

HoDoMS

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES IN THE UK

**Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 11am on Friday 20
January 2012 at the London Mathematical Society, Russell
Square, London.**

Present:

David Arrowsmith	Chair
Toby O'Neil	Secretary
Jeremy Levesley (by telephone)	Immediate Past Chair
Tony Wickstead	Treasurer
Mary McAlinden	
Kevin Parrott	
Charles Taylor	Vice-Chair
Catherine Hobbs	
Pargat Calay	
Alison Hooper	
Dugald Duncan	
Martin Hyland	
Nigel Steele	IMA
Fiona Nixon	LMS Exec Secretary
Anne Bennett	LMS Group Head (Council & Committees)

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		ACTION
1.	Apologies	
	Duncan Lawson, Jeff Griffith.	
2.	Minutes of 16th September 2011 meeting	
	Approved subject to minor corrections.	
	Thanks once again to the LMS for their continuing hospitality.	
	<p><i>Item 6. Communications within HoDoMS:</i> LMS agreed to support us with a website and a new site is being worked upon. We have two domains: hodoms.org.uk and hodoms.net and we will keep the .org one. Donald Eastwood Donald.eastwood@lms.ac.uk is web developer.</p> <p>The renewal payment for org domain is due imminently.</p>	AW
	<p>Three people can currently access mailing list: agreed that Chair, Secretary and Treasurer should have access in future.</p> <p>MH: Can database for HoDs continue development in parallel? Would want:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mailing list, • list of all possible departments, • current HoDs. <p>Would need to ensure compliance with data protection act.</p>	
	<p><i>Item 7. Conference 2012:</i> Need to make preliminary conference announcement next week.</p>	TO/DA
	<p>DA encouraging larger departments to get involved – question as to whether we should up accommodation to 50.</p>	
	<p>The annual call for subscriptions and conference attendance will go out shortly after this meeting. Information/items to AW for cross-checking and coordination.</p>	All
3.	Matters arising from last meeting	
	<u>JL: A level business</u>	
	<p>JL: A level business received an email about a review of the maths curriculum (led by Anne Watson) and the question is whether we should be involved? (This ties into 16-19.) The review is being run by a quasi-governmental body, the Westminster Forum.</p> <p>DL wasn't convinced that we should be involved.</p> <p>JL is sitting on the LMS Education committee and the committee is thinking about this a lot more carefully. HoDoMS has been silent on this issue in the past and JL wonders</p>	

	<p>whether it is appropriate for us to apply pressure on the way that A level is taught – these reviews seem to have too much discussion on content and too little on approach and method. If we don't speak then we have no influence.</p> <p>MH (speaking as the LMS) has no idea whether Westminster Forum will have influence. He also noted the issues about the capacity/capability of teachers to cope with yet more reform.</p>	
	<p>DA: We could send a position statement to Ros Smith at ACME.</p> <p>JL: Could be a good approach.</p> <p>AH: Need to make sure response doesn't result in recommendations that make A level harder. It would be better if there is only one exam board rather than three.</p> <p>MH: This would be against government ideology – no chance that it will happen.</p> <p>KP: Strategically good idea to have a voice but we need to be very careful about what we say.</p> <p>NS: HoDoMS could usefully explain risks of corruption in delivery.</p> <p>Actions: JL to get document together and committee to comment. DA to then pass to Ros Smith.</p>	JL/DA
4.	Correspondence / Chair's communications	
	<p><i>Representation on CMS</i></p> <p>Reminded committee that the Chair of CMS had decided it was not appropriate for HoDoMS to be represented on it. Not appropriate for us to continue to push this issue but instead we will maintain a working relationship and keep communications open.</p>	
	<p><i>EPSRC funding</i></p> <p>DA continues to press point that many departments feel disenfranchised. The EPSRC needs to be encouraged to continue to offer small grants.</p> <p>AB: The 17th Feb is the annual CMS/EPSRC meeting – anything we wish to feed in should be passed to AB or Frank Kelly. (DD to coordinate)</p>	AB/DD
	<p>DA attended a pilot scheme of a new way to appraise grant proposals –they will still have academic quality as the primary criterion but there will be two new secondary criteria (national importance and portfolio fit). National importance <i>does not</i> mean immediate applicability.</p> <p>The EPSRC is still pressing ahead with shaping capability and it is still not clear when we will know the focus areas of the EPSRC.</p>	
	<p><i>MSOR network support</i></p> <p>DA asked departments whether they were willing to provide small amounts of funding to the network. He got a good response but DL doesn't think it needs the financial support at the moment. (HEA supplied transition funding to MSOR network this year.)</p> <p>AH attended last meeting of MSOR-Network in December and reported that some of its activities will be subsumed into the HEA work of MM. (HEA had been supplying discipline support through subject centres for several years but, due to budget cuts, decision was</p>	

