SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

STAFF HANDBOOK

JANUARY 2015
This handbook contains a certain amount of information that will be useful to new and to existing members of staff. It is not totally comprehensive.

Much information is already available on the University web pages, and information which is specific to the School of Biological Sciences is also to be found on relevant web pages.

On the University Staff Portal page, the “How To” link is a useful way in to some of the more general aspects of University life.

http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/staffportal/atoz/sp-howtolinks.aspx

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School Committees

There are a number of Committees which contribute to the running of the School. They include:

- The School Management Group (SMG)
- The Research Committee
- The Promotions Committee
- The Board of Studies (details on page 5)
- The Examiners Committee (undergraduate; postgraduate)
- The Extenuating Circumstances Committee
- The Safety Committee

Each committee meets during the year at intervals which are appropriate to the function of that committee.

In addition there are other meetings for the individual Sections in the School (the Ecology & Evolution Section and the Biomedical Section), as well as individual research group meetings, user group meetings, Technical Support meetings etc.).

The School Management Group (SMG)

The SMG meets every month. Currently it is a committee which comprises:

- The Head of School (Professor Mark Fellowes)
- The Director of Teaching & Learning (Dr Amanda Callaghan)
- The Director of Research (Professor Phil Knight)
- The Director of Student Recruitment (Dr Phil Dash)
- The Director of Technical Services (Dr Karen Henderson)
- The Director of Enterprise & Impact (Dr Rob Jackson)
- The Director of Finance & Operations (Dr Tim Richardson)
- The Director of Internationalization (Dr Simon Clarke)
- The Head of the Ecology and Evolution Section (Professor Nick Battey)
- The Head of the Biomedical Section (Professor Simon Andrews)
- The Director of the ICMR (Professor Jon Gibbins)
Teaching – Undergraduate and Postgraduate

Key Staff

Director of Teaching and Learning  Dr Amanda Callaghan
Senior Tutor/Examinations Officer Dr Andrew Bicknell
Disability Representative Dr Karen Rowlett
Head of Admissions (u/g & MSc) Dr Phil Dash

Administrative Staff

Karen Rowlett  (Manager of the Teaching Office, Room 1 Harborne building)
  o student industrial placements
  o examinations
  o monitoring timeliness of student feedback
  o disabilities
  o library representative

Debbie Barrett  (Teaching Office)
  o examinations (BSc)
  o field courses
  o disabilities
  o projects (undergraduate)

Alison Cairns  (Teaching Office)
  o timetables
  o module descriptions
  o student module selection
  o programme specifications
  o programme handbooks
  o extenuating circumstances

Lindsey Smith  (Teaching Office)
  o undergraduate and postgraduate handbooks;
  o MSc handbooks
  o examinations (MSc)
  o MSc projects
  o extenuating circumstances
  o demonstrating
Louise Coe  Administrative Officer (Teaching Office & Admissions Office)  
Florence Irvine  Admissions Officer (Admissions Office, room 156, Harborne)

- UCAS applications
- Open Days

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<th><strong>Programme Adviser</strong></th>
<th><strong>Admissions Tutor</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecology and Wildlife Conservation</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>Dr Philippa Darbre</td>
<td>Dr David Leake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Dr Andrew Meade</td>
<td>Dr Phil Dash &amp; Dr Liam McGuffin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biol Sci with Industrial Experience</td>
<td>Dr Amanda Callaghan/Dr Karen Rowlett (placements)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biomedical Sciences</td>
<td>Dr David Leake</td>
<td>Dr Andrew Bicknell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>Dr Sheila MacIntyre</td>
<td>Dr Ben Neuman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoology</td>
<td>Dr Amanda Callaghan</td>
<td>Dr Louise Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>MSc Degree Programmes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Course Director</strong></th>
<th><strong>Admissions Tutor</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plant Diversity</td>
<td>Dr Alastair Culham</td>
<td>Dr Julie Hawkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species Identification and Survey Skills</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildlife Management and Conservation</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
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**Boards of Study**

**Role:** to review the content of degree programmes and to approve any proposed changes.

**BSc programmes:** all covered by the Biological Sciences Board of Studies.

**MSc programme:** each has its own Board of Studies.

Items to be included on the agenda for Boards of Study meetings should be submitted via the Chair:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Chair</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All BSc programmes</td>
<td>Dr Amanda Callaghan</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSc Plant Diversity</td>
<td>Dr Alastair Culham</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSc Species Identification and Survey Skills</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSc Wildlife Management</td>
<td>Dr Graham Holloway</td>
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Annual Calendar

October: arrival of new students and allocation of Personal Tutors
request issued for end-of-year examination papers - December deadline
Boards of Study meetings

December: request to module convenors to update/provide module descriptions for the following academic year – March deadline
current programme specifications sent to Programme Advisers for modification for following year – March deadline

January: request for module timetable data for the following academic year – March deadline

February: proposed project titles - deadline early in this month

March: the deadline for submission of student choices for final year projects

April-June: project allocations announced
examination period – scripts sent from Teaching Office for immediate attention. Spreadsheets to be returned to Teaching Office before deadline set by Examinations Office for entry of marks onto RISIS

Academic roles

Programme Adviser

Role:

- management of a degree programme
- membership of the Board of Studies,
  o representing the programme, recommending and approving changes to its structure and development.

Module Convenor

Role: management of a module

- module description
  o provision and updating
- timetabling
  o arrangements for teaching and provision of data
- Blackboard
  o management and maintenance of pages
- assessment
  o provision of exam questions; setting coursework; provision of marks spreadsheet, plagiarism
• **Peer Review**  
  - a programme requiring one academic member of staff to sit-in on lectures of another academic and provide feedback  

• **Feedback**  
  - issued by and returned to the Teaching Office summarising student opinion  

• **Module Provider’s Report**  
  - returned to Director of Teaching and Learning, summarising performance and evaluation  

• **Demonstrating**  
  - provide the Teaching Office with details of demonstrator numbers and hours  

**Personal Tutor**

**Role:** to support the academic development of a student and provide pastoral care.

- Students are assigned a Personal Tutor on arrival and are invited to arrange a meeting at least once each term. Where students fail to arrange or attend meetings, the Senior Tutor is to be informed. Tutors should be the main contact within the school, helping to maximise academic opportunities. They should also be able to direct students to sources of academic guidance within or beyond the School.

