



School of Mathematics

School Assembly

*14:00-15:30 / Fry G.10 and Zoom
19 February 2025*

Agenda

- 1) Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising
- 2) Questions or comments on written reports
- 3) EDI considerations
- 4) Any other business



School Assembly

*2pm, Wednesday 18 December 2024
Fry G.10/Zoom*

Minutes

Present: Open Assembly of School colleagues

1) Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The school received a copy of the previous minutes for information.

No comments or actions.

2) Questions or comments on written reports

The School received written reports from the following representatives:

*Olly Johnson, Head of School
Arne Kovac, Undergraduate School Education Director
Dennis Prangle, Director of Impact
Viveka Erlandsson, Director of Research
Misha Rudnev, Postgraduate School Education Director
Francesco Mezzadri, Associate Chair of the Heilbronn Institute
Henna Koivusalo, Director of Public Engagement and Widening Participation
Marton Balazs, Director of IT Strategy
Helen Mawdsley and Kentaro Fujimoto, EDI Co-chairs
Louise Todd, School Manager*

Questions and discussions:

Head of School report:

- PW2 Lecture cover – With regards to teaching relief, please contact the Head of School.

Director of Impact report:

The Impact Director sent their apologies to the assembly, so the Head of School offered to take any questions on their behalf.

- REF – There is a strong expectation that REF will be happening. There was an online Webinar with the Head of REF, which suggested Bristol will be moving forward with draft selections of papers in the Spring of 2025.

Postgraduate School Education Director report:

- Studentship numbers – There may be an increase in these numbers, and the School will continue to push on the need for more PhD students.
- Applying for CDT – Last round of EPSRC CDT's was last year, and they generally run them 3-5 years apart. There has been an announcement around more funding, and this will be released in 2025.

Undergraduate School Education Director report:

The Undergraduate Education Director gave the assembly an update on the updates on Blackboard and Blackboard Ultra.

- New Blackboard Ultra 25/26 scheme – This now has a lot of administration elements. The University will be rolling this out earlier, so set up units for teaching blocks can be done in plenty of time. There isn't necessarily administrative support for this, but student developers may be able to help upon request.

Director of Research report:

The Director of Research sent their apologies to the assembly, so the Head of School offered to take any questions on their behalf.

- EPSRC School visit - Currently scheduled for 10 April 2025. The format of this however is still under discussion.
- Future Leaders Fellowship scheme – Internal school deadline is the 15th January 2025, please see email from Director of Research on 19th December for details of how to register interest.

EDI Co-chair report:

- University Athena SWAN decision – Confirmation that this is moving from School level SWAN submissions to Faculty level submissions. There is a Faculty EDI Lead meeting in January 2025 to talk about this change in practice. More information on this change will be released in the New Year.

3) School strategy discussions

Staff in attendance at the assembly were encouraged to raise any concerns or issues they had with each Strategy document. These will be taken forward with the Head of School and Strategy owners.

4) EDI considerations

- Acceptable School behaviours.

No further comments or actions.

5) Any other business

- The School has a new piece of Mathematical art hanging in the ground floor, next to the Library.

With no further comments, the meeting was ended.

HOS report School Assembly 19/2/25

1. Update on new arrivals:
 - a) Welcome to Zemer Kosloff (Associate Professor in Mathematics, started on 3rd February)
 - b) Yihan Zhang (Lecturer in Statistical Science, start date 1st May)
2. Update on our Faculty IPP bid: we have one new lecturer position (details tbc), a clearer position on Foundation funding, but other requests were not successful. The funding situation nationally and for the University as a whole remains extremely difficult. As people who attended last week's All Staff Briefing Assembly will be aware, we are not immune from these pressures and may well to have take some steps accordingly. Thank you to staff who have found time to apply for grants, develop ideas for new programmes, support admissions etc
3. December exams generally went well – thanks to academic and professional services staff for all their work on this.
4. Draft 2025/6 lecturing allocation has been released, to allow unit changes ahead of student choice processes. (Some enforced changes will likely still occur)
5. School will be providing some Data Science project supervision for students from Engineering Maths (thanks to staff who volunteered for this). Have plans in process to spend the resulting share of Faculty surplus to enhance various aspects of School life.
6. Having published workload reports for 2021/2, 2022/3 and 2023/4, looking to review model and processes around it ahead of the 2025/6 year. In due course we may move to a Faculty workload model in any case.
7. Levels of completion of essential training are still very low (around 25% in the School, lower than many others in the Faculty). There is now a serious possibility that staff may face sanctions for not engaging with this – for example network access may be removed from staff who have not completed cybersecurity training for fear of costly breaches. Please find time to log into Develop to complete this essential training.
8. Staff Review allocations are being loaded onto Develop – please log in and engage with the process in due course (also please log your lecture observations via Develop).
9. Please save the date of 25th June for a School Away Day (details tbc nearer the time).

