

**Department of Paediatrics
Management Committee/Graduate Studies Committee
Monday 6th November 2023, 12:00-14:00
Via MS Teams**

Committee Members:

Georg Hollander (GH)	Shaka Obhiozele (SO)	Rebecca Slater (RS)	Irene Roberts (IR)
Sarah Atkinson (SA)	Anindita Roy (AR)	Holm Uhlig (HU)	Rinn Song (RS)
Alexander Jones (AJ)	Caroline Hartley (CH)	Laurent Servais (LS)	Carlo Rinaldi (CR)
Charlotte Walber (CW)	Philip Goulder (PG)	Andrew Pollard (AP)	Dominic Kelly (DK)
Teresa Lambe (TL)	Merryn Voysey (MV)	Joanna Bagniewski (JB)	Samantha Vanderslott (SV)
Daniela Ferreira (DF)	Stephan Sanders (SS)	Student Rep (SR)	Nasir Marwat (NM)
Sorcha Morrissey (SM)	Matthew Wood (MW)	Daniel O'Connor (DO)	Maheshi Ramasamy (MR)
Xinxue Liu (XL)	Khaya Rowland (KR)	Kristina Tanso (KR)	Sue Ann Costa Clemens (SCC)
Lucy Howarth (LH)	Laura Borg (LB)	Jessica Bryan Bentley (JBB)	

MINUTES

1. Apologies for absence

Anindita Roy, Philip Goulder, Irene Roberts, Rinn Song, Daniela Ferreira, Carlo Rinaldi, Joanna Bagniewski, Sarah Atkinson, Dominic Kelly, Samantha Vanderslott, Lucy Howarth

2. Minutes of meeting 16th June 2023 (GH)

- Open access
GH queried if there was any update available. JB was unavailable. LB confirmed that JB will be scheduling a Town Hall on the subject. RS confirmed there will also be an update from CLiPS at the next meeting.
ACTION: LB to follow-up with JB and report back via email to the committee.
- Engagement with research groups in order to ascertain what kind of events could be targeted specifically at healthcare professionals.
GH will follow-up with JB separately.
- PhD Studentships
GH currently targeting individuals, foundations and other possible partnerships to increase the departmental number of studentships. GH will follow-up at the next meeting on progress.

3. Conflicts of Interest (SO)

No conflicts noted. SO provided an annual reminder on this to the committee.

4. Matters arising and Action Points from meeting 16th June 2023 (not covered elsewhere) (GH)

None noted.

5. Consultancy Activities in Paediatrics (Jaci Barnett/Kerry Antcliffe)

Jaci Barnett, Head of Consulting Services at Oxford University Innovation and Kerry Antcliffe, Principle Project Manager attend the meeting in order to provide a presentation on the benefits of using consulting services. Please find attached a copy of the presentation alongside these minutes.

6. Graduate Studies Committee (CR/SM)

- 15 new students have been welcomed to the department during October. First in person inductions since before COVID have also taken place.

- Currently running a “findaphd.com” campaign and monitoring the number of applications. All PI's were asked to review and keep SM informed if they notice an increase in the number of applicants. The December application deadline is 03rd December.
- DPhil interviews are due to take place on 8th, 9th and 11th January. A core of panellists for the interviews is already in place, however, if anyone in the Department wishes to take part in these interviews, they're welcome to join the panel. CR will send an email to this effect to all PI's.
- CR has already communicated via email to all supervisors the following information (here again as a reminder): “The MSD Graduate Studies team has asked us to encourage colleagues to refrain from referring to supervisors as “primary” or “secondary”. This is to be replaced with terminology reflecting a supervisory team i.e., supervisor and co-supervisor.”

