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Seasons Greetings

This will be the last newsletter of the year, so let me take the opportunity to say "thanks" for the many different forms of support that I have received during the year, and to offer best wishes for an enjoyable and relaxing festive season.

Progress Against Credit Crunch Plan

I thought that it might be appropriate to use the last newsletter of the year to provide an update of progress against our internal medium-term plan to weather the financial storm. In essence, with a view to ensuring that we were well placed to weather the consequences of the credit crunch, we put in place plans to tighten the financial position of the school by around £2.1 million over a 5 year period (broadly 2009-2013). This is around 10% of our total income (including research), 14% of our core income (broadly all income except that obtained on grants that is then spent directly on research), or 18% of our core income excluding overseas fees (used as an approximation of our UK government income).

The plan involved both cost savings and income generation; previously the goals were stated in the [May 10th Newsletter](#), and these are now associated with some progress information.

First, for cost savings:

Area	Value Over 5 Years	To Date/Known
Academic Staff Salaries	£350K	£350K
Non Academic Staff Salaries	£250K	£121K
Non Pay	£250K	£250
Total	£850	£721

The figure given for Academic Salaries reflects the fact that we know that we will manage to achieve a £350K reduction over 5 years, although this has not yet happened. The figure for Non Academic Salaries reflects the changes since the start of 2009. The change in Non Pay reflects cuts to our non-pay budget for the 2010/11 financial year.

Second, for income growth:

Area	Value to Budget Over 5 Years	To Date
UG Student Retention	£200K	£0
Overseas PGT	£500K	£400K
CPD	£150K	£50K
EU Research Sustainability	£200K	£0
M+N Agreements	£200K	£0
Total	£1,250	£450K

To take the above in turn, with respect to UG Student Retention, overall retention rates for the 2008 and 2009 cohorts were similar. However, we anticipate that there will be a significant improvement for the current first year cohort, as: (i) their average grades are significantly better; (ii) there are fewer students on joint courses that have tended to have higher drop-out rates; and (iii) we have fewer

students from clearing who are on second-choice programmes. With respect to Overseas PGT, there has already been strong growth, in particular in the context of the new programmes. In CPD (in particular Distance Learning), there is a new programme in Digital Biology this year, and there are further developments in the pipeline. In terms of EU Research Sustainability, the increasing profile of EU Funding and the recent creation of a role to ensure that we play the game better, have yet to lead to clear income changes, but in practice changes in behaviour take time to feed through to the bottom line; there are certainly lots of applications being made. With respect to M + N agreements, we have a number of leads, but no deals or students yet. In addition to the above planned areas of income growth, in 2013 the recently won Centre for Doctoral Training grant will generate over £200K for the school, so we can perhaps claim a To Date total of £650K.

Thus two years into a 5 year plan, we are around 85% of the way on expenditure reduction and 50% of the way on income growth. Looking at the external environment, the most visible risks are:

- That fee changes cause us to recruit reduced numbers of home undergraduate or masters students (perhaps the greatest risk being at masters level – if we lost 60% of our home masters students, the reduction in income would be around £250K).
- That the university will impose reductions on our numbers of home undergraduate students with a view to improving our retention rate (our target has been set at 190 for 2011 as against 210 in 2010, a potential future income reduction of over £400K).
- That grant income will reduce in the context of a smaller academic community and somewhat reduced research council budgets (a 10% reduction in our research council sustainability would be £179K).

We should anticipate that there are also some other cuts pending the details of which have not yet been published (“[known unknowns](#)”). Overall, however, my take is that the plan is still broadly of the scale required to address the main visible risks. Progress with the plan is satisfactory, but some of the more challenging areas have yet to bear fruit.

Events

School Christmas party

17 Dec 10

3pm, Staff/postgraduate common room.

There will be food and some drinks but please bring along a drink to help things along. Email your music suggestions to [Jez Lloyd](#) or [ACSO](#).

Future Research Leaders in ICT Workshop

15-16 Feb 2011

I would like to draw your attention to the announcement of the “Future Research Leaders in ICT” workshop to take place on the 15th-16th February 2011 at the Scarman House conference centre, University of Warwick. We would encourage applications to attend from early career academic researchers across the full ICT remit. During this workshop we aim to provide opportunities for future research leaders in ICT to:

- Gain a greater understanding of EPSRC's strategic priorities and funding mechanisms;
- Engage with current research leaders from the ICT community;
- Work with other early career researchers from across ICT to identify new and emerging research directions;
- Network and form contacts to take the research ideas forward.