	<p>taken to restructure and have a more centralised model.) MM is the discipline lead for Maths.</p> <p>The HEA will continue to deliver courses for new staff and PhD students but the format is not yet clear.</p>	
	<p><i>House of Lords HE-STEM</i></p> <p>DA (as Chair of HoDoMS) submitted a response on behalf of the Committee to the House of Lords enquiry into HE-STEM. He observed that for such things to happen, it needs somebody to take a lead and put up an Aunt Sally in order to get a reaction.</p> <p>DA was concerned that the enquiry was getting too low down into the detail – will they be specifying the syllabus?</p> <p>DA also worried that government has two potentially diametrically-opposed goals: progression and high standards.</p>	
	<p><i>16-19 funding review</i></p> <p>There was a call for responses to the 16-19 funding review – HoDoMS didn't submit anything but the IMA did. HoDoMS lack of response partly explained by DA feeling he didn't have the knowledge to respond on our behalf.</p> <p>MH: Not a problem – this represents view of HoDoMS!</p> <p>AH: What is happening with 'use of mathematics'? How will this affect us?</p> <p>DA: Should we have somebody who has an interest/view on 16-19 education?</p> <p>Concluded that it was entirely appropriate that we remain silent sometimes.</p>	
5.	Good Practice Award	
	<p>CH: Updated committee last time that the LMS had concerns with the way the award was set up. LMS Council was not happy about an award but was willing for there to be encouragement of good practice!</p> <p>Athena Swan now has a bronze award and Research Councils are beginning to require Athena Swan status as a requirement for funding applications, (For example, NIHR now requires silver award and possible that RCUK may require bronze award.) This challenges the original rationale for the Good Practice Award..</p> <p>When met with LMS in late September the conclusion was that although LMS Council was not willing to support the award, they were willing to contribute funding to achieve something worthwhile. The current idea is to help departments to achieve Athena Swan status. (Nobody has been awarded the GPA – currently only supporters.)</p> <p>Some possible ways to achieve this: regional workshops, giving departments idea about where they are performing (this requires benchmark data), mentoring departments.</p>	

	<p>The GPA will move to a closer Athena Swan relationship. Proposals to LMS Council shortly.</p> <p>There is a GPA steering committee meeting next Monday.</p>	
	<p>MH: Minor in one sense but we do need to clarify where responsibility for the GPA lies between HoDoMS and the LMS. (It was initiated as a joint scheme.) The steering group needs a clear line of responsibility (partly to clarify and avoid legal issues). He suggested that the Steering Group be a working group of the LMS Women in Mathematics committee, which can hold a budget and receive legal advice.</p> <p>Conclusion: to place under formal control of LMS (WiM) with HoDoMS as a nominating party (some details still to be clarified.)</p>	LMS
	<p>For note: The checklist developed by the Institute of Chemistry is very helpful for monitoring progress towards an Athena Swan award.</p>	
6.	EPSRC	
	Discussed under item 4.	
7.	HoDoMS Mission Statement	
	<p>DA's summary of Committee's views/ideas on this was circulated before the meeting and is attached to the minutes as an appendix.</p> <p>AH: Part B reads like ideas for an action plan, so perhaps would be an idea to pick out one or two as goals for a given year.</p> <p>MM: Need to be careful about ensuring not creating work for other people (for example: the lecturer training scheme)</p> <p>MH: Less is more for a mission statement. So section B needs downplaying. Section A is fine but B should be hidden!</p> <p>Action: Need to cross-check Section A with the constitution.</p>	TO
8.	Conference 2012	
	Clear research and teaching agenda.	
	<p><i>Draft Timetable</i> 12th April REF 2014 (John Toland, Chair of Mathematical Sciences panel) Managing a Mathematics Department (David Riley) EPSRC (Vivienne Blackstone) Good Practice Scheme (Gwyneth Stallard) Annual Meeting Dinner for 7/7.30pm</p> <p>13 April HE-STEM Initiative (Makhan Singh – also asked him to have posters on display before hand)</p>	

