

HoDoMS

Heads of Departments of Mathematical Sciences in the UK

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 1.30pm on Friday 8 April 2011 at Hornton Grange, Birmingham University Conference Park.

Present:

David Arrowsmith
Toby O'Neil
Jeremy Levesley
Tony Wickstead
Alison Hooper
Mary McAlinden
Kevin Parrott
Charles Taylor
Catherine Hobbs
Duncan Lawson
Pargat Singh-Calay
Dugald Duncan
Nigel Steele
Fiona Nixon
Anne Bennet

Chair
Secretary
Immediate Past Chair
Treasurer

IMA
LMS exec secretary
LMS group head for council and education committees

		ACTION
1.	Apologies	
	Tony Mann, Martin Hyland and Jeff Griffiths	
2.	Minutes of 7th January 2011 meeting	
	The minutes were accepted with only minor changes and were signed by the new Chair, DA .	
3.	Matters arising from last meeting	

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	<i>3.1 Workload survey:</i> This is in abeyance due to lack of resource.	
	<i>3.2 Analysis of RAE results:</i> Also in abeyance.	
	<p><i>3.4 HoDoMS website:</i> There has been some progress on this. The LMS are happy to host it but there are several questions to be answered before more can be done.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Website location: although the LMS are willing to host, there is the fact that we are not an LMS committee to consider and whether being hosted by the LMS would negatively affect our other external relationships (such as with the IMA). 2. We need to acquire a web domain name. This raises issues associated with ensuring registration fees are paid and having a long term name as a point of contact. Decision to be made at the next meeting on the precise name (e.g. www.hodoms.ac.uk or hodoms.net, etc as the cost of the address is variable) 3. What would the target constituency of such a site be? Would it be restricted to HoDs (and require issuing of passwords) or would it be a more open site with perhaps only a few restricted areas. 4. The perennial question of obtaining an accurate list of HoDs arose and whether the Heriot-Watt listing is sufficiently accurate and complete to be used as an initial list. 5. It was also suggested that some of the information and issues would be of value to department admissions tutors. 	
	<i>4.1 DFES workshop</i>	
	<p><i>4.2 Share Educations day</i> To be held at De Morgan House on 31 May 2011/</p>	
	<p><i>6.1 Role of HoDoMS with regard to MSOR</i> AH suggested that we need to review our relationship with both the IMA and LMS. The IMA is worried that we are ignoring them - we need to be careful here and not alienate them.</p>	
	<p>NS reassured the committee that we are viewed by the IMA as only being guilty of sins of omission not commission... and that there will be a place for us on the IMA education committee. Future representation would be considered on a case by case basis.</p>	
	4. Correspondence / Chair's communications	
	There was no correspondence to discuss.	
	Chair report: to be delivered at the next meeting.	
	The majority of QR income went to 5 or so institutions (and most were not in attendance at the HoDoMS conference) – DA to make contact with some heads and report back at the next meeting.	

	<p>The Committee felt that the natural forum for the mathematics community to speak with a single voice is through CMS but HoDoMS has no official representation on this.</p> <p>JL has asked for HoDoMS to have representation on this and there has been some progress – things are moving in the right direction.</p> <p>NS advised us to keep pushing on the CMS – we will gain entry eventually.</p>	
	<p>DA suggested that we should focus on persuading Frank Kelly and agreed to talk with him. To report on deliberations at the next meeting.</p>	DA
	<p>There is a general view that mathematical research in most institutions is being marginalised due to the limited amount of external funding available.</p> <p>The last strategy board suggested to the EPSRC that there should be more small grants (as with LMS). The EPSRC says that people currently ask for close to the small grant limit (£30k) and they are looking for people to bid for smaller sums (such as for travel).</p> <p>It was suggested that we approach Philippa Hemmings and ask her to consider the an extension of the small grants scheme? There is a possible opportunity here and David Harman has suggested that we keep pushing.</p> <p>FN suggested that the natural route for lobbying is through the CMS.</p>	
	<p>There was a discussion on the role of HoDoMS and our right to speak for the mathematical community.</p> <p>DA pointed out that HoDoMS does not have the right to speak for all interest groups but JL demurred, observing that we are a reasonable place for a single voice and that the CMS is not necessarily qualified.</p> <p>JL also pointed out that we are the managers who deliver on agreements - we should be involved in the process.</p> <p>AH said that we need to raise our visibility as an organisation. (Perhaps a website would help.)</p>	
	<p>DA on Lecturer Training: he has never heard a positive response on university courses on this but has also never heard anything negative about the MSOR courses.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Could we negotiate a substitution of MSOR modules for some of the internal modules? 2. Could we do it by working in conjunction with the IOP/RAEng etc.? 3. Could we agree a core of activity for STEM faculties to buy into? (For example Birmingham have a 20 credit M-level module on mathematics education at HE). <p>The main problem is getting universities to agree to use external courses –</p>	

	internal 'learning institutes' automatically oppose such ideas and (being the internal validators) are well placed to block. It was suggested that we could possibly flank them via the HEA and by influencing university PVCs.																															
	The committee agreed the principle that there should be subject-specific material delivered nationally.																															
	HoDoMS has been invited to the HEA meeting on 13 th May 2011 and this would be a good opportunity to find common cause.																															
	Need to write a report of the MSOR meeting and newsletter.	JL and DA																														
5.	Matters arising from 2011 Conference																															
	Chair to write to all speakers to thank them. In particular, John Toland was asked to return for next year's conference as it was felt that he did not have sufficient time to discuss the issues fully at the conference (see below).																															
	AH to write up AGM.	AH																														
	Possible ideas for 2012 Conference (provisional date: 12/13 April 2012) 1. Student experience (NUS education chair) 2. REF 2012 – already raised with John Toland 3. Government (Frank Kelly) 4. Performance Management (David Riley?) 5. Discipline lead (MSOR)s 6. EPSRC – something different from previous To be discussed again at September meeting.																															
6.	Watching briefs/external organisation representation																															
	There was nothing further to report beyond that already mentioned above. Briefs were redistributed as follows:																															
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	Bologna International Affairs	Charles Taylor	
	Routine reports should be sent to the Secretary to the Committee one week before each committee meeting. News requiring urgent action should be sent immediately.		
7.	Date of next meeting		
	Friday 16 th September at De Morgan House. Tea/coffee from 10.30am for 11am start.		TO
	Please submit reports from watching briefs to TO by Friday 9 th September 2011.		All
8.	Any other business		
	We need a mission statement and a list of priorities. (Jeremy drew something up that could form the basis of a mission statement that was discussed at conference). Discussion to continue outside the meeting.		All
	Cathy Hobbs volunteered to represent HoDoMS on the Engineering Professors Council working group.		CH

Chair's signature

Date