Professor Oliver Johnson

Head of School

Impact Director report

UKRI Research Commercialisation Funding

I've been sent some details of a UKRI call for Research Commercialisation Proof of Concept Funding "to support early-to-mid-stage commercialisation activities than validate the development of concepts that arose from research". Let me know if this is relevant to anyone and I can send you the full details. The closing date is 29th May, with an intention to submit survey required by 3rd March, and an internal university selection process is also mentioned.

European Study Group with Industry

Engineering Mathematics are organising a European Study Group with Industry event in Bristol on 14th-18th July. They are currently looking for organisations to suggest problems, and Helen Mawdsley is helping advise them on this. Organisations must pay a fee to be involved. The event will be opened to registration for academics, including postgraduate students, later in the year. For further information, see this website for a previous event in the series: <https://be-maths-in.be/mfi24/>.

Knowledge Exchange Hub for Mathematical Sciences

The Knowledge Exchange Hub for Mathematical Sciences will launch its Phase 2 in April 2025, having secured 4 years of EPSRC funding.

It has recently launched a "Short Projects" internship for final year PhD students to work with its partner organisations. One student from the school applied and had a positive experience in discussions in the application processes - the final outcome is still awaited at the time of writing. There will be regular Short Projects calls in future. KE Hub "Triage Workshops" are also ongoing, and you can look at the schedule here:

<https://www.kehubmaths.co.uk/events-activities/triage-workshops/>

Future KE Hub activities are planned to include:

- Working groups. A request for themes will be announced soon.
- Modelling camps, involving a company discussing a problem with academics.
- Sandpit events.
- More engagement with PhD students e.g. KE training

Impact Case Studies

Thanks to everyone who's contributed to potential REF impact case studies. Please get in touch if you think any other work you've been doing recently is suitable.

For anyone unfamiliar with these, a quick summary is that REF Impact Case Studies describe of work which has had a positive impact beyond academia in some way e.g.

economic, health, government policy (UK or international), quality of life, culture. The impact must take place in the period* August 2020 - July 2028 . The work must be underpinned by research outputs (usually publications) carried out at Bristol since* 2007. Universities receive funding based on each case study's rating. It can be over £100k per year for top rating (4 star).

* Cut-off dates are not confirmed yet, but these are the university's expectations.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH

Public talk

A public talk to celebrate Women and Girls in STEM took place on 12 Feb. Nina Snaith gave a talk, followed by a panel discussion chaired by Andrew Hogg, with panellists Asma Hassannezhad, Laura Monk and Rachel Bennett. There were approximately 100 attendees, majority from local schools together with their parents or teachers. A further 15 screens followed the talk online, one of which was a school streaming to a classroom. The event ran smoothly and received an overwhelmingly positive reaction from the attendees. Special thanks to Kelly Woodcock for all her work before and during the event.

Maths Magic videos

We shot some test footage and edited a first Maths Magic video. Take a look [here](#), comments welcome. Thanks to Michael Rumbelow from School of Education for filming.

Maths Circles

We Solve Problems continues to run a weekly problem solving class for school Years 7-10 in the Fry building. As a part of the series, we are supporting them in arranging a bigger event (~60 rather than the usual ~20 participants) on 5 Apr, combining Maths Circles from Bristol, Bath and Cardiff.

Book donations to Montpelier High

We had 10 donations and used the WP/outreach budget to buy another 3 book to be donated to Montpelier High. These were collected in December and were much appreciated by the school (see underneath). Many thanks to Olly Johnson, Sean Dewar, Thomas Jordan, Roman Schubert, Florian Bouyer and Jackie Voros for donations!



Work experience week for Year 10s

Physics and Maths are co-coordinating a work experience week (30 Jun – 4 Jul) for Year 10s. I have some preliminary sign-ups from staff volunteering to run sessions, but if you are keen to volunteer, please do get in touch.