- Tutors should offer advice on the availability of appropriate support concerning study, finance and other matters within the University where necessary and, if required, liaise with the Senior Tutor, other parts of the University and the Students' Union.

**Disability Representative**

**Role:** to liaise with the Disability Advisory Service and the Teaching Office to ensure that personal tutors and teaching staff are aware of adjustments needed in the classroom situation and for assessment arrangement for all students with specific learning difficulties. All such difficulties must be registered with the Disability Advisory Service, from where directions and advice on specific cases will be issued.

**Administrative Processes**

**RISIS**

This is the central data base, which holds records for all students, modules, programme specifications etc. Access is generally via the Portal link to be found on the Home page but is usually restricted, to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, to those who need to know. For example, a Personal Tutor is able to access the record for his tutees but not for other students. Wider access is available to administrative staff but will probably be restricted to students within the School.
Staff-Student Committee

Meetings take place twice a year, usually in the sixth week of Autumn and Spring Terms. Students from each year of each programme are invited to represent their year group on the committee. The Director of Teaching and Learning and the Senior Tutor are members plus at least one of the administrative staff from the Teaching Office.

Timetabling

The data for the following academic year is required in Spring Term of the preceding year. A data collection sheet is issued from the Teaching Office for each module to be offered, requesting week-by-week information on teaching needs: room type; duration; staff etc. A provisional timetable is published late in the Spring Term for checking by convenors and all teaching staff. There is a link on the Homepage to Timetables and this allows checking by module or by member of staff.

Student submission of coursework

The Teaching Office staff must be informed of all coursework deadlines and the mode of submission (Blackboard/Paper/Turnitin) for all modules at the beginning of each term. This is essential to allow monitoring of the 15 day turn round time for student feedback. From 2015, all course work submission deadlines should be set for 12 noon. Part 1 deadlines should be on Mondays, Part 2 on Tuesdays and Part 3 on Wednesdays. No deadlines should be set for Thursdays or Fridays. All paper-based course work should be submitted via the Teaching Office, all electronic submissions should be made via BlackBoard. Paper-based work is date stamped and students are given a numbered receipt. The work is checked against a class list taken from RISIS. Late stickers are added to any work received after the deadline. The convenor is advised when it is ready for collection. All paper-based work should be returned to the Teaching Office for collection by students.

Module convenors should not give an extension to a deadline but should refer all such requests to the Teaching Office. In all cases, an Extenuating Circumstances Form must be completed and will be considered by the Senior Tutor.

Extenuating Circumstances

In addition to being used to support requests for the extension to deadlines, Extenuating Circumstances Forms (ECFs) are used by students asking that circumstances affecting the quality and completion of their work should be taken into account. Additional information on ECFs is available.
Again, all ECFs must be submitted to the Teaching Office as soon as possible, for consideration by the Senior Tutor. Approved cases are sent to the Faculty Office after examinations for consideration of the impact on results.

Examinations

Request for Summer Term examination questions (and re-sits) are issued in the second half of October. Scrutiny meetings are held early in January and any amendments will be required immediately as papers are sent to the External Examiners for approval before final versions are sent to Examinations Office in February.

The Examination period is from the start of Summer Term until early June. Scripts are sorted in the Teaching Office and marking, in all cases, must be returned within days. Marks are recorded on spreadsheets supplied by the Teaching Office, including students’ names taken from RISIS.

The re-sit period is from the end of August into early September.

Final Year Projects

In January a project proposal form is sent to academics, to be returned by February, with details of projects to be offered for students entering their final year the following October. Projects are allocated over the Easter vacation and Guide to Project Work provided to supervisors.

Student choices, deadline end of Spring Term
Allocations announced beginning of Summer Term
Literature Review deadline end of Summer Term
Project Submission due in the week after the end of Spring Term

Demonstrating

Before each term, lists of all modules running and of trained and available demonstrators are sent to all teaching staff with a request for details of the number of demonstrators needed, the number of hours and the times to be covered. All requests received are subject to approval by the School Director of Teaching and Learning. Payments to demonstrators are based on hours agreed and the Teaching Office must be notified where changes to the agreed arrangements are made. Demonstrators must have been issued with a “zero hours” contract of employment by HR, and their
payment is calculated based on timesheets submitted by the demonstrators (and counter-signed by the relevant member of teaching staff).

Periodic Review of Teaching

The most recent formal University review of our Teaching Programme was in March 2012. During 2014 the School commissioned a separate independent review by the Higher Education Academy, the recommendations from which are being currently addressed.

Technical Information

The School of Biological Sciences (SBS) is situated in a number of buildings and facilities across the University of Reading campus. The technical group is responsible for activities including building, facility and laboratory management, research and teaching support, IT and H&S advice and is managed by Dr Karen Henderson, Head of Technical Services k.henderson@reading.ac.uk x7069. Further information is on the Blackboard (BB) Site https://www.bb.reading.ac.uk/ under SBS Technical Information (contact Karen Henderson for access to this BB organisation).

The Harborne Building: Contact Building Manager, Miss Fiona Brown f.e.brown@reading.ac.uk x7956

The Harborne Building is located to the south of the campus (Building number 31 on campus map) and is the School administration area. It includes the following offices: Head of School (157), PA to Head of School (158), Accounts (152 and 154), Director of Finance and Operations (151), Head of Technical Services (148), Research Office (156) and the Teaching Office (1). The Herbarium is located on the first floor (153).

Plant growing facilities including glasshouses and experimental grounds are located to the south of the Harborne Building. Controlled environments are situated adjacent to the glasshouses. The School of Agriculture, Policy and Development (SAPD) is responsible for all these facilities.