The number of places on the workshop is limited, therefore those wishing to

attend are asked to complete and submit an expression of interest form by 1200 on Friday 7th January. Further details and the Expression of Interest form can be found on the EPSRC website:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/calls/open/Pages/workshopict.aspx>

UK ICT Pioneers

CLOSING DATE: 5pm Friday 14th January

SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY TO UKICTPioneers@epsrc.ac.uk

For how to enter and information on the prizes go to:

tinyurl.com/UKICTPioneers

This exciting competition is open to all 2nd and 3rd year UK post graduate research students in ICT related subjects who can demonstrate the exploitation potential of their research. Your PhD does not have to be funded by EPSRC to participate in this competition.

ICT related subjects include but are not restricted to Electronics, Communications, Computer Science and Human-Computer Interfaces and Photonics.

Shortlisted candidates and their supervisors will be invited to a VIP research exhibition and awards event in London on 23rd March 2011 attended by senior government and business representatives; providing a superb opportunity to get yourself noticed and make fantastic contacts in both the industrial and academic research communities.

Funding Opportunities

Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowships

19 Jan 11

The Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship scheme supports excellent scientists and engineers at an early stage of their career, and is designed to help them to progress to a permanent position. It is aimed specifically at researchers who require a flexible working pattern due to personal circumstances including parental/caring responsibilities and health issues. Female candidates are particularly invited to apply.

Each fellowship offers:

- The possibility of holding appointments on a part-time basis or converting from full-time to part-time and back again to help match work and other commitments, such as parental or caring responsibilities etc.
- The possibility to claim back time spent deferring the fellowship and/or working part-time at the end of the fellowship.
- The possibility of claiming some funds for family support where these can be justified on scientific grounds, e.g. the cost of child care during a conference or collaborative visit abroad.

Eligibility: Applicants must demonstrate a current need for flexible support due to personal circumstances at the time of application. This can include: current parental/caring responsibilities, e.g. raising children or looking after ageing or seriously ill family members; or clinically diagnosed health issues. Please note that this is not an exclusive list and further clarification on the eligibility requirements can be obtained from the Grants Section.

Applicants are expected to be at an early stage of their career. As an example,

applicants should have between one or two post doc positions. At the time of application, applicants must either:

- be a citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA), i.e. European Union, Iceland, Norway or Liechtenstein; or a Swiss citizen.
- have a relevant connection to the EEA or Switzerland (a relevant connection can be established if an individual has a PhD from a university in the EEA or Switzerland, or has worked as a research scientist in a university or research institute in the EEA or Switzerland for at least the past two years, or has done so before taking up an appointment outside the EEA or Switzerland).

Persons holding a permanent post in a university will not be considered (includes UK).

Length of tenure: A maximum of 4 years' funding is guaranteed.

Place of tenure: Fellowships must be held in a UK university or a not-for-profit research organisation (except for Research Council Institutes).

Value: Provides funding to cover the research fellow's salary costs, estates costs and indirect costs. Under the full economic costing model, 80 per cent of these costs will be met by the Royal Society. Research expenses (up to £13,000 for the first year and up to £11,000 annually thereafter) will also be provided.

[Website link](#)

Opening date: This round is now open

Closing date: 19 January 2011

Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowships

10 Jan 11

The Royal Society Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowships were established through the generosity of the Leverhulme Trust and seek to provide opportunities for academic researchers to be relieved of all their teaching and administrative duties to allow them to concentrate on full-time research for up to one year.

Subjects Covered: All areas of the life and physical sciences, including engineering, but excluding clinical medicine.

Eligibility: Applicants must hold a permanent post at a UK institution and be at a suitable stage in their career when they would particularly benefit from a period of full-time research.

Length of Tenure: Between one academic term and one year.

Value of Grant: The fellow's employing institution will be reimbursed for the full salary cost of a teaching replacement (up to the equivalent of the minimum point on the lectureship scale as paid by the host university). Research expenses up to a maximum of £2,500 are available to each fellow to cover the costs of consumables, equipment, travel and communicating science.



[Website](#)

Opening date: 18 October 2010

Closing date: 10 January 2011

