

## **BIOLOGY OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of Monday 12 September 2004 in K227

**Present:** Jo Brighton (Secretary), Caroline Calvert (CNAP), Adrian Harrison (Departmental Outreach Organiser), Peter Humpherson (Technical staff representative), Julie Lord, Ottoline Leyser (Research Committee and Academic staff representative) and John Pillmoor (Chair and Strategy Board Link).

**Apologies for absence:** None

04/001 Introduction and background. The Chair outlined the background to the introduction of a Departmental Outreach Committee. Current outreach activity in the Department was not centrally co-ordinated. There were no formal links with other Departmental or University Outreach Committees. As Departments and Universities were being required by the both the Government and Research Councils to actively engage in outreach work, Strategy Group had decided to form a Committee to oversee the promotion and development of all forms of outreach within the Department and John Pillmoor agreed act as Chair.

04/002 Definition of Outreach. The Committee **proposed** a modified definition of outreach: *"Outreach is defined as any activity that involves a contact external to the University to promote science and technology in the wider community and/or continued professional development."* It was **agreed** that the remit of the Committee would be to develop, co-ordinate and promote the above activities, subject to **approval** by Strategy Group.

Excluded from the above definition would be matters relating to intellectual property transfer, consultancy or research contracts; presentations at normal scientific conferences; publications in normal scientific journals and books and the existing Departmental admissions and teaching activities at undergraduate and graduate level.

04/003 Terms of Reference

a) Committee Membership: The Committee **considered** the proposed membership and **agreed** that Undergraduate and Graduate (PhD) student representatives (one of each) should be invited to join the Committee. Jo Brighton **agreed** to organise this at the start of the Autumn Term 2004. The Chair confirmed that Peter Humpherson and Ottoline Leyser had been invited to join the Committee as representatives of their peer groups. Ottoline Leyser felt that it was important that she should also represent the Biology Research Committee.

b) Committee Minutes: The Committee **agreed** that the minutes of the meetings would be approved by Departmental Strategy Group and made

available to all members of the Department. The minutes would also be circulated to other relevant University Committee's if appropriate: the recently formed University Science Outreach Group, Admissions and Schools Liaison, Student tutoring programme and the Continuing Professional Development Co-ordinator (if appointed). The Committee also **agreed** that links should be forged with the Science Education Group and National Academy for Excellence in Science Teaching.

c) Revised Terms of Reference : Are attached for reference as Appendix 1

04/004 Encouraging participation: The Committee **agreed** that the key to the success of outreach was encouraging staff participation. It was hoped that with greater central co-ordination and background help more staff would find the time to become involved. Ottoline Leyser pointed out that not only was there a moral obligation for staff to be involved in this but also an external obligation i.e. BBSRC funded grants currently require investigators to participate in outreach work during the period of the grant and Caroline Calvert suggested the next RAE may also require academic staff to demonstrate their outreach activities.

The Committee **agreed** the following points as an initial step in raising awareness and encouraging participation, subject to **approval** by Strategy Group:

- a. Increase the Departmental profile of and support for outreach work.
- b. Identify a figure (days per year) that academic staff would be expected to contribute to outreach. The Committee **agreed** that 1 or 2 days per year would be an expected minimum. To encourage participation it was proposed that staff should receive points for outreach work on the teaching load spreadsheet, rather than against their administrative load as originally suggested. Adrian Harrison **agreed** to discuss this issue with Peter Hogarth and identify an appropriate point system.
- c. Many technicians are interested in outreach work but are not encouraged to take time out from laboratory work by their line managers. It would be expected that Academic staff would encourage the staff they supervise to participate in outreach to some degree.
- d. For PhD students, outreach activities could be included in the green card system. Adrian Harrison **agreed** to discuss this with Richard Waites and identify an appropriate points system (1 point per day or a greater number of points and a limit to the number they could accrue in a year). It was **noted** that both new and continuing PhD students would need to be informed of this at the beginning of term.
- e. Undergraduate students should be **encouraged** by supervisors to participate in the schemes currently available (e.g. Student tutoring programme).
- f. Creation of central departmental database detailing all outreach work recently undertaken by staff in the Department. This information would be available in a WEB based format that all staff could access. Adrian Harrison **agreed** to discuss the development of the database with Paul

Waites. Jo Brighton **agreed** to contact all staff for information on their outreach activities for inputting onto the database.

