

**School of Mathematical Sciences**  
**School Meeting**

**Notes and Actions from Meeting held on 16 January 2023**

---

Present: Tarek Anous (TA), David Arrowsmith (DA), Oscar Bandtlow (OB), Anthony Baptista (AB), Adrian Baule (AB1), Christian Beck (CB), Hamida Begum (HB), Shabnam Beheshti (SB), Martin Benning (MB), Natasha Blitvic (NB), Omer Bobrowski (OB), Dale Breame (DB), Mary Brown (MB1), Bindiya Chongbang (BC), Alex Clark - Chair (AC), Katy Clough (KC), Steve Coad (SC), Sarah Condron (SC1), Sebastian Del Bano Rollin (SDBR), Lei Fang (LF), Michael Farber (MF), Matt Fayers (MF1), Pau Figueras (PF), Alex Fink (AF), Claudia Garetto (CG), Alexander Gnedin (AG), Jamie Griffin (JG), Louise Goddard (LG), Kieran Hayde (KH1), Maryam Hosseni (MH), Weini Huang (WH), Subhajit Jana (SJ), Oliver Jenkinson (OJ), Mark Jerrum (MJ), Robert Johnson (RJ), Dimitris Kalogiros (DK), Zain Kapadia (ZK), Eleni Katirtzoglou (EK), Boris Khoruzhenko (BK), Rainer Klages (RK), Vito Latora (VL), Matthew Lewis (ML), Megan Liddle (ML1), Silvia Liverani (SL), Shahn Majid (SM), Anna Maltsev (AM), Argyro Mainou (AM1), Jade Mills (JM), John Moriarty (JM1), Vincenzo Nicosia (VN), Behrang Noohi (BH), Kostas Papafitsoros (KP), Fatemah Parsa (FP), Viresh Patel (VP), Nicola Perra (NP), Michael Phillips (MP), Thomas Prellberg (TP), Hong Qi (HQ), Felipe Rincon (FR), Abhishek Saha (AS), Shu Sasaki (SS), Ali Seraj (AS1), Mira Shamis (MS), Arick Shao (AS2), Alex Shestopaloff (AS3), Primoz Skraba (PS), Dudley Stark (DS), Huy The Nguyen (HTN), Ivan Tomasic (IT), Juan Valiente Kroon (JVK), Pedro Vergel (PV), Mark Walters (MW), Shengwen Wang (SW), Justin Ward (JW), Linus Wunderlich (LW), Shunhui Yao (SY), Reem Yassawi (RY), Jo Young (JY)

**Apologies:** Ginestra Bianconi (GB), Matteo Iacopini (MI), Vito Latora (VL), Navid Nabijou (NN), Melania Nica (MN), Chris Sutton (CS)

**Secretary:** Sarah Condron (SC)

Minute	Summary of Agreed Actions	Who	When	Progress
6.1	Speak with AF if you can contribute from FRF to help fund a studentship.	All	ASAP	

Agenda Item	Reports and Actions	Who	When
1. Apologies & Minutes from	<u>Apologies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ginestra Bianconi</li> <li>Matteo Iacopini</li> </ul>		

<p><b>previous meeting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vito Latora</li> <li>• Navid Nabijou</li> <li>• Melania Nica</li> <li>• Chris Sutton</li> </ul> <p>Notes from the previous meeting were reviewed and all actions have been completed.</p>		
<p><b>2. New Starters and Leavers</b></p>	<p>AC welcomed the following new starters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evangelos Mitsokapas, EPSRC Research Associate, fixed-term from 1 Oct 2022 until May 2023</li> <li>• Reem Yassawi, Senior Lecturer in Mathematical Sciences, joined us on 1 October 2022 and is a member of the Dynamical Systems and Statistical Physics Group</li> <li>• Eleni Kartitzoglou, Teaching Fellow, joined us on 1 October 2022 until 31 August 2023</li> <li>• Dimitris Kalogiros, Teaching Fellow, 1 October 2022 until 31 August 2023</li> <li>• Ming Ng, Postdoctoral Research Assistant working with Ivan &amp; Behrang on their EPSRC grant project, joined us on 1 October 2022 until 30 September 2024</li> <li>• Anthony Baptista, Postdoctoral Research Assistant working with Ginestra Bianconi on her Turing Fellowship, joined us on 7 Nov 2022 until 7 May 2024</li> <li>• Claudio Bellani, KTP Associate and Postdoctoral Data Scientist, working with Alex Shestopaloff on his UKRI Knowledge Transfer Partnership, joined us on 1 November 2022 until 31 October 2024</li> <li>• Hong Qi, Lecturer in Mathematical Data Science, joined on 5 January 2023 and is a member of the Geometry, Analysis and Gravitation Group</li> </ul>		
<p><b>3. Head of School Update</b></p>	<p><u>Staff Survey</u> AC, CG and ML1 have been working on an action plan to address concerns raised in the recent staff survey. Staff were invited to share their views on the survey results at drop-in sessions and comments from those who attended fed into the action plan.</p> <p>The School scored below the University average it's confidence in providing education and performing research at the same level as peer institutions. During drop-in sessions, it transpired this was more to do with education than research. Actions agreed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SB carrying out a curriculum review, rolling out from the first-year students starting next year.</li> </ul>		