The Lyle Building: Building Manager, Miss Fiona Brown f.e.brown@reading.ac.uk x7956

The Lyle building adjoins the Harborne Building and is located to the south of the campus (Building number 32 on the campus map). SBS occupies offices and/or research labs on the 1st and 4th floors of the Lyle Building.

The Hopkins Building: Building Manager, Mr Dave Butlin d.j.butlin@reading.ac.uk x8896

The Hopkins Building is located slightly to the north of the Harborne/Lyle Building complex (Building number 118 on the campus map). It is a shared building, occupied by SBS and the School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy (SCFP). A Microscopy Facility is located on the 2nd floor.

The Knight Building (formerly known as the AMS Wing): Building Manager Mr Simon Feist s.a.feist@reading.ac.uk x7075

The AMS Building is located to the north of the campus and comprises the main AMS Tower block (Building number 30 on the campus map) and the Knight Building (formerly known as the AMS Wing)
(Building number 53 on the campus map). SBS occupies the Knight Building and the ground floor of the AMS Tower block, the latter being the location of The Cole Museum of Zoology.

**On taking up a position in the School or transferring between buildings (including working temporarily in another building)**

Contact the Building Manager for keys, access cards and a building induction. The building induction includes information on emergency procedures and evacuation, first aid, fire wardens, working out of hours procedures and lone working. Where use of laboratory facilities are required, the Building Manager will advise on which technical contacts will be able to provide assistance and local laboratory inductions.

**Car Parking Permits**

Long term car permits are obtained through the Facilities Management Directorate (FMD) website at [http://www.reading.ac.uk/parking/staff/park-staff-parking.aspx#permits](http://www.reading.ac.uk/parking/staff/park-staff-parking.aspx#permits). Visitor car parking permits can be obtained from Christine Brickley, Rm 158, Harborne building. The host should post the permit to their visitor in advance of the visit.

**E-information**

The SBS website includes a listing of all permanent School Staff with their contact details, information on research groups and facilities within the school, undergraduate and post-graduate teaching and our post-graduate research activities. These pages are publicly available.

The SBS Blackboard portal provides links to content that is available after secure log-in.

**School IT Support:** The current contacts is Mr Chaz Dawkins c.j.dawkins@reading.ac.uk x7034. During 2015 the responsibility for IT Support will transition completely to the University IT Service.

On arriving at the University, members of staff are allocated a University username and email address on acceptance of their contract of employment. These can be collected from the University ITS Help counter on the 1st Floor of the Main Library on the Whiteknights campus. This will enable access to the University computer network including shared drives and printers.

The School IT office is located in the Harborne Building (122) and requests for assistance should be made by logging a request through the University ITS helpdesk its-help@rdg.ac.uk .

The SBS IT Information Blackboard Site [https://www.bb.rdg.ac.uk/](https://www.bb.rdg.ac.uk/) gives further information on the following: How to set up administrators on your PC, how to check and install SMS client on your PC if necessary, computer rooms, Disc Storage Facilities, Backup storage, Email Lists, Presentation Facilities, Wireless and IT items that are available for loan, although from April 2015 it is expected that all of this advice will be sourced from University IT Services.
Telephones

In addition to the information which can be sourced from the University web pages, Christine Brickley regularly updates a comprehensive list of telephone numbers and room locations for all staff in the School.

Health and Safety: Contact School Area Health and Safety Co-ordinator Mr Simon Feist
s.a.feist@reading.ac.uk x7075

Working safely within the SBS is everyone’s responsibility, however the school has appointed an Area Health and Safety Co-ordinator (AHSC), Mr Simon Feist, to assist with implementing and maintaining set standards. A School Health and Safety Code has been produced which summarises both working practices and the procedures required to operate in a safe and functional manner within SBS.

Staff, students and visitors to the school, including work experience students, should always be registered and provided with enough information to operate safely. The correct documentation can be found on the University Human Resource website or contact Mr Simon Feist.

Information and instruction on a wide range of safety related topics can be found on the University H&SS web pages and locally on the School H&S Blackboard site https://www.bb.rdg.ac.uk/. Please contact Mr Simon Feist for access to the School H&S Blackboard site.

School printing and photocopying facilities

Printing is currently available through the School’s printer server AMS-Heimdall to a number of shared printers/photocopiers in the Knight Building (Minolta printer/photocopier), Harborne room 8, Harborne room 155, Lyle 4th Floor, Hopkins 1st floor, and Hopkins 2nd floor (printer and Minolta printer/photocopier).

Contact the Accounts Office to set up a user account on the print server. An application form, available from the Accounts office, must be completed for all postgraduates.

During 2015 the University is moving to a Managed Print Service, whereby all printing and photocopying will be managed through a University-wide agreement with Konica Minolta. A system will be implemented whereby staff will be able to print documents on a variety of devices around the School/University. The use of cards/PINS which will enable costs to be captured centrally and logged against specific account codes.

Setting ‘out of office’ and signatures in Outlook

During periods such as annual leave or overseas travel, in the latter case where access to e-mails may be difficult, the Outlook out-of-office assistant should be set up to include the following message ‘If your enquiry is a request under Freedom of Information Regulations then please redirect your email to imps@reading.ac.uk<mailto:imps@reading.ac.uk>’ Further information on out of office messages and e-mail signatures is available from IT Services using the following links email signatures and out of office messages.
Room bookings

School meeting room bookings can be viewed by staff in the Outlook folder list and can be booked by either contacting the appropriate Building Manager or Mrs Christine Brickley c.e.brickley@reading.ac.uk and Mr Trevor Pitman abqpitma@reading.ac.uk x4403 (for Harborne/Lyle Building). Many lecture theatres and conference rooms must be booked through the University Central booking system at http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/crbt/crbt-roombookings/crbt-room_bookings.aspx.

Placing orders from external suppliers or through Stores

Orders for items available from external suppliers (such as laboratory reagents for example) are placed through the SBS Accounts Office on a standard School form (see Finance Section, page 20). These items can be collected from the SCFP (School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy) Stores located in the Chemistry Block to the rear of the Hopkins Building. Currently (early 2015) all incoming IT equipment is delivered to the School IT Officer for inventory purposes and uploading of software prior to delivery to the requestor. This responsibility will transfer to IT Services during 2015.

