

School of Physics and Astronomy Diversity Committee Newsletter

The Diversity Committee considers any matters that directly or indirectly prevent some groups of people from fulfilling their potential or from participating fully in the life of the School. If you have any questions or ideas for this committee please contact penny.gowland@nottingham.ac.uk.

Members needed: Our membership is drawn from across the School but we have not yet recruited an undergraduate or someone with particular knowledge of LGBTQ issues. We do not want the committee to get too large but if you would be interested in advocating for one of these groups please let us know. This is the current membership:

Mobeen Ali (PG Student)	Mohamed Henini (International admissions)
Shaun Beebe (School Manager)	Oleg Makarovskiy (Disability officer)
Clare Burrage (Research Fellow)	Michael Merrifield (Head of School)
Penny Gowland (Chair)	Philip Moriarty (Admissions Tutor)
Meghan Gray (Associate Professor)	Kathryn Murray (Post Doctoral Research Assistant)
Maria Hall (Examinations Officer)	Denise Watt (First year lab technician)

Do you have a problem that you want us to know about?

We have set up a webform which you can use to inform the School of any behaviour or circumstance that you believe is making somebody feel uncomfortable, excluded or threatened, particularly on the basis of their gender, race, sexual orientation, disability or belief system. The webform will send your message to Penny Gowland as the Chair of the Diversity Committee. The message can be anonymous if you wish, but if you leave your name we will contact you with a response. The form will be available very soon from the Current Students page of our website and the home page of the staff intranet site.

Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics UK

Oxford, 19-22 March <http://www.physics.ox.ac.uk/cuwip2015/index.html>.

Are you interested in attending this meeting? If so the School might support your attendance financially, provided that you will participate in some feedback sessions on your return. Attendance will be supported on a first come- first served basis. Please contact Penny Gowland if you are interested. We hope we can have a good representation from Nottingham.



Supporting International and EU Postgraduate Students

Some International Students struggle because of cultural differences between the UK and their home country. This can be a particular problem for postgraduate students who are working in a fairly unstructured environment. Our new International Postgraduate Student Tutor, Mohammed Henini will provide advice to International students if they have a problem that they do not want to discuss with their supervisor. (International Undergraduate students can talk to **Keith Benedict** if they cannot talk to their Personal Tutor).

Science in Society

Lots of you will be excited to hear that Phil Moriarty and Meghan Gray are going to start a termly seminar programme entitled 'Science in Society', providing an opportunity for lively debates within the School. Look out for announcements soon.

Invited speakers

We all know that jokes can make lectures much more engaging, but some jokes are hurtful, isolating or divisive. Following some unfortunate incidents we have decided to include a statement on all invitations to external speakers reminding them that we require that they ensure that their presentations are respectful of a diverse audience.

Number of women in the school

Unfortunately the number of women in our first year has fallen unexpectedly this year, and we are now urgently trying to work out why (please let us know if you have any ideas). However in the meantime we want to make sure that the women in our first year do not feel isolated; Meghan Gray is going to organize a focus group to try to identify any concerns.

Future activities

We are very pleased that earlier this year our Athena Swan Silver Award renewed, and so in the next few months we will be making sure that we are delivering on our Action Plan. We also want to spend some time considering how we can encourage more Black and Ethnic Minority students to come into Physics.