We have also arranged for a small number of WEX students to spend the week with a staff member on an ad hoc basis. Thanks for your patience to those of you who are waiting for information on the associated Risk Assessment and other paperwork, I am working on it.

Outreach training

Widening Participation Team is advertising Active Outreach training for anyone who is delivering activities, next available dates are afternoons of 26 Feb and 18 Jun. Sign-up form [here](#).

Henna Koivusalo, Director of Outreach

School Assembly, Feb 2025

Report of the Postgraduate School Education Director

We have made a candidates' shortlist and made two offers on our one (out of one) UoB studentship and one (out of one) Heilbronn one. We are rounding up on Martingale applicants, where the deadline for making offers is in the beginning of March.



Report by the Associate Chair of the Heilbronn Institute

School Assembly, 19 February 2025

Heilbronn Fellowships

We have recently concluded the hiring round for the Fellows starting in October 2025. We have made 7 offers in Bristol; five candidates have accepted, and we are waiting for the reply of other two candidates.

2025 Distinguished Lecture Series

We are very pleased to announce that Professor Nalini Joshi from the University of Sydney will be visiting us between 3-5 March 2025 as Distinguished Lecturer. If you are interested in talking to Nalini please contact me.

Francesco Mezzadri
19 February 2025

Report from the Director of IT Strategy

Isambard AI, the UK's most powerful supercomputer focused on AI research, is now accepting early applications:

<https://engagementhub.ukri.org/epsrc-researchinfrastructure/airr-eoi/consultation/intro/>

Maths HPC mailing list: `grp-math-hpc`. Please subscribe (or let me know) if you are not on it yet but work with high performance computing (e.g., Blue[Pebble/Crystal]). Any School-related HPC issues will be communicated there.

HPC costs in grants: please do include this when applying if you are planning to use HPC. Please see <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/acrc/high-performance-computing/hpc-costs/> and make contact with Finance and ACRC for details. Research software engineering is also available, if your research would use that please allocate funds in your grant supporting this too. <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/acrc/research-software-engineering/>

Acknowledgements are vital for the future of computing at the University. If you used HPC, please visit https://www.acrc.bris.ac.uk/protected/hpc-docs/acknowledging_hpc/index.html to see how to add this fact to both your papers and to Pure.

IT drop in sessions: each day 10:30am-12:30pm in G.08 Fry.

Interactive sessions on BluePebble are available within the queuing system. Doc: https://people.maths.bris.ac.uk/~mb13434/interactive_bp.html.

Various training is available to help scientific computing: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/acrc/training/>.

New starters, please contact me (m.balazs@bristol.ac.uk) if you'd like to know about setting up a personal webpage or using our Linux fileservers for backup. Or with any IT issue really if you prefer this to reporting to IT Services directly at <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/it-support>.

IMAP, SMTP access: if you don't know what these are, don't worry about it. Multi factor authentication was rolled out for this too, knowhow is available if needed. I successfully tested three different solutions, please let me know if you are interested.

Márton Balázs
School Assembly, February 2025

Report from Director of Research (Viveka Erlandsson)

- **DREI will have a drop-in session for us in the common room on February 26th at 11-12:30.**

This is a chance to meet in-person with the Faculty's research support network from DREI, the Industrial Liaison Office and Science Partnership Office. This includes:

- Research Development
- Impact Development
- Industrial Liaison Office Programme Managers (where location is a School previously in the Faculty of Engineering)
- Science Partnership Office (where the location is a School previously in the Faculty of Science)
- Colleagues from teams such as Commercialisation, PolicyBristol or Public Engagement may also be available (we encourage you to get in touch if you wish to speak to colleagues from these areas specifically).

Drop-in sessions will be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss opportunities in relation to all aspects of research and impact development in a face-to-face setting. All colleagues who are interested in applying for grant funding and who would like to discuss this, or ask any questions, are invited

- **EPSRC Open and Open Plus Fellowship schemes reopened** on January 30th. The scheme is currently only available for mathematical science.
There doesn't seem to be any major differences in the application process from before, and the internal process is same as before (a short expression of interest form plus a 3-page internal application reviewed by the School and support from DREI). This is an open call with no deadline, but candidates should plan to start the process (by contacting me + DREI) approximately 10-12 weeks before expected submission.
The Postdoc Fellowship call did not open on the same day but is expected to open soon.



