

Chemistry Update

Newsletter 312, 30 August 2019

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Calendar of Events

Year 3 Organic / Inorganic Plenaries

Date: Wednesday 4 September
Time: 12.40pm—4.25pm
Location: C/B/101

Sustainability Metrics: Tracking, Measuring and Reporting Responsible Innovation

Date: Wednesday 11 September
Time: 9.30am—4pm
Location: C/F/106

Lunchtime wellbeing walk

Date: Friday 13 September
Time: 12.15pm—12.45pm
Meet 12.10 at Chemistry reception

University Open Days

Date: 14/15 September

Second Joint NSFC-RSC Symposium on Sustainable Chemistry and Processes

Date: 19-20 September
Location: National STEM Learning Centre

[Further info and register](#)

Spotlight on Metalloenzymes: Bioinorganic Strategies for Converting Matter and Energy

Date: Monday 23 September
Time: 12.30pm—5.30pm
Location: B/K/018

CHyM: ZULF ITN Network Meeting

Date: 23-27 September

MacMillan Coffee Morning

Date: Wednesday 25 September
Time: 10.30am—11.30am
Location: D Block Coffee Room & Biology Atrium

Date of Next Issue:
27 September 2019

Pioneer in Organometallic Chemistry to join Department

Professor Andrew Weller will be joining the Department in January 2020 from the University of Oxford.



Professor Weller is a currently holder of an [EPSRC Established Career Fellowship](#) (2015–2021) and was recipient of the [Royal Society of Chemistry Frankland award in 2016](#). He is currently co-director of the EPSRC CDT in Inorganic Synthesis for Future Manufacturing at Oxford ([OxICFM](#)).

[Professor Weller](#) has made important, innovative and pioneering contributions to the organometallic chemistry of the transition metals, most notably in the areas of novel synthetic techniques; the mechanism-led design of efficient and selective catalyst systems; C–H, B–H or C–C activation; and the generation, characterisation and use of highly reactive and novel organometallic complexes.

Blending innovative fundamental research with a focused trajectory towards delivering real-world solutions using precision catalysis, Professor Weller's research has impact on the efficient use of finite natural resources, the manufacture of new high-performance materials, and more efficient synthesis of fine chemicals for potential pharmaceutical uses.

Head of Department, Professor Duncan Bruce said: "We are very excited about this appointment as York has a strong tradition in the fields of Professor Weller's expertise, namely organometallic chemistry and catalytic processes. To be able to attract a world-leading scientist to the department will further enhance our profile and capability in these areas."

Professor Weller commented: "I have long admired York Chemistry's approach to supporting and delivering world-class science, in particular the high quality of the faculty, the excellent environment and infrastructure, the obvious collegiality of staff, and its enviable reputation for excellence across the spectrum of the Chemical Sciences. I, and my group, are very much looking forward to joining the vibrant community at York and we are very excited by the new opportunities this will give us in the future."

Professor Weller received his first degree from the University Warwick, and his PhD from the University of Bristol in 1995. Postdoctoral positions at Heriot-Watt and Notre Dame were followed by a Royal Society University Research Fellowship held at the University of Bath. He then moved to Oxford in 2007 to a personal chair in Inorganic Chemistry.

Professor Weller will arrive in York in early 2020; his [research team](#) of 10 graduate and PDRA co-workers will be relocating to York with him. They will make significant contributions to the Department's research theme of [Synthesis, Catalysis and Mechanisms](#).

Academics Assemble - A Celebration of Interdisciplinary Research and Collaboration



The event will take place on 11 October 2019 and is a celebration of interdisciplinary research and collaboration. Interdisciplinary research is a key aspect of university research, alongside our disciplinary excellence, and often cited as necessary to tackle the challenges facing the world. Come and hear from colleagues across the Faculties about their past experiences of working in interdisciplinary networks, consider present opportunities to join and fund interdisciplinary activities, **and influence the debate about the future direction of interdisciplinarity at York.**

[Registration is now open.](#) If you would like to attend part of the day, but not all of it, please do feel free. Lunch will be provided.

For further queries please contact Ruth at research-champions@york.ac.uk.

