

Chemistry Update

Newsletter 336, 24 September 2021

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Calendar of Events

Inorganic Seminar

Speakers: Dr Jona Foster, University of Sheffield &
Dr Laurence Doyle, University of York

Date: Wednesday 29 September

Time: 12.30pm—1.45pm

Location: TBC

KMS Winners Seminar

Date: Wednesday 6 October

Time: TBC

Location: TBC

Organic Seminar

Speaker: TBC

Date: Wednesday 13 October

Time: 1pm—2pm

Location: TBC

Physical Seminar

Speaker: Dr Marco Giardiello, University of Liverpool

Date: Wednesday 20 October

Time: 1pm—2pm

Location: TBC

RSC Top of the Firm Quiz

Date: Friday 22 October

Time: 7pm—10pm

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Inorganic Seminar

Speaker: TBC

Date: Wednesday 27 October

Time: 1pm—2pm

Date of Next Issue:
29 October 2021

JoVE 'Innovation in Instruction' Award for Chemistry

Dr Glenn Hurst has been recognised for his innovative approach to teaching - in particular his working with students as partners and use of technology enhanced learning.



The JoVE Innovation in Instruction award, which is focussed on how instructors have responded to the challenges of successfully teaching science during the pandemic period, has been awarded by JoVE to only three recipients worldwide. As well as receiving an award of \$1500 in prize money, prize-winners are invited to present a seminar on their work, which will also be made available on YouTube.

The JoVE panel of judges learned how through Glenn's innovative approach, students act as partners and develop the skills to address complex global issues by working in a more

interdisciplinary and systematic fashion - key components of 21st century employability. Glenn described how he has implemented this framework in multiple contexts within chemistry, delivering to different audiences using a range of innovative teaching methodologies, including the creative use of visual media. This has also been integrated with social media platforms. Among the aspects of Glenn's work presented to judges was a Snapchat 'class' account demonstrating lab techniques and field research, and a student-led TikTok project which made use of kitchen chemistry for scientific public engagement.

Glenn also described how further to using existing software platforms to advance science education, he has worked with undergraduate students to design their own mobile applications to support chemistry education, such as Green Tycoon, a game to teach students green chemistry principles in the context of biorefining.

"I am delighted to receive the JoVE Innovation in Instruction award," said Glenn. "I hope that post-pandemic, these creative strategies for teaching science are maintained, which when done in conjunction with students as partners, are beneficial for students developing both their personal skills and their employability prospects. Going forward, I am excited by the potential of using augmented and virtual reality technologies as a tool to support practical teaching and visualisation."

Glenn's seminar, entitled, "Actively engaging digitally native students with social media", took place on Wednesday 22 September. Further details will be made available on the JoVE website.

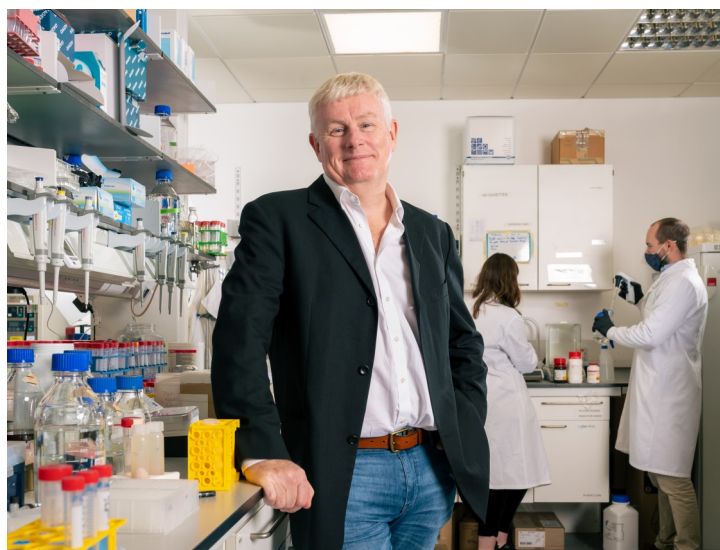
Online Department suggestion box



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 at this [link](#).

York chemist wins Royal Society professorship renewal

Professor Gideon Davies has been awarded a further five year term for his prestigious Royal Society Ken Murray Research Professorship.

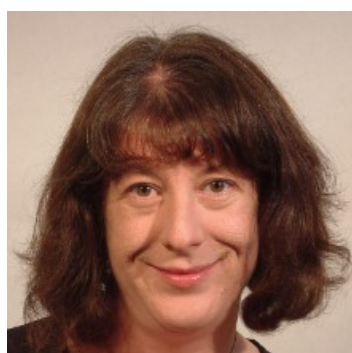


The Ken Murray Research Professorship, first awarded to Professor Davies in 2016, provides long-term support for internationally recognised work in areas such as biochemistry, genetics, chemistry, developmental biology and physics. The renewal of the appointment will extend the term of the post to ten years, granting £1M in funding to the Department of Chemistry. It will allow Professor Davies to continue to lead research into the chemistry of living systems, with impacts for clinical diagnostics, antiviral agents and neurodegeneration drugs as well as biofuels and the degradation of recalcitrant materials.

Commenting on the renewal of [the Royal Society professorship](#), Professor Davies said: "It's a great honour to receive the renewal. It reflects the ongoing research from my amazing group; they are a talented and dedicated team. The renewal of the professorship, alongside funding from the European Research Council and the BBSRC, will enable us to build on our work."

