

**School of Mathematical Sciences  
Research Committee  
Notes and Actions from Meeting held on 14 January 2020**

*Present: Christian Beck (CB), Matt Fayers (MF), Alex Fink (AF), Kathrin Glau (KG), Sasha Gnedin (SG), Mark Jerrum (MJ) (Chair) (DoR), Boris Khoruzhenko (BK), Rodrigo Panosso Macedo (RPM), Juan Valiente-Kroon (JVK).*

*In Attendance: Megan Liddle (ML), Silvia Liverani (SL).*

*Apologies: Bill Jackson, Vito Latora (VL), John Moriarty (JM), Abhishek Saha (AS) (DDoR).*

*Secretary: Elisa Piccaro (EP) (RM).*

Minute	Summary of Agreed Actions	Who	When	Progress
<b>Action 14.01.20 – 2i</b>	MJ to finalise the APC School proposal and send it to SMT for discussion.	<b>Chair</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	
<b>Action 14.01.20 – 4i</b>	Research Committee to send MJ any comments/feedback about the draft environment statement by 10 February 2020.	<b>All</b>	<b>10 Feb 2020</b>	
<b>Action 14.01.20 – 7i</b>	RM to share the draft document 'Developing an Industry Strategy SMS QMUL' by KG with the RC.	<b>RM</b>	<b>With minutes</b>	
<b>Action 14.01.20 – 7ii</b>	KG to talk to other industry leads in S&E and David Lee.	<b>KG</b>	<b>Next RC meeting</b>	
<b>Action 14.01.20 – 7iii</b>	KG and the RC to develop and agree on a detailed policy around industry engagement to present to SMT for final approval/discussion.	<b>KG</b>	<b>Next RC meeting</b>	
Agenda Item	Reports and Actions	Who	When	
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 03 December 2019	<b>REPORTED:</b> The minutes from the meeting held on 03 December 2019 were approved.			
2. Matters arising	<b>REPORTED:</b> <u>Action 02.12.19 – 3i</u> HoGs to email MJ with comments and ranking about the 3 mini CDT proposals. MJ received feedback from one HoG. The Faculty awarded the G&A group with a mini CDT.			

	<p><u>Action 02.12.19 – 4i</u> MJ to share the draft REF environment statement with the HoGs and welcome comments. Draft statement was circulated to the committee. MJ will welcome comments by 10 February.</p> <p><u>Action 02.12.19 – 5i</u> Write to the Faculty proposing that the APC charges are included in what the authors can ask to pay and that a <u>green/gold access eligibility is checked when a claim form to pay for gold access is received.</u> MJ will raise our proposal at the S&amp;E Research Advisory Group. We have been notified by the library that the UKRI block grant has been spent almost in full. Something else that MJ will note at the meeting will be the fact that the commitments may be going to the following year, and this should be accounted for.</p> <p><u>Action 02.12.19 – 5ii</u> The Chair should draft a proposal about an <u>internal School support with APC.</u> A draft summary summarising the views of the committee from Dec 2019 meeting has been circulated about a possible School commitment for covering APC. Feedback has been received about lowering the impact factor slightly to be able to include PNAS and PRL (lowering the factor to 9 would include both of these). A sanity check should be done to make sure that the set of criteria chosen will not result in an empty set. MJ will need to check costs and adjust the £1500 if needed before the proposal goes to SMT for consideration.</p> <p><b>Action 14.01.20 – 2i</b> MJ to finalise the APC School proposal and pass it to SMT for discussion.</p> <p><u>Action 02.12.19 – 7i</u> Discuss ‘SMS research strategy and future directions: Statistics and Data Science’ at the next RC meeting. This item is in today’s agenda (item 5).</p>		
<p>3. PGR admissions</p>	<p><b>REPORTED:</b></p> <p>AF reported that S&amp;E have introduced some changes to the studentships allocation this year, for instance introducing the Mini CDTs. The School submitted 3 proposals, and one was awarded in the G&amp;A research group. Two of the studentships have been advertised for September 2020 start, one will be advertised for September 2021 start. The purpose of these mini CDTs is to encourage the School to think about applying for larger proposals for EPSRC/Leverhulme CDT future calls.</p>		