Board of Studies - Calendar of Meetings 2019-20

Term	Week	Date	Day/Time	Room
2019				
Autumn	SV13	18 September	Wednesday 14:00	A102
	7	13 November	Wednesday 14:00	A102
2020				
Spring	5	5 February	Wednesday 14:00	A102
Summer	4	6 May	Wednesday 14:00	A102
	9	10 June +	Wednesday 11:00	A102
	10	17 June *	Wednesday 13:30	A102
	10	18 June *	Thursday 13:30	A102
	SV2	1 July	Wednesday 14:00	A102

+ Internal Examiners Meeting – Wed 10 June 2020

* Provisional dates for Extraordinary meetings for Examinations results

Graduation Ceremony Dates (provisional):

Friday 24 and Saturday 25 January 2020

Wednesday 22 – Saturday 25 July 2020

New funding to create collaboration with Kobe University

Our researchers are to collaborate with colleagues in Japan to combat ground level ozone - a major pollutant in East Asia.



[Professor Alastair Lewis](#), of the Department of Chemistry and the National Centre for Atmospheric Science, and Takuya Saito, of Japan's National Institute for Environmental Studies and Kobe University, will lead the project which will receive £430,000 in funding.

Ground-level, or tropospheric, ozone results from chemical reactions caused by the interaction of sunlight with pollutants emitted by sources such as transport and power plants.

Tropospheric ozone causes lung and cardiovascular problems and can reduce crop yields. By measuring the compounds that fuel tropospheric ozone production, the researchers hope to influence future methods of reducing this form of pollution.

The partnership is part of a new initiative between UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) which will see £4.7m funding a number of research projects in the UK and Japan.

Universities will investigate a diverse set of global challenges including HIV vaccine design, understanding earthquakes, and human influences in melting ice sheets.

New starters

Carla Nunes-Vital, Green Chemistry Administrator

Room: C/F117b; Ext: 4965; Email: carla.nunesvital@york.ac.uk

Dr Marc Dickinson, Postdoctoral Research Associate (with Dr Kirsty Penkman)

Room: C/D204; Ext: 4472; Email: marc.dickinson@york.ac.uk

Dr Daniel Diaz, Postdoctoral Research Associate (with Prof Paul Walton)

Room: C/E001; Ext: 4587; email: daniel.diazromero@york.ac.uk

Welcome back to:

Dr Jim Brannigan, Postdoctoral Research Associate (with Prof Tony Wilkinson)

Room: B/K266; Ext: 8276; Email: jim.brannigan@york.ac.uk

New roles in the Department:

Dr Tabitha Petchey, Green Chemistry Postdoctoral Research Associate (with Prof James Clark)

Room: C/F119; Ext: 4972; Email: tabitha.petchey@york.ac.uk

Jo Eastwood, CIEC Administrator

Room: C/B013; Ext: 2523; Email: jo.eastwood@york.ac.uk

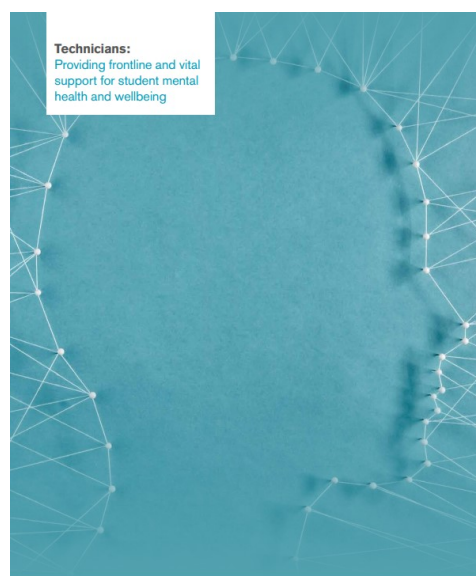


Technicians: Providing frontline and vital support for student mental health and wellbeing

On 20 June, Simon Breeden and Helen Burrell attended the launch of the report, 'Technicians: Providing frontline and vital support for student mental health and wellbeing'. The report, launched at the Royal Society of Chemistry, was developed by a collaborative team from the Technician Commitment, Science Council, Institute of Physics, Royal Society of Biology, Royal Society of Chemistry, University of Liverpool and University of Nottingham.

With mental health issues increasing within the UK higher education sector, the report recognises that many technicians working in student facing roles, whilst providing expertise and support to the delivery of teaching, also quite often provide unrecognised pastoral care. This very much mirrors the experience here in the Department of Chemistry. Although this report focusses on technicians, a similar situation is seen across other groups of staff, and one of the positive responses of the Department is the formation of the award winning Mental Health First Aid Team. The report also confirms that many technicians are dealing with personnel and sensitive issues without any formal recognition or training. Within the report are a number of recommendations to the higher education sector to ensure support and training for all dealing with these issues.