There is a general Store, stocking items such as roll towel and plastic consumables, in the Chemistry Block. Internal Stores orders can be placed by visiting the Stores. Dry ice is also available from the Stores on production of a School / research account code (issued from the Accounts Office).

Stationery

The School no longer holds a significant stock of stationery items; there is a small supply of basic desk stationery in the Knight Building, and there is a “call off” order system with the University supplier (Office Depot) which enables stationery to be sourced quickly – usually next day delivery. Stationery items can also be obtained from the Chemistry Stores.

Harborne/Lyle. Contact Mr Trevor Pitman, (abqpitma@reading.ac.uk) x4403.

Housekeeping

Office bins are routinely emptied by cleaning staff and where possible bins should be situated by the door. In open offices, only the main bins are emptied by the cleaning staff. Bins in open offices should be emptied into the main bins by occupants at regular intervals. General paper waste is collected in a paper collection basket within the office and is taken for re-cycling when full. Confidential waste for shredding is collected by arrangement in special sacks which can be obtained from Building Managers. The Building Manager is the point of contact for cleaning related issues including complaints, information and requests for additional cleaning.
Energy efficiency

To conserve energy, all equipment not in use should be turned off. This also applies to lights other than those in corridors and stairwells which should remain on for reasons of safety. If laboratory equipment needs to be left on, a ‘please leave running’ notice must be used.

School computers should be turned off at the end of the day except where overnight backups are to be performed. Most computers have automatic power saving capabilities. Printers attached to computers should be turned off. Network printers are configured to automatically enter ‘powersave’ mode.

Glassware, media and sterilisation service

Glassware processing, media preparation, waste discard and sterilisation services are available in the School Buildings as follows:

CSS (Central Services Facility) located on the ground floor in the Knight Building. Contact: Jane Clarke j.f.clarke@reading.ac.uk x 7888 for glassware processing, media preparation, sterilisation and waste discard services.

Hopkins Washup room located on the Ground floor of the Hopkins Building. Contact: Hilary Loxton. h.j.loxton@reading.ac.uk x 7051 for glassware processing, sterilisation and waste discard.

Harborne Media Kitchen located on the ground floor of the Harborne Building. Contact: Fiona Brown. f.e.brown@reading.ac.uk x 7956 for Glassware processing, sterilisation and waste discard. Facilities are available for media preparation.

A small charge will apply in some cases, particularly for sterile glassware and media preparation.

Vehicles

The School has three vehicles available; a small van and two electric vehicles. The electric vehicles are specifically used for transporting goods between buildings on campus and are not available for other uses.

Bookings for the van at the Knight Building can be made through Kaye Daish/Paul Baker. The use is charged at 60p per mile. There is a pick-up truck which now belongs to the School of Agriculture, but which can be booked for short periods if required – the contact is Matthew Richardson.

Minibuses for taking students off-site (day visits and field trips) are hired from approved vehicle rental companies. Only staff who have completed the necessary training, and who hold appropriate licence classifications are entitled to drive minibuses. Minibus hire should be arranged through Trevor Pitman.

Teaching labs

There are a number of teaching labs in all School Buildings. Contact Miss Fiona Brown f.e.brown@reading.ac.uk or Mrs Hilary Loxton h.j.loxton@reading.ac.uk for bookings outside of the undergraduate/MSc practical class schedule.
Safety information can be found on the teaching lab notice boards. Lecturers and demonstrators should familiarise themselves with the location of emergency exits, fire fighting equipment, first aid boxes and service shut off points within these labs. Lecturers and demonstrators are responsible for ensuring that students wear lab coats and do not eat or drink in the labs.

Harborne Building: Undergraduate teaching labs are located on the ground floor. Lab B holds 48 students and Lab B/C holds 40, but has an acoustic wall so that the lab can be divided into 2 labs each holding 10 students.

Laboratory coats

Students are expected to supply their own lab coats. – purchase of lab coats is only possible in the Knight Building. These are charged directly to the personal accounts of individual students. Lab coats and safety spectacles can be paid for on-line from the University On-line Store, and then collected from Mrs Kaye Daish k.daish@reading.ac.uk in the Knight Building.

Post

Harborne Building (RG6 6AS) and Lyle Building (RG6 6BS). Separate post trays for internal and external outgoing mail are located in the Lyle reception area G73. Outgoing external post must be labelled by Mrs Christine Brickley or staff in the Teaching Office before being placed in the outgoing tray. Incoming external mail is delivered once a day to the Lyle reception and then distributed by the Porter to trays in the reception of the Lyle Building and the post slots in Harborne 155. Incoming internal mail is delivered to the building twice a day.

Hopkins Building (RG6 6AD). There are separate trays for outgoing internal and external mail in the area outside G01. All outgoing external mail should be labelled with the initials and School of the sender before being placed in the relevant tray. Incoming external and internal mail is delivered the area outside room G01 and then distributed to the racks in that area.

Knight Building (RG6 6UR). The post table is located in the link corridor between W30 and W53. Incoming external mail is delivered to the front of the Knight Building once a day and distributed into appropriate sections in post baskets. Outgoing external mail is collected twice a day in the morning before 8.45 and in the afternoon usually between 3.00 and 3.30. Outgoing external mail is placed in the 1st/2nd Class wallets. Incoming internal mail is delivered to the post table twice a day.

Courier information

For the Knight Building:

Wherever possible use DHL via the university post room in Whiteknights House. They will help with the paperwork (shipping details and consignment notes) but they will need the PSD code 40020 and a grant charge code. Collections daily at 3pm and 5pm. The post room can also arrange special and recorded deliveries.

For dry ice parcels in the UK (tel: 0800 777222, account no. 2001891962) and Europe (tel: 0800 777999, account no. 505433) use TNT. For UK same day use TNT (tel: 0118 9752200, account no.
2001487541). Arrange for collection from Building or from Whiteknights House post room. Send top
copy of paperwork to SBS accounts for charging.