REPORT FROM EDI Leadership Team

- We renewed the membership of the EDI committee
- The co-chairs attended the faculty's EDI away day on 9 Jan. The event involved productive group discussions on Gender inclusion, anti-racism and accessibility and workplace culture.
- We have raised at faculty EDI level some concerns about the process of promotion and progression in relation to career breaks and the impact on potential success. Applicants would like to know what the committee takes into account so people know the kind of information they should be providing. EDI co-chairs to continue discussions with Faculty.
- The faculty launched a funding of up to £2,000 to support EDI projects focused on students and/or staff. Support can be in the form of resource (e.g., UG summer intern, part-time postgraduate researcher) or equipment/consumables for activities. All projects must be completed by mid-July 2025. An application can be submitted with the EDI co-chairs. If you have any ideas for an EDI project, please let us know and discuss.
- A Women and Girls in STEM talk took place on the 12th of Feb 2025 – joint WP/EDI activity. We had around 100 attendees in person, and the event was very successful.
- We have a “parent room,” G.82 on the ground floor, a space for breast-feeding, milk expression, storing milk, etc. This is a multipurpose room and serves as first aid room also.
- The first version of the School's EDI strategy was circulated at the School Assembly on 18 December, and we received a few comments. It has now been updated.
- Kelly is organising a mental health day on 14 May 1-4pm – there will be a crafting event for Mental Health Awareness week.
- Free period products. We have been informed by Caroline McKinnon that there's a 3-month trial underway that Campus have started in some buildings across the Uni. These are; **Senate House, Beacon House, Wills Memorial Building, Richmond Building, Arts and Social Sciences library**. There are posters in the toilets that ask for feedback. At the end of the trial (end of March), Campus will look at usage, feedback, and costs.

REPORT FROM THE STUDENT EDI LEAD

Updates from Faculty WP and Student EDI Committee Meeting

Report from Gosia Drewniok, Assistant Director for International Student Success

The Director of Success will enhance support for international students by reviewing practices, identifying gaps, coordinating activities, fostering collaboration, proposing an International Student Experience Strategy, and supporting staff working with all international student groups.

Training Initiatives

The SayWhat online course on communicating with students using English as a second language (pilot phase, licenses provided by ISS), 'Working with International Students' workshops for Professional Services staff (ongoing since October).

Future activities

- Review of the English language support available and needed
- Review of the extended welcome programme and transition project
- Development of the International Student Success team
- Full rollout of sessions for staff
- Mapping of the international student journey and connecting activities across the University
- Running International Student Barometer survey again (11 Nov – 16 Dec 2025)
- Establishing the International Arrivals and Welcome working group

Student EDI Strategy

Trans Student Experience Action Plan (expected to be completed by January 2025).

Launch of a web page for trans and non-binary students in December 2024.

Review of Student Names Policy to simplify legal name changes, completion by January 2025.

Focus on using student names at graduations identified as a priority and underway.

Stand Up Speak Out Campaign

Development of student workshops continues, with pilot sessions planned for early 2025.

Facilitator training development in progress; pilot with a school planned for March 2025.

Workshops focus on active bystander techniques to foster a safe, inclusive environment.

Training Initiatives

Antisemitism awareness training delivered to staff, Islamophobia awareness training scheduled for January 2024. Anti-Racism in Practice workshops ongoing; teams across student-facing services to attend by May 2025.

Student Inclusion Team

[Mindset Coaching](#)

Applications open for home undergraduate students meeting eligibility criteria.

One-to-one coaching over six sessions focuses on managing stress, building confidence, and overcoming distractions.

Transition to University Hackathon

Longitudinal research study on transition, engagement, and attendance starting February 20, 2025.

Hackathon with 50 first-year undergraduates to inform future university activities.

Incentives: £150 Love2Shop vouchers and lunch for participants.

Athena Swan update

University of Bristol has introduced a major change to Athena Swan submissions. Rather than applications from individual Schools, there will be Faculty-wide submissions.

TARGET: FSE to make a Faculty-wide submission by July 2026, which will supersede the SoM's award.