	Professional Training for Maths Sciences in HE (Mary McAlinden) Post-16 Mathematics (Rosalind Mist) Why should taxpayers fund research in mathematics? (Graeme Read, BIS) Lunch Committee Meeting																																	
	May be wise to have a reserve speaker but needs to be somebody who will be attending. One possibility would be for TM to discuss student experience. Conference details need to be confirmed.	TO, DA																																
9.	Representation on other committees																																	
	<i>HE-STEM and JMC</i> HoDoMS representative to JMC: DA . Action to inform DL that DA is nominee. HE-STEM: Inform David Youdan of HoDoMS observer: NS will report back to HoDoMs:.																																	
10.	Watching briefs/external organisation representation																																	
	Current Brief distribution: <table border="1" data-bbox="268 1021 1225 1742"> <thead> <tr> <th>Agency</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>JMC</td> <td>Duncan Lawson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACME</td> <td>Kevin Parrott</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CMS</td> <td>David Arrowsmith</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NCETM HE</td> <td>Pargat Calay</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HEA MSOR Network</td> <td>Duncan Lawson/Mary McAlinden</td> </tr> <tr> <td>STEM (incl WP)</td> <td>Alison Hooper</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EPSRC</td> <td>Dugald Duncan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IMA</td> <td>Nigel Steele</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LMS</td> <td>Martin Hylund</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RSS</td> <td>Charles Taylor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ORSOC</td> <td>Jeff Griffiths</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TDA</td> <td>Jeremy Levesley</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UUK</td> <td>Toby O'Neil</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bologna International Affairs</td> <td>Charles Taylor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Engineering Professors Council maths working group</td> <td>Cathy Hobbs (to be nominated by us)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>HEdSA</i>: DA to add something. (Peter Giblin chairs this).</p> <p><i>CMS</i>: Frank Kelly letter to EPSRC.</p> <p><i>ACME</i>: Nothing to report</p>	Agency		JMC	Duncan Lawson	ACME	Kevin Parrott	CMS	David Arrowsmith	NCETM HE	Pargat Calay	HEA MSOR Network	Duncan Lawson/Mary McAlinden	STEM (incl WP)	Alison Hooper	EPSRC	Dugald Duncan	IMA	Nigel Steele	LMS	Martin Hylund	RSS	Charles Taylor	ORSOC	Jeff Griffiths	TDA	Jeremy Levesley	UUK	Toby O'Neil	Bologna International Affairs	Charles Taylor	Engineering Professors Council maths working group	Cathy Hobbs (to be nominated by us)	
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	<p><i>NCETM</i>: New teacher training programme is shifting emphasis away from HE towards on the job training in schools – what is view of effect on teacher training in HEIs. They seem to be short of funding but will continue in some form.</p> <p><i>STEM</i>: Employer engagement – PC employers got involved in design of degree courses and got a lot of very useful feedback and engagement. Now have a work-related learning module which is informed by employer. Used IMA to identify employers. (Unilever, NHS, BAE, Financial companies,...)</p> <p><i>EPSRC</i>: (DD) recommends Burt Totaro’s website for updates on current situation. There will be a scheme of PhD prizes (to give some post-PhD funding for a year or so.) Internal competition within Universities for EPSRC students. EPSRC has clarified that they expect 100 contact hours of teaching for students.</p> <p><i>IMA</i>: (NS) Strategy review published and Robert MacKay (Warwick) is new president. Looking at how to grow membership and how to support student societies. Working closely with ACME.</p> <p>The HE-STEM project has taken a lot of time, one of long term: one of the aims was to get professional bodies to work more closely and this now seems to be starting to happen. Careers advice pilot.</p> <p>With aid of IoP, have been lobbying TDA to have a maths and physics route into teacher training and have succeeded! Initial Teacher Training route Physics and Maths. Think it has been successful.</p> <p><i>LMS</i>: (MH) Apart from CMS activity and responses to DoE, there is an issue with EPSRC short courses – they have announced that they’re cutting them. LMS thinks they are valuable (needs validation) and LMS will be taking on more of the financial load. (And in two years will have to bear it all).</p> <p><i>RSS</i>: (CT) They have formed an Academic Affairs Advisory Group. This has been visited by the research councils explaining the opportunities for mathematicians/statisticians. (For example, BBSRC allows mathematicians to be PI on math biology bids). Perhaps HoDoMS should organise something along these lines?</p> <p><i>Engineering</i>: (CH) nothing to report.</p>	
11.	Date of next meeting	
	Friday 13 th April 2012 at Birmingham Conference Centre. 1.30pm start.	
12.	Any other business	
	KP : What is the likely future status of taught PG courses in mathematics? Current pricing and funding are not sustainable and fees are likely to increase significantly over the next couple of years.	

