

Blizard Administration Committee (BAC)

Monday 20 January 2025 at 13:30, Large Cloud

MINUTES

Present:

Rachael Parker (RP) - chair	Claire Cox (CC)	Nici Kingston (NK)
Sam Matthew (SM)	David Bell (DB)	Sabrina Skeete (SS)
Nawaz Ahmed (NA)	Molly Ramalhoso (MR)	Jyoti Salhan (JS)
Carlos De Oliveira (CDO)	Mohammed Rofik (MRo) on RD's behalf	Sri Kulandaivelu (SK)
		Lauren Exell (LE)

In attendance:

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Part 1: Preliminary items

1. **Apologies for absence:** Richard Davies (RD)
2. **Minutes from last BAC meeting:**
 - The minutes from BAC meeting in November were approved.
3. **Matters Arising:**
 - Welcome to SK as the new CBCR Centre manager in post from 13 January.
 - Sabrina is leaving QM in March and Nataly Murphy will cover as acting Centre manager for GCH for the time being.
 - No update on PS transformation yet.

Part 2: Agenda items

Part 3: Standing items

4. **Finance**
 - Blizard is doing fine regarding cash generating target but we need to continue as we have been and minimise expenditure.
 - FRF: RP reported that Blizard has over £650k in FRFs that will be lost if not spent by the end of the financial year.
5. **Education**
 - University has set targets for 2025/26 close to 2024/25 enrolments for all Schools/Institutes where possible, for Blizard this is 381. Blizard expected to enrol between 5 and 9 starters this month for January starts. 364 students were enrolled for September 2024/25 and target for this year was 432. Blizard current application figures are trending above last year for offers, accepts and firms, higher than the university and FMD average.

6. Research

- Grants: 101 applications have been submitted to different funders in the current financial year, which represents 23.1% more in number of applications submitted compared to last year at the same period. The total value submitted is £43.4M, which is 16.7% more compared with last financial year at the same period.
- Awards: 40 grants awarded for a total of £19.5M which is 14.3% more in number of awards compared with the same period last year. The breakdown by funders is as follows: 14.1% UKRI, 7.7% Wellcome Trust, 26.5% Barts Charity, 16.1% NIHR and 6.5% non-academic and industry.
- CDO, Jonathan Pearce and Vicky Byers are working to develop an FMD ERC programme for the ERC to provide tailored and comprehensive support. This new FMD initiative will only focus on the Starting Grant call initially.
- CDO is still waiting for FMD to forward an updated report on the Research Integrity mandatory training.

7. PGR update

- Quiet month, MR sent January PGR list to Centre managers with new students as: 1 in IB, 1 in GCH and 1 in NST.
- No further PGR updates following weekly PGR Meeting with Kenny Linton and Tania Maffucci.

8. Laboratory management

- CC asked Centre managers to ensure that the current version of the Health and Safety document is sent to new starters. Lab management is working on an update of that document which will be circulated when finalised/approved.
- Office access cards: two will be handed to Lauren Exell (Centre manager at Bone & Joint Health new Centre) and two to JS for NST.
- Lab space was discussed in earlier meeting after BEB that Centre managers attended.
- Lab management provided a breakdown on how much staff have spent so far on gloves and blue rolls since September 2024.

9. Reports from Centre managers

All Centres in attendance reported on posts as per updated recruitment tracker spreadsheet submitted to BAC by RP. Standing action for CMs: to update tracker either before or after BAC meeting.

- **Genomics & Child Health:**
 - Senior lecturer post was advertised but no suitable candidates applied. Now pending of business case to be approved to start advertising process again.
- **CB&CR:**
 - Nothing to report.
- **Immunobiology:**
 - Two postdocs: one for Dr Andy Stagg and another one for Prof Dan Pennington were advertised and one was shortlisted but another one had no suitable candidates.
 - New staff joining Prof Adrian Martineau. This is regarding his Barts Charity grant.
- **NST:**
 - Welcomed several new staff in December.
 - Currently shortlisting for two new posts.
- **Bones & Joints Health:**
 - LE will keep attending BAC as new Centre manager for Bone & Joint Health.
 - She will be on maternity leave from end of February and cover for her absence will be Anne-Marie Stephen a.m.stephen@qmul.ac.uk
 - Currently Centre is busy with recruitment.
- **Centre of the Cell (CoC):**
 - Recruitment for Youth Scheme Lead took place last week. This is for internal staff to apply.

