

**School of Mathematical Sciences
Research Committee**

Minutes from the Meeting held on 21 November 2016

Present: Malwina Luczak (Chair), Christian Beck, Michael Farber, Alexander Gnedin, Bill Jackson, Christopher Joyner, Boris Khoruzhenko, John Moriarty (via Skype), Leonard Soicher, Juan Valiente Kroon

Apologies: Vito Latora, Jo Young

Secretary: Elisa Piccaro

Minute	Summary of Agreed Actions	Who	When	Progress
21.11.16-3	HoGs come up with new lists of 'aspirational' journals and 'good' journals. This exercise should be carried out by HoGs in consultation with the academics in their group. HoGs should justify their choices.	HoGs	Research Committee Feb 2017	
21.11.16-4a	The Research Manager will include the postdoc list when reminding everybody to add their accepted papers on Elements within 90 days from acceptance.	Research Manager	ASAP	
21.11.16-4b	The Research Manager will try to get the missing agreements signed and liaise with the HoGs to get these.	Research Manager	ASAP	
21.11.16-5	Research Manager to email the academics with the instructions on how to switch on the email alerts from EPSRC.	Research Manager		
21.11.16-6	The Research Manager will liaise with the EU unit and Enzo Nicosia (in direct contact with EPSRC) and start organising these 2 events.	Research Manager		
21.11.16-7	Academics with requests for PhD students to work on impact projects should be encouraged to advertise their project for the next studentships' appointments in the School and to consider CASE award	John Moriarty		
21.11.16-8	HoGs to prepare a proposal and a theme to put forward to the next Research Committee.	HoGs	Research Committee Feb 2017	
21.11.16-9	Juan and Leonard will need to consult informally with their groups, come out with a proposal and discuss this with Boris. Then this should be also reviewed by the Director of Research with the aim to finalise it at the next School meeting.	Juan, Leonard, Boris, the Chair	By School meeting in March	

Agenda Item	Reports, Discussions and Actions	Who	When
1. Minutes from last meeting	Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016 were reviewed. All actions were completed except for the one related to Aspirational journals. This was discussed under item 3.		
2. Matters arising	No matter was raised.		
3. Aspirational journals	<p>REPORTED: The Chair summarised the analyses that were performed to draw a list of aspirational journals. The Committee agreed that the resulting list is very unsatisfactory. Also, in some groups the research areas are so broad that a list will always be difficult to be drawn.</p> <p>DISCUSSED: The Committee agreed that a revision of the list is needed. The lists provided by the HoGs had some merits, but a number of journals on the lists did not really seem particularly aspirational. Instead, some journals on the lists seem to be journals that the groups like to publish in. Some of the journals listed are clearly 3* and should not be named 'aspirational' (some are even lower standard). It was suggested that the SNIP added to the list could be used as a metric. However, the Committee felt that impact factors should not be the only criterion, since these can be very different in different research areas. (Although SNIP is supposed to take account of some of the differences between areas.) The Committee recognised that there is some uneasiness in aiming really high in naming journals that are truly aspirational. It was suggested that we should perhaps have two lists: 'good' journals (with academics expected to publish in journals at least as good as those), and a smaller number of top, truly 'aspirational', journals (publishing here may not happen every year). Academics should accept that not many people publish in aspirational journals (certainly not on a regular basis), and they should not fear to point out what an aspirational journal is.</p> <p>ACTION 3: HoGs come up with new lists of 'aspirational' journals and 'good' journals. This exercise should be carried out by HoGs in consultation with the academics in their group. HoGs should justify their choices.</p>	HoGs	Research Committee Feb 2017
4. Open Access monitoring compliance	<p>REPORTED: The Research Manager reported that the Open Access compliance work is going well. No major problems are encountered on the QMUL repository Elements. The large backlog of records has now been cleared and it will be easy to monitor compliance on a monthly basis. The most important step still remains for the academics to add the accepted papers to Elements. It was also reported that most academics have now signed the agreement, except for 7 of them (3 T&R and 4 T&S).</p> <p>DISCUSSED: At the moment the Open Access compliance is not enforced on PDRAs, and therefore if a record is not compliant with the policy the Research Manager does not chase this. It was</p>		

