

School of Mathematical Sciences School Meeting

Notes and Actions from Meeting held on 28 March 2022

Present: David Arrowsmith (DA), Oscar Bandtlow (OB), Adrian Baule (AB), Christian Beck (CB), Martin Benning (MB), Prajmitra Bhuyan (PB), Ginestra Bianconi (GB), Omer Bobrowski (OB), Dale Breame (DB), Reto Buzano (RB), Ron Chan (RC), Alex Clark - Chair (AC), Katy Clough (KC), Steve Coad (SC) Sarah Condron (SC1), Sebastian Del Bano Rollin (SDBR), Lei Fang (LF), Matt Fayers (MF), Pau Figueras (PF), Alex Fink (AF), Felix Fischer (FF), Claudia Garetto (CG), Alexander Gnedin (AG), Mahdi Godazgar (MG), Jamie Griffin (JG), Arthur Guillaumin (AG), Rosemary Harris (RH), Kieran Hayde (KH), Oliver Jenkinson (OJ), Mark Jerrum (MJ), Robert Johnson (RJ), Rainer Klages (RK), Vito Latora (VL), Matthew Lewis (ML) Silvia Liverani (SL), Megan Liddle (ML1), Anna Maltsev (AM), Charalampos Markakis (CM), Hugo Maruri-Aguilar (HMA), Jade Mills (JM), John Moriarty (JM1), Ian Morris (IM), Huy The Nguyen (HN), Biplab Paul (BP), Elisa Piccaro (EP), Thomas Prellberg (TP), Felipe Rincon (FR), Abhishek Saha (AS), Lubna Shaheen (LS), Arick Shao (AS1), Shu Sasaki (SS), Thomas Stead (TS), Ivan Tomasic (IT), Pedro Vergel (PV), Juan Valiente Kroon (JVK), Mark Walters (MW), Linus Wunderlich (LW), Andrea Young (AY), Jo Young (JY)

Apologies: Zain Ahmed Kapadia (ZAK), Boris Khoruzhenko (BK), Michele Levi (ML), Nina Otter (NO), Michael Phillips (MP1), Farasat Shamir (FS), Chris Sutton (CS), Justin Ward (JW)

Secretary: Sarah Condron (SC1)

Minute	Summary of Agreed Actions	Who	When	Progress
20.09.21 - 3.1	Staff with experience in module development or HE in China to contact AC if they are available to help.	All	ASAP	Complete
20.09.21 - 4.2	SB to circulate student enrolment numbers and student preferences for F2F versus virtual teaching	SB	ASAP	Complete
20.09.21 - 6.1	SC to liaise with JM for next meeting agenda.	SC	Next meeting	Ongoing
10.01.22 - 4.1	JY to provide an update on Telephony Consultation in April 2022.	AC	Next meeting	Ongoing

Agenda Item	Reports and Actions	Who	When
1. Apologies & Notes and Actions from	<p>Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zain Ahmed Kapadia • Boris Khoruzhenko 		

<p>the Previous Meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michele Lèvi • Nina Otter • Michael Phillips • Farasat Shamir • Chris Sutton • Justin Ward <p><u>Notes and Actions from the previous meeting:</u></p> <p>20.09.21 – 6.1 SC to liaise with JM to add Impact to the next School Meeting’s agenda.</p> <p>10.01.22 – 4.1 The Unified Communications and Collaboration consultation is ongoing and extended to 31st March 2022. Our telephony service will change, however the timescale is yet to be determined. An update will be provided in due course.</p>	<p>SC</p> <p>JY</p>	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>Next Meeting</p>
<p>2. New Starters and Leavers</p>	<p><u>New Starters:</u> Nicola Perra – Reader in Applied Mathematics – 01.05.22 Viresh Patel – Lecturer in Optimisation – 01.06.22 Melania Nica – Senior Lecturer in Actuarial Science – 01.08.22 Shengwen Wang – Lecturer in Geometric Analysis – 15.08.22 Subhajit Jana – Lecturer in Number Theory – 01.09.22 Kostas Papafitsoros – Lecturer in Mathematical Data Science – 01.09.22 Matteo Iacopini – Lecturer in Statistics - 1 September 2022</p> <p><u>New PDRAs</u> Mohammad Osman – PDRA 01.04.22 – 31.03.2023 Christopher Evans – PDRA 01.04.22 – 30.09.2022 Marco Gramatica – PDRA (EPSRC RA Scheme) 01.04.22 – 30.09.22 Aryan Ghobadi – PDRA (EPSRC RA Scheme) 01.04.22 – 30.09.22</p> <p><u>Leavers</u> William Ng – Student Support Officer – 17.01.22 Gaik Ng – Senior Lecturer in Actuarial Science – 31.01.22 Reto Buzano – Reader in Applied Mathematics – 31.03.22 Diego Millan Berdasco – PDRA (EPSRC RA Scheme) – 31.03.22 Vaibhav Kumar Jena – PDRA (EPSRC RA Scheme) – 13.04.22</p> <p><u>Recruitment</u> Recruitment for the second Coursera-funded post is ongoing. Kostas Papafitsoros has been recruited into the first post, however as there was an exceptionally high calibre of applicants from the first recruitment round, it was decided to substitute the</p>		