Chair's signature

Date

Items in abeyance		
	Workload survey	
	RAE results analysis	



APPENDIX

HODOMS MISSION STATEMENT

A: I would like a short version of who we are and what we are about

For example:

HoDoMS is the representative body for Heads of Department in the Mathematical Sciences in UK Universities and aims to discuss and promote the interests of HE Mathematics in the UK and to facilitate dialogue between departments.

HoDoMS does this by:

- engaging with issues impacting on UK Mathematics
- representing the interests of departments in response to funding, resource, education and national/international surveys
- organising a reflective annual conference to
 - encourage awareness of current issues and good practice, and
 - inform heads in the management of departments for their research and teaching success.

B. We might wish to have a secondary list of aims? I have listed those collected when we last met which are perhaps not met directly by the general thoughts above. A subset of these might be appropriate for listing.

Other specific aims of HoDoMS are to:

1. promote and support a relevant and unified lecturer training scheme designed specifically to support mathematics
2. support the full range of HE departments in the mathematical sciences
3. work through Heads of Department to improve the UK maths community
4. use its influence to maintain a healthy mathematical community in the UK which is geographically spread and intellectually diverse
5. represent/support the community of HE lecturing staff in mathematics in the UK
6. articulate (strategic) details concerns affecting the vitality of mathematics in HE inclusive/representing as well as supporting
7. influence policy where it impinges on mathematics and statistics research
8. play a full role in the wider mathematical community of education and research in so far as these impact in HE
9. aid in development of pedagogy and coordinate common learning materials (paper-based and/or electronic)
10. act as a focal point for external agencies to communicate with HE mathematics
11. develop a picture of the research landscape and how research money should be distributed
12. develop a strategy for engagement with business/industry
13. aid departments to take an overview of the discipline with a view to developing the mathematical leaders of the future mathematics with policies, provide links to relevant bodies,
14. ensure the maths community within UK speaks with strength to their own Universities (?)

15. share best practice in dealing with intuitional (stet) challenge
16. work together to ensure the continued existence of a sustainable mathematics community
17. act as a "trade union" for HoDs – providing support and guidance for departments experiencing a variety of difficulties
18. facilitate discussion on issues of mutual interest with other learned bodies and other interested parties

David Arrowsmith

18/01/2012