For dry ice parcels outside Europe use Fedex (tel: 08456 070 809, account no. 141 644 300).

For the Knight Building contact Mrs Jane Clarke for assistance and advice.

School Facilities

The Cole Museum http://www.reading.ac.uk/colemuseum/

The Cole Museum of Zoology, situated on the ground floor of the AMS Building contains some 3500
specimens of which about 400 are on display at any one time. Curator of the Cole Museum: Dr
Amanda Callaghan, a.callaghan@reading.ac.uk ext. 4428, technical contact: Mrs Kaye Daish
k.daish@reading.ac.uk x7083

The Herbarium

The University’s Herbarium (RNG, which is part of an international network) is situated on the 1st
floor of the Harborne Building and contains around 300,000 vascular plants with a smaller number of
non-vascular plants and lichens. The herbarium also houses a reference library and collection of
botanical images. These specimens are used for teaching and research purposes. The herbarium
operates a plant identification service which is charged pro rata and such services can be written
into grant proposals. A significant number of holdings are searchable on-line at:
http://www.herbarium.reading.ac.uk/. If you wish to use the herbarium please contact Mrs Sue
Mott in the first instance. Academic contact: Dr Alastair Culham a.culham@reading.ac.uk: Technical
contact: Sue Mott s.e.mott@reading.ac.uk x 5083

Research microscopy facilities

Communal microscopical facilities within SBS and the School of Pharmacy are primarily located
within the Hopkins building. These include two Zeis epifluorescent phase/DIC microscopes with
dedicated digital capture and analysis software, and two Nikon inverted microscopes with motorised
stages allowing automated time lapse monitoring of multiple samples, also with dedicated digital
capture and analysis software. We also have the ability to perform microscopical and
electrophysiological analysis concurrently. We are very well equipped for confocal microscopy. We
have a Leica confocal system housed in the Hopkins facility, and two new Nikon A1 confocal
microscopes (one with resonant, the other with Super Resolution (STORM) image capture capability)
housed in the ICMR imaging suite in the Lyle Building. Staff can also make use of several specialist
facilities on campus (for example Environmental Scanning Electron Microscopy within the Centre for
Advanced Microscopy which is housed in the JJ Thomson Physical Laboratory).

Contact Dr Graham Luke g.n.luke@reading.ac.uk ext. 8016
Plant growing facilities

The School of Agriculture, Policy and Development is now responsible for the facilities for growing plants for both experimental research and practical classes. Next to the Harborne Building two modern, purpose built, Cabinet Halls accommodate Growth Cabinets that provide accurate growing environments. The glasshouses provide growing space for plants in a variety of controlled heated environments whilst the experimental grounds, which lie alongside, provides growing space for those plants that require a natural environment.

Controlled Environment facilities

There are a number of facilities of various sizes, providing controlled environments that provide accurate growing environments.

www.reading.ac.uk/biologicalsciences/museums-facilities/biosci-controlledenviron.aspx

Technical contacts:

Growth Cabinets: Matthew Richardson m.j.richardson@reading.ac.uk x 7953 (School of Agriculture)

Experimental Grounds: Helen Dominick h.m.dominick@reading.ac.uk x 8070

Glasshouses: Val Jasper v.a.jasper@reading.ac.uk x 7953 (School of Agriculture)

Field Unit: David McLay d.i.mclay@reading.ac.uk 0118 988 3032 (School of Agriculture)

ENTERPRISE and IMPACT

Director of Enterprise: Dr Rob Jackson

There is an Enterprise & Impact Committee within the School which does a number of things:

- Interprets the University Enterprise strategy, and translates this into what the School is doing, and will do, in this context. Links this with Three Year Operating Plan.

- Communicates this upward (to HoS, SMG and Dean), and outward (to Sections, Industry, Nationally/Internationally, website).

- Reviews the portfolio of SBS enterprise activities – updates/provides commentary.

- Provides input to the REF units of assessment. Links this with Research Plan.

- Establishes a working list of proposed enterprise activities/initiatives both from within the School, and from external clients. Reviews and recommends appropriate courses of action – provides timely advice/feedback accordingly.

- Includes an invited member to some meetings if appropriate (eg an individual from Business Development, the Knowledge Transfer Office, or Research Accounts).
• Includes special agenda items when necessary eg issues relating to filing IP, copyright, contractual terms, consultancy rates, pricing.

• At all times, encourages and supports all staff in the School to actively engage in the Enterprise and Impact agenda.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Funds in the School are separated into four different categories and are identifiable as seven digit numerical codes prefixed with a different letter of the alphabet.

SCHOOL-RELATED FUNDS

Funds which are under the direct management of the School are either within what is called the Resource category, or the Other Services Rendered (OSR) category.

RESOURCE

Funds in the Resource category have a project code with an A prefix (e.g. A3586000) and cover all aspects of routine School activity – general administration, teaching, technical support, core equipment. Each member of academic staff has their own A code called a Staff Development Account (SDA). The funds in this account may be spent on work-related activity, at the discretion of the staff member. Details later.

OSR

Funds in the OSR category mostly have a project code with a K prefix (e.g. K3347200) and are typically derived from an income generating activity, such as carrying out some work for an external client, running a short course for which participants are charged, or providing a service from which income is derived.

Members of staff who carry out consultancy work may be assigned a specific code with a J prefix (such as J3350400).

The funds in the Resource category (A, J and K codes) all fall under the annual accounting principle – both income and expenditure are recognized within the financial year in which they occur. The University financial year runs from 1 August to 31 July the following year. The financial year end is 31 July so all income and expenditure transactions in the Resource category are reconciled to this date – at which point the School knows whether it has achieved break-even, maybe made a surplus (happiness) or has gone into deficit (misery).
RESEARCH-RELATED FUNDS

There are two further categories of funds, which are administered through the School, but are termed Restricted Funds. They are restricted in the sense that they are to be used for a specific purpose for a specified duration.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

Funds made available, either from Research Councils, charities, private sector organizations, foreign governments or individuals, which are for the training of postgraduate research students (PhD candidates) are restricted funds, i.e. specifically for a named student and are held within a project code with an F prefix (e.g. F2356419). These funds are available for the duration of the studentship - typically 3 or 4 years – and the balance is carried from one year to the next until the end date of the studentship.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTSHIPS

Funding for a postgraduate student is typically broken down into three areas:

- Stipend – living expenses
- Tuition fee – the cost of attending the University for higher education
- Bench fees/research expenses – the cost of the materials for carrying out the work

It is important that PI’s do not mistakenly assume that the tuition fee includes funds for carrying out the research – it does not. A studentship needs to include the additional provision of funds for reagents, consumables, travel etc. This amount may vary according to the nature of the research, but should not be underestimated.

