

# HoDoMS

## HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES IN THE UK

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 11.30am on Friday 9 January 2015 at De Morgan House.

**Present:**

Cathy Hobbs	<i>Chair</i>
Peter Clarkson	<i>Vice-Chair</i>
Toby O'Neil	<i>Secretary</i>
	<i>Treasurer</i>
David Arrowsmith	<i>Immediate past chair</i>
Kevin Golden	
Mary McAlinden	
Jan van den Heuvel	
Eddie Wilson	

**In attendance:**

Nigel Steele	IMA
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**Apologies:**

Pargat Calay  
Dugald Duncan  
Kevin Parrott  
Stephen Huggett

*Chair*

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1.	<b>Apologies</b>	
	See above	
2.	<b>Updates/actions related to January 2014 meeting</b>	
	The minutes of the September 2014 meeting were approved subject to some small corrections.	
3.	<b>Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CH</b> has done some limited updating of the website</li> <li>• There has been some gentle membership chasing, resulting in at least one membership renewal</li> <li>• <b>PC</b> Some discussion as to aims of REF Survey.</li> <li>• Proposed (and agreed) to defer discussion of admin support to conference (AGM item)</li> <li>• <b>DD</b>: Bank update – still working through but may get it all in place by the end of <b>DDs</b> term as treasurer.</li> <li>• RSS representative: Co-option of Ian Dryden to committee was approved</li> <li>• <b>MM</b> reported that she has successfully obtained an LMS grant to support a postgraduate training workshop at Oxford Brookes in February.</li> </ul>	
4.	<b>Correspondence / Chair's communications</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CH</b> would like to know where and when was the earliest female HoD-Committee was not sure, best suggestion made was Cardiff.</li> <li>• <b>CH</b> reported on her investigation into non-UK mathematicians who had been refused visas: she had found quite a few cases.</li> </ul> <p>The Royal Society has an allocation for visas but details of the scheme suggests that visitor needs essentially to be a superstar. (They have had an allocation of about 200 but only managed to distribute about 6 so far.) See <a href="https://royalsociety.org/about-us/competent-body/">https://royalsociety.org/about-us/competent-body/</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is still a need for case studies for the Diversity website – a reminder has been sent round the mailing list.</li> <li>• <b>CH</b> attended HEdSA (IMA). CMS raised the issue of 'cold spots' for mathematics in the UK and HEFCE has produced some data and looking to find more. <b>CH</b> following up and will recirculate the link.</li> </ul> <p><b>EW</b>: Important to identify right question. It was resported that some people were worried about small departments. There are lots of threats around and serious lack of data to help counter them.</p> <p><b>MM</b> suggested that it could be a possible conference discussion. But if so, need to plan some questions in advance and be clear as to what we hope to discover. One aim is to produce materials for briefing particular audiences –</p>	

	<p>for example, a 'refutation pack'. There is some need for short documents for various audiences. (departments, senior managers etc.) and perhaps a website for collating information and sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Impact:</b> <b>CH</b> met Ursula Martin (currently at Oxford), who has a project to look at REF impact case studies with the aim of finding deeper connections/effects. UM is interested in the gap between 'real' Impact and those studies that were eligible for REF and would like to talk at HoDOMS conference on this.</li> </ul> <p><b>CH:</b> She is interested in whether impact case studies concentrate in particular subdisciplines. <b>JvdH:</b> mentioned that there was an internal LSE report on potential impact cases for REF. <b>PCI:</b> reported that Kent did something similar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DD</b> had requested that we talk about the HoDoMS fee. Agreed to go to £175 to help raise funds for future activity.</li> </ul>	
5.	<b>New lecturers induction course</b>	
	<p>LMS in favour but wanted to know what we needed from them? (Did we want underwriting or to use them as a venue?) Some discussion about suitability of De Morgan House as a venue – significant concerns about accessibility of the building.</p> <p>IMA are also in favour and have offered us use of their conference-support administration.</p> <p>HoDoMS list: 22 positive responses and all likely to send at least one person.</p> <p><b>MM:</b> will need at least 25 people to make it viable. (The HEA one usually achieved this.)</p> <p><b>CH:</b> ideally would like to move location around...needs to be seen to be as community-owned.</p> <p>Target would be to run it for this September. MM to coordinate but will need support from others.</p> <p><b>MM:</b> IMA suggested they could seed fund us of about 2-3k (to cover admin) (but we need to pay back) and they would run all the conference-related administration such as payments, accommodation, etc. (Would need to be approved by IMA Council)</p> <p><b>CH/MM:</b> going to run it at least once (and perhaps aim to run with this structure) and use it as a learning exercise for running it longer term.</p> <p><b>CH:</b> ideal time beginning of 3rd week of September.</p> <p><b>MM:</b> The IMA has other conferences in September and they are and as a result</p>	