	<p>discussed that PDRAs (and especially PDRF) should be helped to comply with the policy as they may be in academic positions in the next years, and therefore it is in their best interest to be able to be submitted to the REF and to have their papers open access. It was agreed that the Research Manager will monitor compliance on all records, and liaise with PDRAs and PDRFs (even PhD students if necessary) to ensure that all records are compliant.</p> <p>All PDRAs and PhD students have an account on Elements. The monthly reminder email will be sent to postdocs as well as academics.</p> <p>ACTION -4a: The Research Manager will include the postdoc list when reminding everybody to add their accepted papers on Elements within 90 days from acceptance.</p> <p>ACTION -4b: The Research Manager will try to get the missing agreements signed and liaise with the HoGs to get these.</p>	<p>Research Manager</p> <p>Research Manager</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>
5. Grant applications report	<p>REPORTED: A report summarising the current School grant income, per funder, in the last 4 years has been shown and distributed to the Committee. Success rates for EPSRC and Horizon 2020 were also reported, as well as the current grant applications in preparation.</p> <p>DISCUSSED: The Committee agreed that the academics should be encouraged to apply for more research grants, and that it is risky to have a portfolio composed of a small number of large grants. We should aim to be listed near the top in the EPSRC own ranking. This would be beneficial for instance in cases when EPSRC allocates extra money to departments and universities with large grant portfolios. The HoGs should keep encouraging the academics in their group to apply for grants, and to talk to the Research Manager about funding opportunities and support available in the School. Academics would like to know how to sign up to the EPSRC funding opportunities automatic alert.</p> <p>ACTION -5: Research Manager to email the academics with the instructions on how to switch on email alerts from EPSRC.</p>	<p>Research Manager</p>	<p>ASAP</p>
6. EU funding and EPSRC workshop	<p>DISCUSSED: It was discussed and agreed that the EU unit will be asked to come to SMS to deliver a half day workshop about EU funding. This will be organised in April/May 2017. It was also agreed that an EPSRC half day workshop would be beneficial for the School. This will be organised for May/June 2017.</p> <p>ACTION -6: The Research Manager will liaise with the EU unit and Enzo Nicosia (in direct contact with EPSRC) and start organising these 2 events.</p>	<p>Research Manager</p>	
7. Impact	<p>REPORTED: John Moriarty, the impact champion, summarised different approaches that the School is taking towards having a good impact submission at the next REF. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information pack on QMplus; • An impact questionnaire, to assess possible impact cases on a consistent basis and to monitor their progress over time; • A consultancy offering (long term initiative); • the exercise of exploring existing case studies that we may not be aware of; 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exercise to get all academics that have been involved in large research consortia grant from 2000 to explore possible impact from the research that was done at the time; • Impact workshops (for example Christian Beck’s grant is funding one of these in January, when industry and academics will come together to learn about each other’s work). <p>John also reported that some academics have requested funding from the School to support their impact cases, via studentships for example.</p> <p>The Chair pointed out that the current round of the QMUL Impact Acceleration Fund has finished and there will not be a new round for some months, but it would be good to have such support in place.</p> <p>HoS pointed out that the School should keep impact production in mind when allocating studentships, and that the new way in which studentships are allocated also takes into account the priorities within the School, and that we can classify impact as one of our priorities. He also reiterated the importance of impact in relation to academic promotions and how some academics will be more likely to get professorships on impact instead of grants.</p> <p>The Director of Postgraduate Research Studies pointed out that CASE studentships were not requested nor preferred by academics in the School in the past.</p> <p>The academics can advertise PhD projects but the committee felt that most academics prefer to advertise projects that fall within their core research area, and that they fear advertising projects that focus on impact generation. Comments were made about PhD projects with focus on impact, such as the fact that it could happen that the supervisor may not be able to supervise the project fully, and/or that the project may be risky for a PhD student in case it does not reach the results expected.</p> <p>ACTION -7: Academics with requests for PhD students with potential impact projects should be encouraged to advertise their project for the next studentships’ appointments in the School and to consider applying for a CASE award</p>	John Moriarty	
8. Possible bid for DTC in 2018	<p>DISCUSSED: The Committee discussed possible ideas for a bid in the next DTC call in 2018. Possibilities include a bid in combinatorics together with LSE or Cambridge. To be able to succeed with this we need to be competitive, as probably we need to match up against UCL and other prestigious institutions. The themes of combinatorics and optimisation, probability and data science were also suggested. The Committee agreed that the School needs to work on a bid which fits well with the EPSRC priorities and that a bid in computation and programming will probably not be favourable. A comment was also made about creating a consortium with other Universities far away and how this setup would not work effectively.</p>		

	ACTION -8: HoGs to prepare a proposal and a theme to put forward to the next Research Committee.	HoGs	Research Committee Feb 2017
9. Research Group Review	<p>REPORTED: The Chair reported that she is working on putting together a document summarising what was discussed in the meetings held in the School, and the responses from the survey. This will be presented at HOSAG and then at the next School meeting. It was also pointed out that possibly the most important decision is for the Algebra and Geometry & Analysis groups and a possible re-alignment of these.</p> <p>ACTION -9: Juan and Leonard will consult informally with their groups, come up with a proposal and discuss this with HoS. Then this should be also reviewed by DoR with the aim of finalising it at the next School meeting.</p>	Juan, Leonard, Boris, the Chair	By School meeting in March
9. Collecting papers for REF	REPORTED: The Chair reported that that the 2017 exercise will be internal and that the School has already been informed of the process via email. The proposal has been sent to the University.		
10. Funding and other information on the intranet	REPORTED: The Research Manager reported that the funding information is now on the intranet, as is also information about pre/post award, impact, Open Access, events, Research Committee and useful forms. The Research Manager updates this on a monthly basis and emails the academics and postdoc to remind them.		
11. Research Enabling Fund	REPORTED: The Chair reported that the allocations for 2016/17 have been made and the PIs have been informed. It was also reported that the faculty will try to increase this award to 15% next year if possible, and to look into ways of allowing the PIs to carry the award forward to the next financial year so that the award can be used by the PIs when they need it the most i.e. at the end of their grant.		
12. Any other business	None		
13. Date of next meeting	The next Research Committee meeting will take place at 14:00 – 16:00 on Monday 27 February 2017.		