RESEARCH PROJECTS/PROGRAMMES

Research awards, e.g. from the Research Councils, charities etc. are also treated as restricted – to be used for the research specified in the original grant application. These funds are held within a project code with an H prefix (e.g. H5049800) and are available for the duration of the award which can be anything from a few months to several years. As with postgraduate studentships, the funding carries forward for the duration of the project, but has to be reconciled by the agreed end date. Though much of the day-to-day operation of these funds will be channelled through the School Accounts Office, the overall accounts are co-ordinated centrally in Whiteknights House by the Research Accounts group (Room G05).
ENDOWMENT FUNDS

There is one final budgetary category which is managed on an annual basis, for which funds are made available to the School, typically at the discretion of the PVC Research & Innovation. These funds are derived from the Research Endowment Trust Fund (RETF); specific codes may be set up with an E prefix (e.g. E3020700) and are to be spent for a specific strategic purpose. This may include setting up a new laboratory, acquiring an item of specialist equipment, or bringing in specific expertise to the School/University. The funds have to be used within a defined period for a defined purpose.

IN SUMMARY

A codes: School operational activity
J codes: consultancy work (OSR)
K codes: services (OSR)

F codes: postgraduate research students

H codes: research projects

E codes: endowment funding

ORDERING GOODS

Most items which need to be ordered fall into the category of what is termed “consumables”. Orders are raised by completing an internal order form as an electronic document [http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/biologicalsciences/biosci-placing_orders.aspx](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/biologicalsciences/biosci-placing_orders.aspx). Handwritten orders are no longer accepted. The completed form is then delivered to the SBS Accounts Office (Room 153, Harborne building) either as an email attachment or as a hard copy.

Key information on the order form includes a brief description of the goods to be ordered, the quantity, the name of the supplier, the catalogue number, an accurate estimate of the cost, the cost of delivery and the project code to which the purchase should be charged. Hard copy forms should be signed either by the PI who is the grant holder, or by a member of staff who has delegated budgetary authority. Electronically submitted forms can be unsigned, but should be accompanied by an email indicating that the PI is aware that the order is being placed.
Purchases from the School budget (A-codes), which includes purchases for teaching, are set aside for daily approval by the Head of School.

The above approved orders are then uploaded into the Purchase-To-Pay (P2P) system by the staff in the Accounts Office. This process first requires the information on the internal order form to be transcribed into an on-screen template – this generates the so-called requisition and includes details of the delivery address. These electronic requisitions then pass from the requisitioner to another member of the Accounts Office who is designated as the approver. The electronic requisition is checked and approved, which then places it in the P2P system for direct electronic submission to the supplier.

Usually, requisitions are uploaded and approved by 11.00 a.m. each morning. Orders which are received during the afternoon are typically requisitioned/approved the following morning.

The P2P system generates an order number at the point at which the order is electronically transmitted to the supplier. An electronic copy order is then copied back to the Accounts Office. PLEASE NOTE, THE SBS ACCOUNTS OFFICE STAFF DO NOT GENERATE ORDER NUMBERS, SO ARE UNABLE TO DIRECTLY PROVIDE SUCH INFORMATION. THE P2P SYSTEM GENERATES ORDER NUMBERS.

Goods are despatched from many suppliers within a very short while of the electronic order being received. Deliveries are mainly to the Chemistry Stores, and an email is generated which advises the person who wants the goods that they have arrived. It is not unusual for the suppliers to immediately issue an invoice to the University.

Incoming invoices are matched with the electronic orders and paid when the goods have been received. However, payment is dependent on the receipt of goods being confirmed. In the majority of cases, this happens when goods are received into Stores – a Goods Received Note (GRN) is completed and sent to the Accounts Office for processing.

Occasionally, goods can be delivered directly to the person who originally placed the internal order. If this happens, and the Accounts Office are not made aware that the goods have been received, the invoice will remain unpaid – this obviously creates problems between the University and the supplier, so please be mindful of the need to pass delivery paperwork either to the Stores or to the Accounts Office for processing.

**PURCHASING CARDS**

Not all goods are ordered through the P2P to system and certain purchases are more easily made using purchasing cards – specific examples are conference bookings and travel arrangements. Furthermore, the School no longer holds petty cash so certain purchases that would have historically been made using petty cash are now made with purchasing cards – examples include certain locally printed documents, replacement keys, sundry materials for teaching etc.

There are approximately 15 card holders in the School. Senior members of academic staff, usually with large research groups and frequent travel requirements, are card holders. However, their use of cards is usually limited to personal/research group expenditure. Senior members of the technical support staff, plus the Accounts Office staff are all card holders and are usually able to make card
purchases where there is a need. In making such purchases, it is critical that they are given the project code against which the purchase is to be charged.

**STORES ITEMS**

The Store is shared between the School of Biological Sciences (SBS) and the School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy (SCFP) and is located on the ground floor, at the rear of the Chemistry building. The Store carries a modest stock of routinely used items (such as paper towels, plastic ware etc.). Items can be drawn from this stock by providing a project code and signature.

**EQUIPMENT PURCHASES**

Specialist items of research equipment are usually bought using grant funding. Equipment for teaching or core equipment for general use (i.e. machines, freezers, autoclaves etc.) is purchased from the School budget. Any purchases in excess of £5,000, irrespective of whether the equipment is for research, teaching or general use, has to be sourced by a tendering process through the University Procurement Department. Three quotations are required and the purchasing decision has to be made on the basis of cost effectiveness.