	<p>T&S Coursera post to a T&R post to allow us to recruit an additional applicant from this pool. . Interviews will be taking place shortly for a 2-year Teaching Fellow funded by the Coursera project.</p> <p>Following the success of a recent broad Applied Mathematics recruitment campaign where Nicola Perra was recruited to the post of Reader in Applied Mathematics, the next recruitment round will follow a similar process. A composite recruitment campaign is underway (closing date 20 April 2022) where each Head of Research Group (not including Data and Statistics Science) will shortlist the candidates who have been identified to meet the required individual criteria for that particular research group. There will be approximately three, possibly more posts to recruit to. Initial shortlisting will be done at group level, with a final shortlist agreed by the recruitment panel at each level Professor, Reader, Senior Lecturer and Lecturer. Any additional vacancies that may arise will be included in this recruitment round.</p> <p>AC thanked ML and JY for their persistency and efficiency with the recent recruitment rounds.</p> <p><u>Grant Successes</u> Congratulations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ginestra Bianconi - The Alan Turing Institute, Turing-Roche Strategic Partnership – Co-I in Southampton. Total award £240K (£40 for the Co-I) - Alex Shestopaloff – Innovate UK KTP (company is Wine PLC) – Co-I in EECS. Total award £188k (£8k in EECS) 		
<p>3. Head of School Update</p>	<p><u>Office Space</u> Academic office space is now at full capacity. We have 71 single occupancy academic offices and as of September 2022 we will have 80+ academics. AC confirmed that allocation of office space will not be determined solely by seniority and will possibly include the use of the visitor’s room as hotdesks for staff who may share an office. Office space will be allocated to those who currently maximise use of their office.</p> <p><u>Promotions Update</u> The School Promotions Panel met recently, and decisions will be communicated to candidates shortly. The Faculty Panel is due to meet on 10 May 2022.</p> <p><u>Sabbaticals Update</u></p>		

	<p>The Faculty has considered the School's sabbatical requests. Two applications have been approved. As workload starts to balance out and with the additional new appointments, more support may be able to be given to sabbaticals in the longer term.</p> <p>The Faculty Vice Principal is trying to ensure fairness amongst all S&E Schools in relation to sabbaticals. Allocation of workload within the Schools has been difficult but with recruitment now increasing, there is hope that there will be more scope for sabbaticals over the next couple of years.</p> <p><u>Graduation Ceremony</u> The most recent graduation ceremony in January 2022 was reasonably represented by Maths but not as well attended as Faculty had hoped.</p> <p>There will a further graduation ceremony at 5.30pm on 27 April 2022. This is primarily for January 2021 start MSc Applied Data Analytics students but also some PhD students. Staff are encouraged to attend; and AC referred staff to the email from JY on 14th and 22nd March for details.</p> <p><u>Online MSc in Applied Data Analytics</u> Andrea Ward (Project Manager for Coursera) and PS have been progressing well. MB/AG have been working on the first two modules which make up Semester A of the degree.</p> <p>Gideon Shimson (GS) (Associate Principal and Director of QMUL Online) who has overseen distance learning at QMUL will be leaving QMUL shortly. Stephanie Marshall (SM) will be taking on the duties of the distance learning. The project is well developed at this stage therefore there is no cause for concern.</p> <p><u>Flexible Research Funds and Research Enabling Funds</u> There are two different fund associated with research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible Research Funds (FRF) - Research Enabling Funds (REF) <p>The FRF is the current scheme and was launched at the beginning of this financial year. PIs are awarded 20% of the overheads (awarded on an annual basis, to be spent in that financial year). Previously under the REF scheme, PIs were awarded 10%.</p> <p>There are currently fewer studentships funded by the School or Faculty than in previous years and AS has devised a plan to make use of these funds for studentships and other purposes within the School.</p>		
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	<p>AS explained that there is approximately £123k of funds allocated across 19 PIs. PIs have full control on how the funds are spent (within financial regulations) but are often not able to spend the full amount within the financial year, therefore vast amounts are returned to the Faculty unspent.</p> <p>Several colleagues within the School currently have no source of funds for research purposes (for example, publication fees for journals).</p> <p>There is a request for more resource sharing. If PIs become aware of the research needs of others as they arise, there would possibly be funds available to support immediate activities such as travel, but also longer term goals such as funding studentships/conferences and future expenses.</p> <p>Colleagues who identify a need for research funding would be asked to contact EP with details of their request. EP will log the request on a dynamic spreadsheet, containing allocations and budget codes. This spreadsheet will be viewable by REF/FRF holders. An email will be sent via a mailing list and then a decision will be made as to whether the request can be met. There is no obligation to donate funds.</p> <p>In addition, this plan is a possible source for funding studentships. If each PI donates 20% of their REF/FRF allocation for the year, it may support an additional school funded PhD student.</p> <p>WW has given permission for the School to support a studentship next year once commitment is confirmed from PI's to donate 20% of their allocation. WW has also given approval for the School to underwrite the risk of the additional funds required as the Studentship will be longer than the one year of allocated funds.</p>		
<p>4. EDI Update</p>	<p><u>Athena Swan Roadshow: Institutional Application and Gender Impact Plan</u></p> <p>QMUL has a longstanding commitment to tackling gender inequalities having been engaged with the Athena Swan charter since 2005. Athena Swan is a charter mark accreditation run by Advance HE focusing on Gender Equality.</p> <p>QMUL first achieved Silver award in 2016 having achieved the Bronze award in previous years. Applications must be renewed every 5 years. In January 2022, QM submitted the application and</p>		