7. Administrative staff update (SO)

- SO welcomed Laura Borg, to the Department as the new Departmental Comms lead, Laura comes with a wealth of experience in health care communications.
- SO informed the committee that a newly appointed Head of Finance will be joining us on 20th November. Sam Branch, will join from NDM and comes with a wealth of technical knowledge having been Head of Finance in the Nuffield Department of Medicine.
- HR Service Review is being undertaken jointly with NDORMS. Highlighting the importance of making sure that as a department, we're operating as effectively and as efficiently as we can. Particularly in the context of known pressures on HR. SO thanks those who had provided input into the initial user survey and provided a few slides giving an overview of the timeline for the review and proposed scope of work. The next key stage of the review will be receipt of a diagnose report by the Oversight Board – a further update will be provided to the Committee at the next meeting.
ACTION: SO to provide an update on the progress of the review at the next meeting.
- Division took a paper to FRGPC outlining proposals to suspend the recruitment protocol until 30th September 2024. The Division will still expect departments to monitor staff expenditure very closely during the current financial year and will ask for a clear justification for adverse variances against staff expenditure. GH and SO have discussed this and are of the view that it makes sense for the Department to retain the process of having to prepare recruitment protocol requests, so that SO can analyse them before submitting a recommendation to GH. The discipline, level of rigour and scrutiny attached to these requests will be maintained. SS queried what led to the recruitment protocol. SO explained that approximately 2 years ago, the University, in response to the financial challenges associated with the pandemic, decided to have a moratorium on new staffing. It was intended as a measure to mitigate some of the financial impacts associated with the pandemic. A process was put in place whereby any request for a new post, funded mainly by departmental funds, would require divisional approval via submission of a written business case, explaining why the investment was needed. Consequently, decisions will now be devolved to departments which will help facilitate quicker decision-making. However, the process of going through a recruitment protocol remains very important in ensuring the department's financial sustainability and so the policy remains that research groups will have to use the recruitment protocol

form to set out a case for new resource and its financial impact for all new posts paid for largely or entirely by the department.

8. HR update (CW)

- CW thanked everyone who participated in the HR Service Review. A few PI's have also agreed to speak further with Emma Morris to hear more insights.
- The Peakon survey tool has successfully been trialled by OVG. Peakon will now be rolled out across the department accompanied by a "roadshow".
- The roll out of mandatory PDRs has been a big initiative this year. Officially our PDR season has finished. CW shared a short presentation which showed that 56% have started their PDR, this is more than we've had in the last few years. CW asked if everyone could follow this up with line managers as 38% still have to do a PDR. MV queried whether it could be that a PDR may have taken place but may not yet be captured by/deposited on the simitive system. CW confirmed this to be possible.

9. Finance update (NM/SO)

- Q3 forecast was £3.9m surplus. However, at year end a £4.4m surplus was recorded. This was mainly due to an increase in the research audit income, and greater utilisation of industry grants, which have higher overhead rates. Our year-to-date position is currently, at around 750k surplus this is an increase of our original budgeted forecast of 350k surplus. This difference is due to income generated from various research projects mainly on the OVG side. Q1 forecast figures will need to be submitted for review to Division by mid-November.
GH and SO added that it is still uncertain how the Finance White Paper will operate beyond the current Financial Year, but emphasised the importance of accurate forecasting as a means of demonstrating to the Division that the Department is capable of exercising sound financial management. Particularly in the context of having to cross-subsidise other departments within MSD.
NM provided an overview of the process of forecasting to MV.

10. Grants update (KR)

- KR provided a few slides on the overhead recovery rate report for financial year 2022-2023. This showed that income from EU funding has reduced slightly, along with overheads from industry. Industry projects are always welcomed and encouraged. KR asked PI's to get in touch if there are any questions about industry funding, how to approach a company or when a company has approached departmental staff. Reduction of EU funding is likely a combination of Brexit and a reduction in international students. Charity funding has also diminished in comparison to prior years. Again, likely due to encouraging applications to funders that do come with overheads or FEC (full economic costing) which is the full cost of running your project. However, total overheads for the department have increased from previous years and a further increase from successful research funding is expected. Importantly, GH highlighted again that members of the Department should pursue grants that support the best science independent of differences in overhead income.
- AP asked for clarification of some further points regarding full economic costs (FEC) and the denominator being used. FEC is defined as the full cost to the University of undertaking the activity. Included are all direct and indirect costs such as space, central services, depreciation and a contribution to investment

in the University's infrastructure. JBB added that FEC is not the same as overhead recovery rate (ORR) which is defined as the overhead costs divided by the direct costs. KR confirmed that industry grants have a policy to cost at 120% FEC, albeit with some exceptions where a strong case is made in favour of not doing so i.e. due to broader strategic imperatives including the importance of the research or as part of efforts to leverage additional funds on future projects. The department will always primarily seek to achieve maximum cost recovery.

