

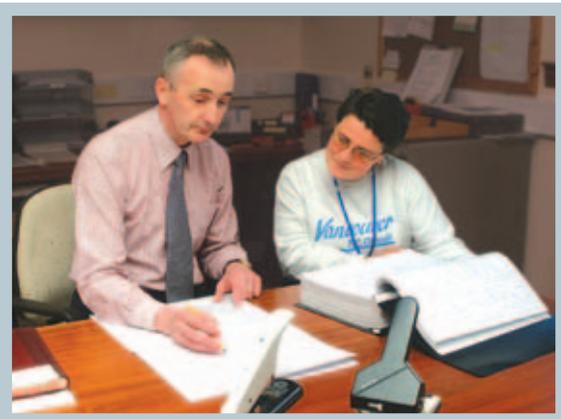
Finance and Human Resources Unit

N. G. Hattersley & Alison Cartwright

Dr N G Hattersley joined the Institute in September 2001, as Financial Controller, replacing Ian Harrington who left to join West Lothian College of Further Education.

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 £2.48 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.



As such, the HR section within the Unit 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. The section played an important part, along with internal staff committees, in the attainment of the Institute's Investors in People accreditation (which was awarded in October 2001), and administers the training budget on behalf of the Institute Training Committee, in addition to collating training requests from staff and arranging training with the appropriate training providers.

The section co-ordinates the recruitment of Institute staff (during the year 50 posts were advertised, attracting 435 applications from external and internal sources), and carries out the administrative induction for new members of staff, as well as supervising probation procedures during their first year of employment. HR are also involved in monitoring the progress of the 24 research students based at the Institute, and in providing assistance to new staff, visitors and students with accommodation and other welfare related matters.

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 1,000 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 2,500 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 the Institute can respond to the changing demands of the sponsors and research programmes.