- g. The Committee **noted** that there is a lot of grant funding available for outreach work and **suggested** that Adrian Harrison should concentrate his work as outreach organiser on applying for funding, rather than delivering the programmes himself. Caroline Calvert **agreed** to help with this. Co-ordinated applications with other Departments should also be investigated.
- h. The Committee **noted** that schools often look for 'outreach continuity' i.e. regular (annual) programmes. With respect to schools input, it was noted that CRB checks are often required and, at the moment, there is no help with the costs of these. Due to the amount of legislation, particularly in schools, it would be important to provide a suitable level of training to help staff. A suitable course may already be available through the Staff Training and Development Group.

04/005 Publication of Outreach Committee: The Committee **agreed** that the work of the Committee would be publicised to the Department via the Website.

04/006 AOB: No other business was forthcoming.

04/007 Date of next meeting: Tuesday 26 October at TBA in K227.

Jo Brighton  
Secretary, September 2004

Matters arising from the Outreach Committee Meeting of  
Monday 12 September 2004

**John Pillmoor** to approach **Strategy Group** to approve the following:

- (1) The revised Terms of Reference.
- (ii) Academic staff to be expected to contribute a minimum of 1 – 2 days per year to outreach work.
- (iii) Points for outreach work should be included on the teaching load spreadsheet.

**Adrian Harrison** is asked to:

- (i) Identify the appropriate number of points to be allocated to academic staff for outreach work in discussion with Peter Hogarth.
- (ii) Identify the appropriate number of points to be allocated to PhD students for outreach work in discussion with Richard Waites.
- (iii) Approach the Biology Graduate School Board in discussions with Richard Waites to seek approval for outreach work to receive points on the green card system
- (iii) Discuss the creation of a WEB based database with Paul Waites.

**Jo Brighton** is asked to:

- (i) Contact all Departmental staff for information on Outreach work undertaken in the past year.
- (ii) Organise Undergraduate and PhD student representation on the Committee in October.

## **Appendix 1 : Biology Outreach Committee - Revised Terms of Reference**

### **Remit**

To develop, co-ordinate and promote the Department's outreach activities. The Biology Outreach Committee takes into account equal opportunities in its work.

### **Definition of Outreach**

"Outreach is defined as any activity that involves a contact external to the University to promote science and technology in the wider community or to provide short training courses and/or continued professional development."

The definition includes :

- activities by any member of staff or Biology student that involves them as a representative of the University or Department whether or not this is directly related to their normal job role;
- contacts with the general public, community groups, schools and industry, whether directly or through other departments within the University.

Specifically excluded from the definition are :

- any matters relating to intellectual property transfer, consultancy or research contracts;
- presentations at normal scientific conferences or publications in normal scientific journals and books;
- normal activities associated with undergraduate and post graduate admissions and teaching.

### **Reporting Structure**

*Reports to:* Departmental Strategy Group  
*Considers minutes from:* None

Non-starred minutes of the Biology Outreach Committee are available within the Department (location to be defined) and provided to other outreach committees and groups within the University as appropriate.

### **Membership**

John Pillmoor (Chair and Strategy Group Link)  
Adrian Harrison (Biology Outreach co-ordinator)  
Ottoline Leyser (Research Committee and Academic staff representative)  
Caroline Calvert (CNAP representative)  
Peter Humpherson (Technical and other staff representative)  
Post-graduate representative  
Undergraduate representative

### **Specific Functions**

1. To develop and maintain the Departmental policy and guidelines for those involved in outreach;
2. To develop and maintain a database of outreach activities;
3. To develop and publicise the outreach resources available within the Department;
4. To provide summary data regarding outreach activities within the Department;
5. To prioritise and allocate bids for the outreach funds provided by the Department;
6. To liaise with other outreach and CPD committees / working groups within the University (e.g. the National Academy for Education in Science Teaching);
7. To identify and facilitate applications to obtain external funding to support the outreach activities of the Department.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

Normally once per term (3 times per year)

**These Terms of Reference were agreed at the 13 September 2004 meeting of the Biology Outreach Committee and are subject to modification in the light of experience.**