**Chair** **ASAP**

	<p>AF will also talk to the unsuccessful Mini CDT PIs about future development and scopes for those two proposals.</p> <p>AF reported that in total SMS can allocate 8 studentships from College (3 EPSRC, 2 College Principal's, and 3 MiniCDT).</p> <p>The allocation committee meeting will be on the 18 February 2020, with deadline for the groups to send their shortlists by 14 February 2020.</p> <p>One new condition that S&amp;E introduced is that new supervisors of the College studentships should apply for a substantial grant in the next year. SMS have decided to extend this to all studentships including School funded ones. Supervisors can ask for this requirement to be waived if they are already the recipients of a large grant.</p> <p>The application deadline is 31 January 2020, except for the China Scholarship Council scheme that set an earlier deadline on 10 January 2020.</p>		
<p>4. REF update</p>	<p><b>REPORTED:</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The new submitted outputs are being scored by the externals at the moment;</li> <li>- Outputs. The Chair noted that we have now had 3 yearly dry runs, and at each one new outputs are assessed individually, or as a group depending on when the academics join the exercise (new appointments may have missed earlier dry runs). There will be an overall exercise to optimise a subset of outputs per each academic to be submitted and some authors may be asked to have a meeting to discuss and optimise their own set of outputs.</li> <li>- The impact autumn review (review by research users instead of academic reviewers) has ended and all authors have received feedback. The next deadline to submit the case studies to the dry run for academic review is on 2 February 2020.</li> <li>- The SMS draft Environment Statement has been circulated to the committee. The Chair welcomes comments by 10 February 2020.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action 14.01.20 – 4i</b> Research Committee to send MJ any comments/feedback about the draft environment statement by 10 February 2020.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p>	<p><b>10 Feb 2020</b></p>
<p>5. SMS research strategy and future directions: Statistics and Data Science</p>	<p><b>REPORTED:</b></p>		