A [full copy of the report](#) can be found on the [Technicians Make it Happen website](#).



The front cover of the report



Kelly Vere from the Science Council introduces the launch of the report at the RSC

Online Department suggestion box



The online Equality and Diversity suggestion box has been extended to be a suggestion box for the whole Department. You can submit your thoughts/suggestions/ideas for general Departmental matters as well as matters relating to Equality and Diversity. You can find the Google form on the intranet homepage or at this [link](#).

Athena SWAN Gold submission now available online

Our most recent Athena SWAN Gold submission document is now available on the [University Athena SWAN pages](#).



Chemistry at York has held the Gold Award continuously since 2007, making it the longest held Gold in the country. The award recognises the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all, to which the Department is committed and sets out an ambitious action plan designed to drive further change over the next four years.

The Department of Chemistry received the award at a ceremony held here in York this summer. The award was accepted by Equality and

Diversity Group (EDG) members Dr Derek Wann, Dr Helen Coombs and Dr Leonie Jones, who gave a talk highlighting some key achievements such as the development of family friendly and flexible working arrangements, the introduction of an unconscious bias observer scheme and support for professional and support staff. It was a great day for York with Biology also receiving their Gold Award and the University's institutional Bronze Award was renewed.

The submission was the culmination on an enormous amount of hard work by a core team of EDG members led by EDG chair Dr Caroline Dessent. It was particularly praised for its wealth of good practice, inspiring case studies and support for the career development of professional and support staff. Many thanks to all those who contributed to the submission document by taking part in departmental surveys and focus groups and by providing quotes and photographs.

The new action plan, found at the back of the submission document, sets out the vision for the next four years, with a focus on mid-career support, well-being and support for BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) individuals. EDG will continue to provide regular updates here in Chemistry Update and in staff meetings.

Revised 2015 Athena SWAN Charter

Recognises the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

Award now includes:

- professional and support roles (e.g. admin and technical staff)
- trans staff and students
- addresses gender equality more broadly, not just barriers that affect women



HEaTED, Hull and hot weather

A very hot day on Tuesday 23 July saw six members of the technical team journey to the University of Hull to attend the HEaTED Northern Regional Network Event.



The event, which brought together technicians from universities across the northern part of the country, celebrated the diversity of technical roles. Invited to speak at this event was Helen Burrell, our Deputy Teaching Laboratory Manager. Helen's talk, entitled "The diversity of roles within a teaching laboratory" enlightened the audience on the complexity of running such a large teaching laboratory, highlighting the many qualities, abilities and skills, both technical and soft required of teaching laboratory technicians. With such a wide area to cover, Helen focused on three main areas: pastoral care both in terms of adaptations to allow physically disabled students to complete the lab and

mental health support. There was also a whistle stop tour through experimental design and development as well as module assessment. Included in the talk was the acknowledgement that teaching labs could not operate without the never-ending support from the wider technical team within Chemistry. The talk was well received and gave a great impression of our teaching laboratories.

The networking event ended with a tour of the University of Hull's Allam Medical Building. Opened in 2017 by HM The Queen, the building provides a stimulated learning environment which includes hospital wards, an operating theatre, a birthing unit and even a fold-up ambulance.

Clarke group news



Msc(Res) student Nik Vagkidis and MChem student Alex Brown developed amino imidates as a new class of organocatalyst. Their work evaluating them in aldol reactions has recently been [published in Synthesis](#).

A group Laser Quest social (photo left) welcomed summer students Freddy Horsfall and Tamsin Nicklas.



Come along to our Coffee Morning

Every penny we raise means Macmillan can help more people with cancer live life as fully as they can.

Where: **Biology Atrium and Chemistry D-block Coffee Room**

Date: **Wednesday 25th September** Time: **10:30**

Cakes, cuppas and cash at the ready!



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MORNING**

**MACMILLAN
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UNIVERSITY
of York



INDO-UK Workshop

Green Chemistry for Societal Needs: Healthcare, Pollution and Circular Economies

VENUE: HOTEL MAIDENS, NEW DELHI, INDIA

16-18 DECEMBER 2019

Bringing together Early Career Researchers from the UK and India with an aim to promote research

More info and register at: bit.ly/2TUfcAj Application Deadline: 20 Sept 2019

In partnership with