In the event that there is only one supplier which can provide the required items of equipment, then the order can be processed without tendering, provided that a Single Action Waiver (SAW) is completed at the time the order is submitted in the P2P system.

**VAT**

VAT is payable on all purchases for goods and services where VAT normally applies. This information will be captured when the Accounts Office staff apply the relevant tax code (PP) when orders are being uploaded into the P2P system.

However, some research grants are designated VAT exempt on the basis that the funding is for medical research. Purchases made specifically for items to be used for medical research can be ordered VAT-free (by using the PZ code) and by the inclusion of a VAT exemption certificate with the order in the P2P system.

VAT rules are complex – both in terms of whether we should pay it and whether we should charge it (if SBS charges for goods/services). Although the SBS Accounts Office is able to apply correct coding, the staff are not in a position to provide advice or to make definitive judgements. These matters are referred to the University VAT specialist (vat@reading.ac.uk).

**EXPENSES**

In the course of normal operation, not all costs can be covered by prior ordering, or by purchase cards and we no longer hold petty cash. Expenses may be incurred typically for travel and travel-related activities (train tickets, car parking, fuel costs, subsistence costs). These costs are quite easily reimbursed by the completion of an expense claim form (link below). These claims need to include
an appropriate project code (the Accounts Office will check this), be signed and by the claimant and passed to the Head of School for authorisation. They are then sent to Central Finance in Whiteknights House for payment. Funds are reimbursed directly into the claimant’s bank account; cash reimbursement is no longer used. ([http://www.reading.ac.uk/finance/expense_claims.html](http://www.reading.ac.uk/finance/expense_claims.html))

**FEE CLAIMS**

Some activities involve payments to individuals for work carried out, rather than for expenses incurred. These payments are usually for modest amounts – from a few pounds to a few hundreds of pounds. Historically, these payments were made by completion of what used to be referred to as “a Blue Form”. The “Blue Form” has been superseded by the Fee Claim form.

These payments are made when the reason for payment has been agreed in advance with the Head of School and a Fee Claim form has been completed (web link below) and countersigned by the School Director of Finance. Examples of payments made using this process might be the payment of student guides for UCAS Open Days, a visiting speaker for whom a fee is payable in addition to expenses, or someone engaged on a short-term and temporary basis for a particular reason. Payment using the Fee Claim scheme does not represent a form of employment.

[http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-Fees_Claim_Form_October11.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-Fees_Claim_Form_October11.pdf)

**VISITING LECTURER FORM**

If a visiting lecturer is to be engaged to deliver a series of lectures, rather than just a one-off guest lecture, this may be viewed as a form of temporary employment. It should be approved in advance by the Head of School, and the identity of the lecturer will need to be validated in order to establish that it is legitimate for the individual to be receiving remuneration for paid work in the UK. The University has to do this to remain compliant with UK Border Agency rules. It is usually adequate for the visiting lecturer to present his/her passport so that a photocopy can be taken for the School files. This is necessary before the Head of School can countersign the relevant form (link below) to authorise payment.


**RECRUITMENT**

Staff recruitment, i.e. bringing someone into University employment, whether part-time or full-time and whether for a fixed term or permanently, requires the completion of a Staffing Request Form (SRF).

An electronic system was introduced in 2013, and anyone wanting to recruit a new member of staff, or change/amend an existing appointment must present a brief business case justifying the reason. This must be sent to the School Office, (room 158 Harborne Building) from where all SRF’s are initiated. The SRF’s then follow an electronic chain of approval, beginning with the Head of School, and passing through Central Finance in Whiteknights House for checking, before receiving final review (and usually approval) by the Dean. The whole process can usually be completed with 48 hours.
However, for renewal of existing contracts, forms should be completed/approved **well in advance** in order for the Payroll deadline to be met (typically the middle of the month). It is not possible to back-date starting dates; new “real-time” legislation makes it impossible to pay anyone if a contract of employment is not in place.

For new posts, after the SRF has been approved, the next stage is to proceed to advertising. Please note that if a post is for a year or more in duration, it **must** be advertised. The only occasions on which HR will accept a post not being advertised are if the post is for less than one year in duration or the PI already has an appointee in mind who is named on the grant.

The following documents will be required by HR:

Job advert; job description; person specification – refer to the following link:

[http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-UoR_Staff_Guidance_for_Recruitment_ads.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-UoR_Staff_Guidance_for_Recruitment_ads.pdf)

After short-listing has taken place, the next stage is the job interview:


The standard “Invite to Interview” letter **must** be used and candidates advised to bring ID with them, usually their passport and NI card. This applies to **ALL** short-listed candidates, regardless of nationality. The photocopied documents (i.e. each page) must be signed as follows:

- Original seen – followed by a tick
- Date seen
- Signed: Please write signature **legibly** followed by your name in **BLOCK CAPITALS**

Once a candidate has been selected, a Chairman’s Report and a New Starter Form must be completed (see link above). Queries regarding the recruitment process can be directed, in the first instance, to the SBS Business Partner in HR, Mr Alan Twyford a.j.twyford@reading.ac.uk

The School takes care to work within the University Equality and Diversity Policy ([http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-Revised_Equality_and_Diversity_Policy_-_December_2011.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-Revised_Equality_and_Diversity_Policy_-_December_2011.pdf)) which is reproduced here:

**Equality and Diversity Policy**

The University of Reading is committed to providing an inclusive environment which promotes equality, values diversity and respects the rights and dignity of all its staff, students and visitors. It will ensure that individuals are selected, developed, appraised, rewarded, promoted and otherwise treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and are given equality of opportunity within the University.
Embedding and using the best equality and diversity practices will help the University to recruit and retain the highest quality students and staff and to enhance its reputation for academic excellence, in line with its corporate mission.

In implementing this policy, and in line with the Equality Act (2010), the University will ensure that no individual, applicant, student, employee, provider, contractor or user of facilities shall be discriminated against on the grounds of his or her sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, marital or civil partnership status, race (including colour, nationality or ethnic origins), religion or belief, disability, age or socio-economic background.