	<p>was successful in attaining the institutional Athena Swan Silver award. Over the next five years QM will be delivering a Gender Impact Plan which was included as part of the submission for the Athena Swan Silver award.</p> <p>In order to meet the Silver award criteria QMUL had to demonstrate a number of criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a through self-assessment via required qualitative and quantitative data. - Provide a SMART five-year action plan based on the findings of the self-assessment analysis. - Articulate evidence of impact and progress since the previous application in 2016. <p>The self-assessment process took place over two academic years (2019/2020 and 2020/2021). The Gender Equality Action Group (GEAG), chaired by the Vice-Principal PCI, oversaw the application and feeding into the group were four sub working groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic - Professional Services - Data - Culture, policies and procedures <p>There was also an Athena Swan Forum which acted as an informal space for anyone interested in engaging in Athena Swan.</p> <p>Please see attached slides for the self-assessment process: governance structure.</p> <p>The application draws upon an extensive array of quantitative data by gender including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - students by level of study - staff by profile, grade, contract type - staff recruitment - staff promotion and progression - staff appraisal - REF returns - training - parental leave uptake - senior leadership and committees <p>Staff feedback was collated from a number of sources including the 2019 staff survey, the 2021 Athena Swan Survey, the 2021 Parents and Carers Survey and 2021's Carers focus groups.</p>		
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	<p><u>Key Findings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closing gender attainment gap between UG students. - Reducing gender pay gap, and closing the median bonus pay gap in 2020. - Reducing the overrepresentation of women on Fixed Term Contracts. - Increasing the proportion of women at Lecturer lever through to Reader. - Increasing the diversity of leaders at Board level, with more women than ever before. - Promoting a record number of Black and Ethnic Minority women. <p><u>Gender Impact Plan 2022 -2027</u></p> <p>This plan has been developed in accordance with Athena Swan action plan requirements. It includes a combination of current actions and new actions. New actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Piloting Athena Swan in at least two Professional Services Directorates. - Providing bespoke support for carers. - Undertaking intersectional (gender and ethnicity) pay gap reporting. - Building on Schools' good practice of Returners Schemes to support those returning from parental leave (>3 months). - Scoping suitable models for enhancements for parental leave. <p><u>Engaging at Local Level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read and share the executive summary (attached). - Consider how and which aspects of the Gender Impact Plan could be embedded into the School's next Athena Swan application. - Review and update EDI action plans that were submitted to EDISG in June 2021 – are there aspects of the Gender Impact Plan that would be suitable to incorporate? - Individuals are asked to keep personal details updated on MYHR (in the 'Equal Opportunities' tab). <p>As of April 2022, there will be a new EDI Manager. Until then Eleanor McDavis and/or Darren Hunwicks – EDI Officer for S&E remain the primary contacts.</p>		
	<p>The EPSRC Mathematical Sciences Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) 2021-22 had indicative funding for doctoral students to</p>		

<p>5. PhD Studentship Allocation</p>	<p>start in academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. Unfortunately, they are now unable to provide the second instalment of funding for students to start in 22/23.</p> <p>We currently have one School studentship funded by the Minnie Brooke endowment fund, although this cannot be awarded every year. There are also studentships linked to horizon scanning and external funders.</p> <p>The Minnie Brooke studentship has been accepted and initial offers have been made for Horizon Scanning studentships and are still in progress. External funding offers have also now been made and responses are expected in due course.</p> <p>There will be a Faculty annual review of the PhD studentship process taking place shortly.</p>		
<p>6. Any other business</p>	<p>AC confirmed that following a difficult couple of years, next year is looking to result in a more positive and balanced workload with increased use of the Maths Building.</p>		
<p>7. Date of next meeting</p>	<p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 13 June 2022.</p>		