	<p>- The school supporting staff in taking on leadership roles across the University. The research group structure within the school is changing. The change will provide staff with more confidence and experience to take on the University wide leadership roles. It was clarified that taking on these roles will not result in additional work, if a staff member takes on a leadership role, their workload will be adjusted.</p> <p>More interaction with senior leaders in the University is needed. Wen Wang (WW), Faculty VP for Science &amp; Engineering, met with SMT and Heads of Group recently. Please see attached slides for topics raised by the school. The school is generally doing well with research however there needs to be work done on putting together programme grants and establishing key areas of research.</p> <p>The School significantly overrecruited UG students the past two years, mostly due to the clearing process and having to honour offers made through the different channels. This can be seen as unsustainable going forward as far as staffing and students go, however there are also high targets set by the University that need to be met. If the School decides to stop expanding, there is a possibility this will be viewed negatively by the University.</p> <p>In order to keep up with the growth, the proposed approach is to request that the level of UG students is lessened and the proportion of overseas UG students is increased as the fees are significantly higher. This is generally out of the School's control however the number of PGT programmes can be increased which will attract more students.</p> <p><u>Research Group Restructure</u> SMT have met with a few of the research groups to discuss the restructure. By the end of February all groups will have met with SMT as part of the consultation process, with a view to finalising the new structure and implementing before the next academic year.</p> <p>Roles within the groups will be defined resulting in a wider spread of leadership roles, this will provide more autonomy than the group leaders currently have. The expectation is the heads of the centres will take on more line management responsibility and will have deputies creating an opportunity to take up leadership roles in the University at the same time as supporting the heads.</p> <p><u>Studentships</u> PhD studentships need to be increased, in the past grant holders were allocated 10% of their overheads for their own personal research, that has now been increased to 20%. This means that now, 10% that used to go to the Faculty is no longer available resulting in less funding for studentships.</p>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>Grant holders are being asked whether they are able to contribute to funding studentships from their FRF funds going forward. This will need to be done on an individual basis as each grant has different conditions.</p> <p>Last year there was a rollover of funds from the previous year but this won't happen again. An email will be sent out shortly to all staff asking for contributions to studentships.</p>		
<p><b>4. Education Update</b></p>	<p>SB provided a brief overview of the team supporting education in the School which consists of:</p> <p><b>Director of Education:</b> Shabnam Beheshti  <b>Deputy Director of Education:</b> Sebastian del Bano Rollin  <b>Programme Directors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr Felix Fischer</li> <li>- Dr Huy The Nguyen</li> <li>- Dr Dudley Stark</li> <li>- Dr Kathrin Glau</li> <li>- Mr Chis Sutton</li> <li>- Prof Oliver Jenkinson</li> <li>- Dr Weini Huang</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Experience, Year Tutors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weini Huang – Director of Student Experience</li> <li>- Prof Oliver Jenkinson – Y0/Foundation Tutor</li> <li>- Dr Shu Sasaki – Y1 Tutor</li> <li>- Lei Fang – Y2 Tutor</li> <li>- Dr Hugo Maruri-Aguilar – Y3/Finalists Tutor</li> <li>- Martin Benning – Hainan Programme</li> <li>- Thomas Prellberg – Director of Learning Environment</li> </ul> <p>Staff were advised to use the above list for any student enquiries regarding modules, and if there are any individual cases across the student programmes, to contact SB, SDBR or the Education Services Team (EST) directly.</p> <p><u>Operations</u>  Presentation slides for detailed information for Operations, QMPlus and Assessments are attached.</p> <p>The university has rolled out Zoom with Q Review as a backup. Staff were advised to contact TP if there are any queries/problems. If technology is not working within ten minutes, staff are advised to continue with the class.</p>		