The University opposes any form of discrimination on these stated grounds unless it can be objectively justified as genuine, substantial, reasonable and within the law. Evidence of discriminatory behaviour (including harassment) will be treated as a potential disciplinary matter which may, in turn, result in sanction up to and including staff dismissal or student expulsion in line with our staff grievance and disciplinary procedures and student complaints and disciplinary procedures.

December 2011

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE & ATHENA SWAN

The School holds Investors in People accreditation and has a Silver accreditation under the Athena SWAN charter (the Charter for Women in Science). We have recently applied for re-accreditation of the Athena SWAN award; the School has taken specific initiatives to avoid disadvantaging female members of academic and research staff.

These include:

Wherever possible scheduling meetings within a core hours period of between 10.00am and 4.00pm, to avoid creating difficulties with child care drop-off and pick-up arrangements at either end of the day.

Maintaining continuity of contact when female staff take maternity leave, and helping to maintain the continuity of a career pathway in research. In particular, providing support to female research staff whose maternity leave starts during the period of a research grant, but maybe ends after the end date of the award.

The School will assist such staff in maintaining career continuity by:

- Responding positively to requests to keep a University email address open for an agreed period.
- Agreeing to confer “visiting” status to such staff (such as being a Visiting Fellow) for an agreed period.
- Allowing such staff to have KIT (Keeping In Touch) days during the period of maternity leave.
All of the above would apply even if the maternity leave extends beyond the end date of a research grant (beyond the original end date of the grant-funded contract of employment).

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Academic staff wishing to invite an overseas visitor to the School should firstly obtain the permission of the Head of School. If the visitor is from a non-EU country, the academic should then discuss the matter with Aileen Wallace (a.m.wallace@reading.ac.uk) in HR to check that we are adhering to the strict Home Office/UK Border Agency rules which have to be followed. There are financial penalties for the University if the rules are broken. The academic should then contact the School Office giving as much information about the visitor as possible:

- Full name & address of institution
- Job title
- Dates of proposed visit
- Purpose of visit
- Bench fee to be charged

The School Office will then prepare a letter of invitation which will be signed by the Head of School. On arrival, the visitor’s passport will need to be photocopied by the School Office as proof of identity.

Academic staff wishing to invite a UK visitor to the School should also obtain the permission of the Head of School before entering into any arrangement. A letter of invitation will be signed by the Head of School upon receipt of all relevant information about the visit.

WORK EXPERIENCE

For Academic Staff wishing to offer work experience to school children, please obtain permission from the Head of School in advance and then refer to the following web-sites:

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-work_experience_application.pdf

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/humres-work_experience_young_people.pdf

Anyone involved with hosting school children is required to have had a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check – formerly called a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check.

ROOM BOOKINGS

The following rooms can be booked directly with the School (via admin staff and Fiona Brown/Trevor Pitman); capacity shown in brackets:

- Harborne Conference Room (18)
- Room 130, Knight Building (12)
**SICKNESS**

Absence arising due to ill health should be reported at the earliest opportunity ie when absence begins, not on return to work. An absent member of staff should contact their line manager directly, ideally by ‘phone, and advise of any teaching, supervisory or support commitments which need to be addressed. If the line manager cannot be contacted directly, the absent member of staff must make contact with a colleague, or the School Office, requesting that their absence is made known, and communicated to relevant parties.

http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/humanresources/policiesandprocedures/AbsenceandLeave/humres-sicknessabsence.aspx

On returning to work the staff member must complete a Sickness Absence Form (USP1), have this countersigned by their line manager and then submit this to the School Office. All such forms are then forwarded to HR.

Current practice also requires staff to have a brief “Return To Work” interview with their line manager to ensure that there are no outstanding health-related issues that are relevant to the resumption of normal work.
BROAD AREAS OF RESEARCH IN THE SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The area of research expertise are currently grouped into four categories – Microbiology, Ecology, Evolution and Molecular & Cellular Medicine. These research groups cut across the two Sections. The below list gives a very approximate guide to the expertise within each Section.

Biomedical Section

- Muscle biology and stem cells (Patel, Foster)
- Reproductive endocrinology (Knight & Bicknell)
- Cardiovascular biology (Gibbins, Clerk, Leake, Boateng,
- Bacterial metabolism (Andrews, MacIntyre, Clarke)
- Cancer biology (Darbre, Fry)
- Plant/microbial interactions (Jackson)
- Molecular structures (Watson, McGuffin)
- Viral agents (Jones, Neuman)

Environmental Biology

- Fruit crops (Battey)
- Plant taxonomy (Culham, Hawkins,
- Ecology (Holloway, Fellowes, Baker, Mitchley)
- Invertebrate biology (Callaghan, Cook, Hatcher, Perotti)
- Evolutionary biology (Pagel, Johnson, Meade, Venditti)
- Population biology/modelling (Sibly)
- Vertebrate pests (Prescott)
## SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES - JANUARY 2015

### SECTION OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

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<td>Prof Simon Andrews (Head of Section)</td>
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<td>Dr Andrew Bicknell</td>
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<td>Dr Samuel Boateng</td>
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<td>Dr Simon Clarke</td>
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<td>Prof Angela Clerk</td>
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<td>Dr Philippa Darbre</td>
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<td>Prof Ketan Patel</td>
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### SECTION OF ECOLOGY & EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

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<td>Dr Phil Baker</td>
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<td>Dr Amanda Callaghan</td>
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<td>Prof James Cook (on sabbatical)</td>
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<td>Dr Alastair Culham</td>
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<td>Dr Mark Fellowes (Head of School)</td>
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### Teaching Fellows

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<td>Dr Elizabeth Lander</td>
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Comments page

Please use this page to make a note of any corrections that need to be made in future versions of the handbook, or to make a note of any omissions.

Please make recommendations for additional information.

If there is a specific contribution you would like to make to the handbook please supply electronic copy (in the form of a Word document) to the School Office, to allow this to be included in a revised future edition of the handbook: c.e.brickley@reading.ac.uk