- HR-EDI will request a year's extension to school level Swan awards due to expire (Geog, Earth) whilst governance structures are established at Faculty level post-restructure.
- Rather than prepare full submissions, the four Eng schools continue with their data analysis and develop evidence-based priorities for action.
- Note that data would still need to be disaggregated and analysed by School to meet AS requirements (already underway in Eng schools).
- Early 2025 a Faculty-level Self-Assessment Team would be convened, to include existing AS leads from each School. This ensures that their experience to date is not lost, and they can help drive cultural and structural change.
- Oversight from the Faculty EDI Committee means positive change can be embedded at scale across the entire Faculty, for example in recruitment or promotions, with greater impact.
- An initial review of data and existing Science school action plans alongside priority areas identified by Eng schools would be undertaken to identify shared challenges and common issues. This will also facilitate the identification of local challenges for targeted action to be developed and deployed where it is most needed.
- Each School retains current award levels (subject to extension approvals above) pending the outcome of the faculty submission, which could be made at Bronze (most likely) or Silver level.

Naomi Boardman / Kentaro Fujimoto, EDI Co-chairs

Andrew Hogg, Athena Swan lead

Katarzyna Reluga, Student EDI lead

February 2025

REPORT FROM THE SCHOOL MANAGER – FEBRUARY 2025

Professional Services Staffing Updates

- Student Admin Team
 - We are sad to announce the departure of Lily Golden, Deputy Student Admin Manager, who will be leaving us on 14th February. Lily will be stepping up to take on the promoted post of Executive Admin Manager in the School of Biochemistry, congratulations Lily! We would like to say a massive thank you to her for all her hard work and support during her time with the School, and wish her all the very best for her next steps.
 - We are pleased to announce that Alex Torres (School of Humanities) and Philip Coupland (School of Law) will also be joining us on 4th and 11th March respectively as Deputy Student Admin Managers – please join me in welcoming them both to the School!
 - We would also like to welcome Amber Williams to the Student Admin team, who joined us as Student Administrator on 18th December.

School IPP (Integrated Planning Process)

- The School has been awarded a further Student Administrator post which can be recruited to for 25/26 academic year to support our growing Student Admin team.

Finance Update

- Research grant post-award support changes
 - Changes to post award research support continue. A reminder that and two new shared mailboxes have been set up to assist with the management of queries. These mailboxes should be used in place of contacting your current AA if you have a studentship or EC award, with the budget code of the award included in the subject line/body of the email. Queries will still be picked up by your designated post-award contact but use of a shared mailbox will facilitate more effective support during periods of leave/cover etc
 - EC Post Award Shared Mailbox (fin-eu-postaward@bristol.ac.uk)
 - Studentships Shared Mailbox (fin-postaward-studentship@bristol.ac.uk)
 - A heads-up that all other colleagues with external research funding (with the exception of Heilbronn-associated awards) will also be asked to begin use of a new shared mailbox in the coming weeks to assist with the management of queries when contacting their AA. Further details and timelines to follow in due course.

Updated anti-bribery policy

- Please ensure that you are familiar with the updated [anti-bribery policy](#), launched before Christmas, and follow any required procedures going forward e.g. to register any gifts or hospitality valued over £200, or obtain

consent from your line manager and Group Finance Director before accepting any gifts or hospitality valued over £500.

Health & Safety Management

- Staff Survey
 - The School will shortly be launching its Health and Safety survey for 2025. This is mandatory for all staff and PGR students to complete as it outlines colleagues' personal responsibilities towards Health and Safety in the School community, as well as for their own safety. We would ask for colleagues' support in ensuring this exercise is completed by all and also for academics support in highlighting the importance of this to their PhD students.
- Ventilation of teaching spaces

We are working with colleagues across campus to support practices to improve ventilation in large shared teaching spaces. Please support ventilation in your teaching areas when you can by opening windows, running air exchanges etc as best you can between and during classes.
- Request for volunteers to join School fire warden group

Thanks to those academics and PS colleagues who have kindly volunteered to join our growing fire warden team – if anyone else would like to volunteer, please let me know.
- Tailgating

Please support the ongoing safety of the School community by being vigilant for tailgating or potential strangers on campus. Further information is available [here](#)
- Minutes of the School Safety Committee can be found on the School of Maths intranet pages

Travelling overseas – All staff and PGR students

- A reminder that all overseas travel needs to be logged on the Global Travel Portal <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/staff/travel/> and for staff travel above 30 days, approval by both Head of School and International Mobility team is required.

Louise Todd, School Manager, February 2025