	<p>The committee discussed how the statistics group should be placed within the School structure. At the moment the group sits within the Probability and Applications (P&amp;A) research group.</p> <p>SL added that perhaps this is not the best time to discuss this given that a job as Chair in Statistics has been recently advertised and there is no outcome of the recruitment campaign yet. She added that ideally the Statistics group would be independent from the P&amp;A group but that a leader/Chair/HoG should be appointed before moving in that direction.</p> <p><b>DISCUSSED</b></p> <p>Four options were discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Split the role of HoG in to a strategic role and a line management role for the Statistics group.</li><li>2) Recruit or appoint internally a HoG just like all others.</li><li>3) Create a Statistics and data science group.</li><li>4) Revisit the SMS entire group structure to have departments.</li></ol> <p><b>Option 1.</b> This would require the line manager role to be placed outside the statistics group. In theory the HoS would be the line manager for a period of time until someone else is recruited to the role.</p> <p><b>Option 2.</b> CB expressed a positive view in appointing someone junior to the role of HoG for the statistics group, but someone who shows clear vision and commitment to be a leader. He thinks (and others shared his view) that SL could be a good candidate as HoG. In the School there are other HoGs that are not Prof and cope well with the role.</p> <p>SL commented that the composition of the statistics group at the moment is rather weak and even with two new fantastic appointments, it could be problematic to manage the group. BK assured her that there is more support now at QM level.</p> <p><b>Option 3.</b> This would be related to the idea to create a group in statistics and data science and move researchers (i.e., Skraba, Benning) to this group, with a leader i.e. Farber.</p> <p><b>Option 4.</b> BK explained option 4. In the School we have 6 research groups, but for instance SBCS has 4 departments, SBM 3 or 4 departments (despite being larger Schools). Furthermore, in SMS our research strengths are not well aligned with teaching (see the finance research area). One way to re-structure the School would be to reduce the number of research groups into bigger departments within which teaching and research are taken care of. With the current structure in SMS P&amp;A is a large group compared to others because of the statistics</p>		
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	<p>people. So one option would be to reorganise all other research groups to have fewer, larger departments, comparable to the P&amp;A group.</p>		
<p>6. Impact</p>	<p><b>REPORTED:</b> JM could not attend the meeting but sent the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback has now been received from the Autumn Review, and we are working with the impact case holders to update the impact case studies templates in light of this, for submission on 2 February 2020.</li> </ul>		
<p>7. Industry lead role</p>	<p><b>REPORTED:</b> BK explained that all large schools now have an industry lead and as we have grown to become a large school we should also be more involved with industry engagement, and have a clear industry strategy. This would help us increasing funding for instance with the Alan Turing Institute, and via the Institute of Applied Data Science.</p> <p>The SMS industry lead KG prepared a draft document that was presented and discussed. <b>Action 14.01.20 – 7i</b> RM to share the draft document ‘Developing an Industry Strategy SMS QMUL’ by KG with the RC.</p> <p><b>DISCUSSED:</b> The first discussion was around questions such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would we like to be positioned in the next years?</li> <li>• What scenarios would we like to avoid?</li> <li>• How important do we think this is?</li> </ul> <p>SL commented that in the next years the School should have established relationships with a few companies and everyone should be aware of these and how to engage with them. We need to create a culture in the School about industry engagement.</p> <p>JVK added that industry links are beneficial and often facilitated by PhD students that have research projects involving industry partners. He (and the committee in general) agreed that knowing what companies we can work with and have established relationships helps approaching them and knowing how to work together.</p> <p>JVK (the committee agreed) added also that having industry connections via other departments/Schools is a great advantage. Collaborations with other Schools would help to build bridges between SMS and industry.</p>	<p><b>RM</b></p>	<p><b>With minutes</b></p>

	<p>BK reminded everyone of the large funding available via Innovate UK grants where industry and academia collaborate on various projects. Researchers are encouraged to look into this resource.</p> <p>CB pointed out that researchers can be encouraged to engage with industry by decreasing their teaching commitments. This can be done in the first instance by making a request to the HoS. However, BK reported that this can be risky and there have been examples in the last years when this strategy proved disappointing.</p> <p>MJ added that industry engagement is very important also with regard to the REF impact, and towards building the next set of case studies for REF 3.</p> <p>KG was advised to talk to other industry leads in the Faculty and David Lee (Deputy Vice Principal - Enterprise) to understand how their role is shaped and to ask for help in the first phase of this role in SMS.</p> <p><b>Action 14.01.20 – 7ii</b> KG to talk to other industry leads in S&amp;E and David Lee.</p> <p><b>Action 14.01.20 – 7iii</b> KG and the RC to develop and agree on a detailed policy around industry engagement to present to SMT for final approval/discussion.</p>	<p>KG</p> <p>KG</p>	<p>Next RC meeting</p> <p>Next RC meeting</p>
<p>8. PDRA report</p>	<p><b>REPORTED:</b></p> <p>The PDRA representative RPM reported that in general PDRA's in the School are not very involved in the School strategy as their primary focus is to build their research profile and think about their next steps in their careers.</p> <p>They feel that there is a nice group and they enjoy their experience within the School. They feel supported and work well with their PI/mentor.</p> <p>They find very useful to use the new Academic Hubs in the Maths building and ML confirmed that the Hub next to the PDRA office (floor two facing east) has not been opened for undergraduates to use but will stay locked as it has been so far, for the PDRA ad-hoc use.</p>		
<p>9. Any other business</p>	<p><b>REPORTED:</b></p> <p>The Research Manager's report has been circulated with the agenda, with an update about the recent proposals submitted to funders, pipeline and awarded proposals.</p>		

10. Date of next meeting	The next Research Committee meeting will be on <b>17 March 2020.</b>		
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