (WAM).

Once seminar organisers have been decided, please let the DHoS know so that it can be credited in the WAM. Of course, circumstances may change during the year, in which case please send

updates. In line with current WAM allocation, seminar organising will be credited at three hours per seminar organised.

Budget

Each Centre will be allocated a fixed seminar budget for the academic year. The HoC is responsible for monitoring the overall seminar budget for the Centre while seminar organisers should oversee the costs for their seminars. Seminar organisers should ensure that costs are kept at a reasonable level and within the [QMUL Expenses Policy](#). As a guide, it is recommended that seminars should *normally* cost up to a maximum of £200 for travel/accommodation and point 5 below must be followed on the provision of post-seminar entertainment. Total expenditure above £300 for any one seminar *must be approved by HoC before the speaker is invited*. HoCs and seminar organisers should ensure compliance with the following:

Speakers' travel and subsistence

1. Reasonable travel (standard class rail fares or low cost flights) will be reimbursed, as well as tube fares to and from QMUL. We expect organisers to bear in mind financial constraints when issuing invitations and to encourage speakers to purchase tickets early to ensure good value.
2. Bookings can be made for necessary overnight stays bearing in mind the recommendations given above.
3. The speaker should complete an expense claim form, have it approved and submit it along with all original receipts by email to maths-travel@qmul.ac.uk
4. If the speaker wishes to make a claim for subsistence to cover the cost of food during their visit it must not exceed the subsistence guidelines below and must be supported by receipts.

Expense Policy 5.2. Claims for teas, coffees and light refreshments that do not accompany breakfast, lunch or dinner are not permissible, however a claim for tea, coffee or a light refreshment in lieu of one of the three meals is permissible. There is a maximum of £30 for the evening meal. Alcoholic drinks accompanying a meal are included within the allowances, as are tips or gratuities.

Expense Policy 5.6. Only actual subsistence costs incurred will be reimbursed. Receipts must be provided for all expenditure claimed.

Seminar Hospitality

5. Pre or post-seminar drinks are not funded but the seminar organiser (or host) may take the external speaker to either lunch or dinner but not both.

A claim can be made for the seminar organiser, the speaker(s) and up to two further members of the School, at a maximum allowance of £50 per person. A VAT receipt for the bill must be obtained, uploaded and attached to the online expense claim form. A list of names and affiliations for all those whose meal is being paid for must be included. If the speaker is taken to lunch, then the University facilities should be used if possible.