	<p>unwilling to support another in the 3rd week. The 2nd week is out because of a conference clash.</p> <p><b>MM:</b> There are issues with HoDoMS financial setup: HoDoMS need a travel expense policy for mileage allowance etc for speakers – she suggested we use the IMA’s as a starting point. Speakers at the course will require at least one overnight stay.</p> <p><b>CH/MM:</b> Priorities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. formal IMA agreement needed,</li> <li>2. Venue (free if ideal)</li> <li>3. Speakers.</li> </ol> <p><b>MM:</b> Asked about whether we could pay an Honorarium to (retired) speakers. Some discussion about an appropriate rate: ~£350 per day (plus expenses) agreed.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Committee gave its permission for MM to go ahead with planning and organisation (calling for support as needed).</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Planning for conference 2015</b>	
	<p>Conference will be 13 - 14 April (Monday and Tuesday) at the usual venue Possible Speakers/topics/sessions were discussed.</p> <p><b>CH: DD</b> will send around requests for subscriptions and conference fee shortly (by the end of January). Not clear what the payment mechanisms will be but hopefully at least one automated route. Participants/members will need a receipt.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> produce a receipt pro-forma to take to conference.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Open Plan Offices</b>	
	<p>The Chair reported that she had been contacted by a department that was facing a move to Open Plan offices. The department was looking for a statement supporting their them against this proposal. Committee agreed that this is a much wider issue for academic community and that we weren’t the right body to provide such support.</p> <p><b>CH</b> was invited to write opinion piece on Open Plan for THES but wasn’t sure she was the right person to do it.</p> <p><b>MM</b> suggested someone with generic expertise in higher education may be a more appropriate person to write such an article.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Watching briefs/ items for note</b>	

Current Brief distribution:

Agency	
JMC	David Arrowsmith
ACME	Mary McAlinden
CMS	David Arrowsmith/Lindsay Walsh
NCETM HE	Pargat Calay
GPS/Athena SWAN	Peter Clarkson
EPSRC	Eddie Wilson
IMA	David Arrowsmith
LMS	Stephen Huggett/Kevin Golden
RSS	Ian Dryden
ORSOC	Paul Harper
UUK	Toby O'Neil
European Math Soc	Stephen Huggett
Engineering Professors Council (on engineering education, employment and skills)	Cathy Hobbs

**ACME (MM)**

- In June 2014 the Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education (ACME) published its *Blueprint for Mathematics Education*. Following on from this a series of *Maths Snapshots* are due for publication. These are short policy summaries.
- ACME will be running a conference in July 2015. Further details will emerge over the coming months.
- ACME has two ongoing projects. One is focussing on initial teacher education and the second is about Statistics in reformed qualifications.
- The notes from the recent round table on teacher professional development have been posted on the ACME website.

**JMC: (CH)**

- A lot of discussion (with civil service input) about teacher training. Strong concerns were expressed that HEIs are closing their teaching training. There is strong demand for maths teacher training but the wider shift to primarily schools-based training means that universities are closing down their teacher training provision.
- Awarding bodies (Edexcel etc) are seeking subject experts to endorse their curricula. There are issues as to whether the individual or the body they are a member of are providing the endorsement. The awarding bodies are requiring confidentiality agreements to be signed by the Endorsers.

- Reported via Charlie Stripp (NCETM) that government wants to import some of the Chinese methods of teaching maths.

#### **CMS ( DA)**

- Very little news at the moment but beginning to see more activity.
- Focussed on setting up the subject committee.

#### **GPS/Athena SWAN (PC)**

- There are now 50 supporters.
- The committee organised a workshop in the autumn on *Unconscious Bias* which was run by the Equality Challenge Unit.

#### **EPSRC (EW)**

- Alan Turing Institute: Results not yet been announced. (Since meeting was held announced that it was to be headed by the universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh, Oxford, Warwick and UCL, and was to be based at the British Library.)
- There is a call for mathematical sciences in healthcare,
- Something strange is happening with the awarding of some Fellowships – there appears to be no panel for some candidates until the autumn.

#### **IMA ( DA)**

- Still working hard on scholarships for teachers but the government has holding back on marketing. Perhaps a HoDoMS mailing list prompt would be helpful?

#### **LMS (KG)**

- There have been discussions about the A-level reforms.
- New lecturers course was mentioned,.
- Concern expressed about young mathematicians stalling in their careers.
- LMS summer school:- waiting to hear how successful...
- **KG** to find out a bit more about the internship schemes for HoDs.
- Shanghai scheme and set up of hubs.

#### **UUK (TO)**

- Nothing to report

#### **EMS (SH)**

- No report

#### **EPC (CH)**

- **CH** is on a team that is working with UCAS to construct a Postgraduate

	portal. (Discussions are exploratory at the moment.)	
<b>8</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	None	
<b>9</b>	<b>Date of next meeting:</b> <b>14 April 2015 at 1.30pm at Birmingham Conference Centre.</b>	