10. Feedback from FMD Operations Board

- BEAM will be used by FMD as a work allocation model.
- Mandatory training – staff to be reminded to complete all necessary mandatory training.
- IT has launched a taskforce that will look at purchasing which should help to give savings.

11. Marketing & Communications

- Student recruitment marketing: visit from UK International partners with a tour of the Blizzard labs and talks from FMD institutes. The Blizzard has the highest enrolments of all Institutes for UK based international postgraduate students.
- In person PGT open event in the Octagon is scheduled for 5 February.
- Comms project to update and refresh centre pages to make them more consistent and better looking.
- DB asked for clarification on action regarding monthly comms message for starters that Eolan Healy sends. It was made clear that new starters spreadsheet populated by Centre managers/admins must include students projects too.
Action: DB will add a new column for those individuals whose title has changed to avoid confusion as they are not starters. DB and MCB asked Centre managers to include email addresses as soon as possible so that Eolan is able to circulate comms at the end of each month. SM asked CMs not to include starters personal email but QMUL one. CMs to add qmul email address for new starters by last day of each month.
- CDO and DB met to discuss funding bulletin so that it can start being circulated soon.
- RP asked CMs to provide lists of people from their Centres to facilitate DB's creation of new Sympa lists. **Action:** CMs
- Good news newsletter is going out soon.

12. Space

- SM asked CMs to ask staff to book their desks through Space Connect (possibility to book up to four weeks in advance) to avoid any unnecessary conflict/clash when desks not booked. She also asked CMs to remind staff not to personalise desks, especially in the New Initiatives section, as desks should be kept tidy for next person to use. **Action:** CMs
- Lights in the Blizzard building, on first floor area mainly, are not adequate. Complaints received due to darkness early afternoon, which makes it difficult to work in certain areas after 4pm. Suzanne Mason (FMD Health & Safety adviser) executed a test on lights at various times on the same day last week.
Action: SM to contact Suzanne for outcome to inform any decision on purchasing any desk lamps.
- MCB has been liaising with Estates/Sustainability on very cold temperature and ventilation noise issues in the Blizzard building for the last three months. Estates set up sensors in North ground floor and first floor section of the building to monitor temperature for the next two weeks in those areas reported as draughty. Suzanne Mason has been involved in correspondence since January as this is now being treated as a potential health issue for staff.

13. Athena SWAN & EDI

- Athena SWAN – no update
- EDI – The wellbeing room in the Garrod building is still not suitable for expressing milk and conversations to use the disabled shower room (behind Blizzard reception) are ongoing. This will require some minor Estates works to make the room suitable and accessible via swipe card. Currently there are several Blizzard staff expressing milk using another room as a temporary measure.
- FMD EDI Committee is planning to reach out to EDI colleagues from other faculties in order to share good practice across QM.

14. Good news

- Lab management team received the Silver LEAF award. RP and all congratulated CC on achievement. The Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) is a certification scheme designed to enable staff and students to understand and improve the sustainability and efficiency of their laboratory areas.

Part 4: Other business

15. Any other business:

- RP has updated business continuity plan and sent to Centre managers.
- Prof Mary Collins (Institute Director) plans to attend either one monthly Centre meeting or a seminar per Centre for a maximum of 15 minutes to speak about bullying and harassment behaviour.

Action: CMs to send possible dates to MCB for Mary's calendar.

- SM belongs to a community of practice for Oleo and asked if anyone has any feedback on any process that can be done better to report to her. SS asked to include Trust ID for verification of all posts. MCB asked for HR recruitment to start implementing Oleo changes feedback during ongoing pilot period, which started in September and not concluded yet.
- MCB asked CMs to encourage new starters to attend the next Blizzard staff coffee morning on Tuesday 28 January as we will informally welcome new starters. RP will lead this time and on future occasions it can be SM or any Centre lead or CM or BAC member who does this. Once new starters identify themselves, CMs and Director's office will try to approach as many as possible to introduce themselves.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday 17 February at 13:30, Large Cloud**

BAC outstanding action list

Meeting date	Minute Reference	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Outcome
20/01/25	Item 11	To add new column in new starters sheet re: title change (not new starter)	DB		
20/01/25	Item 11	To provide lists of people from their Centres to DB for Sympa list	CMs		
20/01/25	Item 12	To contact Suzanne Mason for outcome on lights test	SM		