- KR explained that staffing costs have a big impact on overhead costs.
- SO encouraged the committee to let KR know whether there were any other elements of the Department's grant portfolio that they would be interested in hearing about at future meetings.

11. Equality & Diversity Update (RS)

- Currently preparing the Athena SWAN application, which we will be submitted in May 2024. RS showcased the work of the different committees and the data presented at last week's Town Hall meeting. Town Hall meeting was recorded and LB can be contacted to access the recording.
- The ED action plan for the next 4–5-year period was presented. The committee was invited to identify any additional action points that they felt ought to be included.
- MV presented on a provisional data set concerning gender pay gap (a copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes).
- RS added that one of the biggest initiatives in the action plan is to make sure that women are applying for bonus awards across all different pay grades and that they access all necessary support to be successful with their application.

12. Comms (JB/LB)

- LB gave a brief introduction of her background. LB will be writing a communication strategy paper for the Department. LB will be following up on PR opportunities and has liaised with individual groups already. Please let LB know should you wish to share news from your groups. LB is also creating some marketing resources including a data repository of statistics etc.

13. OUCAGS/ACF/ACL updates (AJ)

- Shortlisting process has begun for next round in the ACF's. 17 applications at ST1 level, 1 at ST 2 and 2 at ST3. Deadline for shortlisting is 16th November. Paediatrics are in competition this year with Obstetrics and Gynaecology.
- Victoria Smallpiece Fellowship job description has been revised. Last year was successful despite the delays in getting the advert out. With the advert communicated earlier, it is anticipated that applicants have this year sufficient time to contact research groups in the department for projects and the 50% salary funding. AJ confirmed that applications would be accepted from candidates whose research careers may have stalled at some point during the challenging process of trying to run a clinical and academic career.

14. AOB

- GMC revalidation for departmental fellows (MR)
MR provided an update on the need for medically trained staff to have an annual appraisal, a condition to maintain GMC registration and revalidation. Most research fellows who are employed within the department are trainees,

so they already have a formal revalidation process via the deanery. There may be a small number of trainees who are not in training positions but come to the Department on short term research fellowships, these are usually overseas candidates or colleagues between training grades. While support to maintain GMC registration and to secure an annual appraisal is important this created an additional admin obligation to the Department. Fortunately, it is now the Trust that will act as the designated body, and they have asked the Department to provide an appraiser who is a senior consultant who will review applications on an annual basis. Within OVG there are a number of appraisers, MR, DK and Kat Pollock. Appraisers need to attend a ½ day appraiser training course run by the Trust to be eligible to act as an appraiser.

- The CRF has now been given the green light by infection control to be operative. LS informed the group that the CRF is now open “for business”. Those who wish to use the facility should contact the CRF Manager, Tamar Cameron.
- CW updated the committee on the Concordat the University has agreed to with the aim of supporting researchers.
 - o One of the new actions is CDR, career development reviews. This is in addition to (or merged with) our existing PDR which is to be implemented by April 2025.
 - o The other action is that the University is granting researchers 10 (paid) days of learning and development time. This is already in place, but it is unclear "how" this will be implemented. CW has reached out to the Division to gain some clarity on this.
ACTION: Add to next management meeting.
- GH emphasised the importance of organising a departmental-wide event in 2024 following on from the success of the garden party, which was attended by a significant number of staff. It's crucial that the Department provides future opportunities like this where everyone can come together in a fun and engaging way.

15. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 13th February 2024