	<p>It has been widely communicated to the students that they are expected to be on campus this year, and there is once again an expectation they engage in person. If a student is not on campus for a legitimate reason, it should be seen as a one off.</p> <p>Small tutorials and IT labs do not need to be MME, tutorials are not to be recorded. Small face to face groups help students meet people, make friends and support each other.</p> <p>Staff were advised that prior to teaching, visit the tutorial room to check the IT setup. Some rooms are better set up than others, but all should have a desktop equipped with zoom.</p> <p><u>Tutorials</u>  <u>Week 1 (timetable week 25) – first week of teaching</u>  <u>Week 2 (timetable week 26) – first week of tutorials</u></p> <p>Week 7 (no longer referred to as Reading Week), there are no lectures or tutorials, however because of Good Friday and Easter Monday, this may change as catch up lectures may be scheduled in week 7. Contact the Education Services Team if there are any queries on timetabling throughout the semester.</p> <p>Students have responded positively to interactive classes and see it worth coming onto campus for so staff are encouraged to make lectures as interactive as possible.</p> <p><u>Mechanics</u>  <u>Staff with Teaching in Semester B were asked to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure location, date and time on QMPlus actually reflects the teaching timetable.</li> <li>- Ensure the students are aware of where to direct queries.</li> <li>- Set an office hour per week where students can visit, whether it be online or in person.</li> <li>- Be very clear with the students on their exam format and what is expected.</li> </ul> <p>Most modules have 20% coursework or midterm and 80% have final exam. There are modules that are essay based or entirely in term assessments.</p> <p><u>Exams</u>  It was initially communicated in the student town hall meeting exams going forward were to be wholly face to face. This was not received well by the students; therefore, it was decided by the Dean that all level 6 exams were to be fully online. The year 5 students then expressed their unhappiness with having face to face exams and</p>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>therefore exams for level 5 will now be a mix of face to face and online.</p> <p><u>Curriculum Review</u> SB thanked to those who offered to assist with the curriculum review. Part of the review will concentrate on informing teaching staff what they will be teaching to enable them to plan. Teaching staff will receive a 'request for teaching preferences' which will be used as a guide. Staff were asked to provide a couple of options to allow for flexibility.</p> <p><u>Education Away Day</u> There will be a half day Education Away Day in week 7 (invites to be sent shortly) where staff will have the opportunity to discuss teaching assignments, constraints etc, face to face.</p> <p>Any questions should be directed to via email or visit SB in office MB-127.</p>		
<p><b>5. EDI Update</b></p>	<p><u>Levelling Up</u> EDI will be launching a programme called '<a href="#">Levelling Up</a>' in February 2023. Black heritage A-Level students will receive support in Maths, Physics and Chemistry. Five tutors have been recruited and come from black heritage themselves. There are currently 16 applications, from Tower Hamlets and surrounding areas. The programme will run for 2 years initially and will be a role model for the rest of the faculty.</p> <p><u>EDI Subgroups</u> The following EDI subgroups have been created to focus on the individual EDI topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender Balance</li> <li>- LGBTQ Plus</li> <li>- Acting Minorities</li> <li>- Disability</li> <li>- Early Career Researchers</li> <li>- First Generation Scholars.</li> </ul> <p>Members of staff have volunteered to be part of the subgroups with the Early Career Researchers group already organising an event on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023. The event will focus on supporting final year PhD students who are looking to move towards Post Doc positions.</p> <p>Any questions should be directed to CG.</p> <p>Finally, congratulations to CG, VE and ML1 who were awarded the only award in the Faculty celebrations for EDI.</p>		

<p><b>6. Update on PhD Students and Allocation Process</b></p>	<p><u>PhD Funded Studentships</u>  Funding for FRF studentships will be a prediction based depending on how much grant funding can be provided. At present, there are two students being supported on an FRF studentship. There is no FRF application for studentship open for this application cycle.</p> <p><b>&gt; ACTION</b>  Staff with FRF to speak with AF if they can contribute funding from their FRF to help fund a School studentship.</p> <p>See attached slides 'PhD Funded Studentships' for current funded PhD studentships.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p>	<p><b>ASAP</b></p>
<p><b>7 Any other business</b></p>	<p>No other business</p>		
<p><b>8. Date of next meeting</b></p>	<p>27 March 2023</p>		