

Finance and Human Resources Unit

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The Finance and Human Resources Unit (FHR), comprises 16 staff covering accounts, contract management, administration, payroll and human resources.

The Institute employs approximately 350 staff (plus visiting workers and postgraduate students) and has income and expenditure of approximately £14 million with an additional capital grant this year of £2.51 million. The Unit is responsible not only for the financial regulation of the Institute's activities but also for providing training and a human resources service for all staff.

The HR section plays an important part in the development of staff and the provision of a positive working environment, providing support and guidance in all areas of staff welfare and ensuring that the policies and procedures in the BBSRC Staff Code are implemented effectively.

Working with the Senior Management Team, HR helps to develop a Manpower Plan that meets the needs of the SCRI Corporate Plan and ensures the effective recruitment of the staff required throughout the Institute. In 2002/03 (1st April 2002 – 31st March 2003) this included advertising 59 posts that attracted 873 applications from external and internal sources. HR is also responsible for the operation of effective induction and probation procedures to ensure that new staff become productive and effective members of the Institute quickly. On an ongoing basis HR continues to work with all managers to ensure that there is effective performance management throughout an individual's working career.

In addition HR is involved with internal staff committees in relation to the maintenance and development of the Institute's IIP status and the promotion

and delivery of a wide range of training and development activities through the Institute Training Committee. These development activities include IT training, training in a range of management issues and appropriate scientific training to continually develop the skills of staff.

The accounts staff process over 17,000 purchase invoices per annum, 95% of which are paid within 30 days, utilising the BACS payment system to reduce the number of cheque payments. Over 1,100 sales invoices are raised in addition to the claims on grant aided projects. In addition to the 'core' research projects funded by the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department, additional income is sought from other external grant awarding bodies and from industry and the Institute carries out research on about 200 projects which are monitored and supported by the accounts team, particularly where the Institute acts as the co-ordinating partner for collaborative projects. The team also maintains over 2,700 items on its fixed asset register, ranging from personal computers to laboratory buildings.

The Institute is reliant on the funding from external bodies to maintain the resources and facilities of the Institute, therefore the development of staff, the monitoring of the finances and the control of the overhead expenditure is critical to the management of the Institute and its ability to produce world class science in an increasingly competitive research environment, both in terms of funding and output. This year has seen a reduction in research funding by commercial organisations and the role of budgeting and forecasting has become increasingly important to maintaining the financial integrity of the Institute, to ensure that it can respond to the changing demands of the sponsors and research programmes.