The renewal of the Royal Society Professorship is the most recent of three highly significant awards won by Professor Davies this academic year. In November 2020 he was awarded a European Research Council (ERC) Advanced Synergy grant of £2.7M over 6 years, as part of a collaborative research programme into how enzymes work on complex sugars. In addition, in March 2021 he and Professor Paul Walton were jointly awarded £555,000 from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) to investigate a recently discovered class of enzymes whose capacity to break down solid matter has potential applications for insect control.

New Head of Chemistry



We welcome Professor Caroline Dessent, who has taken over as Head of Department in Chemistry this month.

We also thank the outgoing Head of Department, Professor Duncan Bruce, for the tremendous service he has given to the Department and the University over the last six years. He will continue to serve on the Planning Committee.

My pronouns are...

Each year, the Equality and Diversity Group encourages everyone to share their gender pronouns to improve inclusiveness in the Department of Chemistry. Gender pronouns are words that we use when talking to or about somebody, for example “he, him, his” and “she, her, hers.” People who are non-binary or gender nonconforming may use pronouns that don’t conform to binary male/female gender categorisations, such as “they, them, theirs”.

By sharing our own pronouns, we aim to:

- Let others know what pronouns you use
- Make it easy for others to communicate their pronouns
- Create a welcoming environment for people of all genders

Some easy ways for you to share your pronouns:

- **Update your email signature** - see the [how to guide](#) for instructions on creating or editing your email signature
- **Introduce yourself** in talks/presentations/meetings using your pronouns.
- **Update slides/handouts** to include your pronouns after your name
- **Add your pronouns** to your [Zoom profile](#), [Instagram](#), [Slack](#) and Twitter handle
- **Wear a badge/sticker** - update name badges to include your pronouns, e.g. for welcome meetings/ networking. We are hoping to have some pronoun stickers available at the Chemistry reception for the start of term.

We encourage cisgender people to lead the change by sharing pronouns. It sends a strong message, normalises the process, has little risk and makes for a safer environment for everyone. The RSC has published a fantastic set of guides as part of its [LGBT+ Toolkit](#) including a [guide on trans inclusivity](#) (see pages 8-9 for information on being an effective Trans ally).


Sharing of pronouns in the ways we have suggested should be normalised and encouraged, but not mandatory. There are a number of reasons someone might not feel comfortable stating their pronouns, for example if they are questioning their gender, or don’t feel comfortable outing themselves as trans or non-binary.

You can find out more information about LGBTQ+ support, including a list of LGBTQ+ Friendly contacts in the Department on the [Chemistry Equality webpages](#).

If you have questions or suggestions related to gender pronouns, or any other equality, diversity and inclusion matters, please get in touch with Employability and Diversity Officer leonie.jones@york.ac.uk or Professor Kevin Cowtan, who is the Chair of the Chemistry Equality and Diversity Group - kevin.cowtan@york.ac.uk.


My pronouns are:

She/her/hers.

Chemistry@York 


My pronouns are:

they/them/theirs


Chemistry@York 

My pronouns are:

he/him/his

Chemistry@York 

My pronouns are:

Chemistry@York 

New starters



Carmen Piras, PDRA with Prof David Smith

Room: C/D126; Ext: 4184; Email: carmen.piras@york.ac.uk

Connor Prior, PDRA with Dr Alyssa-Jennifer Avestro

Room: C/E214,16,17 & C/E202; Ext: 2556 & 2593; Email: connor.prior@york.ac.uk

Dr Katherine Forsey, Primary Science Advisory Teaching in the Humber

Room: C/B013; Ext: 2562; Email: katherine.e.forsey@york.ac.uk

Dr Kirsten Hawkins, Green Chemistry PDRA—Furafact Project

Room: C/F111; Ext: 4547; Email: kirsten.hawkins@york.ac.uk

Lee Duff, Technician: Research Support (Synthetic Chemistry)

Room: C/D211; Ext: 2596 & 2520; Email: lee.duff@york.ac.uk

Tyler Hughes, Teaching Laboratory Facilitator

Room: C/B103; Ext: 5872; Email: th1091@york.ac.uk

John Sanderson, Teaching Laboratory Facilitator

Room: C/B103; Ext: 5872; Email: jrcs501@york.ac.uk

Alex Derry, Teaching Laboratory Facilitator

Room: C/B103; Ext: 5872; Email: aed539@york.ac.uk

RSC Top of the Firm Quiz



Friday 22 October • Zoom • 19.00-22.00

Perfect for a dark autumn evening, this year our popular RSC quiz will run on Zoom (each team will have a breakout room).

We'll be looking for teams of 4 players to take part - this is open to all students and staff, and there's no need for everyone on a team to be a member of the Department. Terry and Frank from Central Scotland will be setting the questions, with Derek trying to manage the technology, but you'll have to provide your own refreshments. We will limit the number of teams to 12 as would be the case for an in-person quiz (otherwise the scoring might go on all night!) and I'm sure we'll find some prizes. While it's organised through the Royal Society of Chemistry, a knowledge of chemistry is usually only required for one or two rounds.

If you'd like to enter a team, please email Derek Wann. Eventually he'll want to know team name, team captain, other 3 team members' names - if you can give as much of this as possible when you initially register it helps to weed out duplicate teams. If you haven't got a full team but are still interested please also get in touch - we can often introduce partial groups to each other: derek.wann@york.ac.uk