The Post Masters' Placement programme: Short fact sheet for prospective hosts.

What the programme is:
This is a chance for you to have a student ("PMP student") spend up to eight weeks in your lab or working group over the summer. The intention is that the PMP student would work alongside a PhD student/post-doc/other member of the lab or working group ("host partner") assisting in research.

Following some very successful projects run as a pilot last year we are opening the programme to undergraduates with the required skills. (List required skill levels in advert form)

The programme is not assessed as part of the degree course, and as such affords an opportunity to get mathematical input at a stage where a problem might not yet be well formulated. (a bit in about open problems vs more routine directed work)

The programme provides a community forum for mathematically related interdisciplinary work. We support young mathematicians gaining this essential experience through computing training where required and bursaries. We host a Presentation day (17 August) which includes presentations of summer projects and a meeting open to PMP students, hosts, host partners and supporters to find effective ways by which mathematicians can be part of the solutions of problems throughout the scientific technological spectrum.

Requirements of the host department.
The host department is expected to provide work space, computing facilities and cover any costs incurred in their research. A good research environment is also important for the success of PMP projects. Projects are most successful where the PMP student works closely with a PMP host partner, and both are supported by a research group which meets for coffee/tea and weekly for seminars or social events.

How to proceed:
Register your interest in having a PMP student online. Students will be able to view these details and will contact you. There will be a chance to give a 7 minute presentation about your proposed project in a series of lunchtime seminars on Mondays during the Lent term. Sign up online here by the 13th January if you would like to take advantage of this opportunity to give a talk.

Following successful pilot projects in 2016 the PMP programme is now open to undergraduates with the required skills.
Make whatever arrangements suit you for meeting your prospective students, and deciding which one(s) you would like to engage. Working arrangements, hours of work, whether working from home or elsewhere is permitted, start and end dates for the project should be agreed between you and the student. Students should contact you before the **3rd March** if they are interested in your project. Offers to your first choice student should be sent out on the **10th of March**.

Once you have found and agreed a project with a student, the student should then fill in an application form [available online] and forward it to you to complete the section required for host supervisors to complete. (whether or not you will be applying for bursaries, which should be forwarded to the host “PMP project supervisor” - the member of staff in the host department with authority to invite the PMP student to join the working group.

Email the completed form to pmp@maths. Please complete the form even if the project is not being subsidised by the Bridgwater Bursary Fund.

**The Bridgwater Bursary Fund:**

We have a small bursary fund available to contribute to summer research undertaken by Part III students and undergraduates, but we ask all students and all host labs and departments to do their utmost to find complementary funds from their own sources. As a rough guide, we hope that departments and labs that have had PMP students in the past and are familiar with the programme could contribute half of the student’s living expenses. We ask students to ask colleges for reduced

If a bursary is required, fill in the appropriate sections of the application form which should be submitte by the last Friday of Lent term. First round decisions will be made by mid April. Some funds will be reserved for a second round, for which bursary applications should be made by late May, with decisions announced by the beginning of June.

**End of Project requirements.** The following are required of projects which have received bursary funding, and requested of all.

- PMP students are expected to present their project at the PMP Presentation Day (17 August).
- A poster/case study for the archive.
- Online end of project forms to filled out by PMP students, the PMP partners and PMP supervisors.

**Deadlines and decision dates:**

**13 January:** Projects should be listed on the website - fill in the [online form](#) here. We will upload projects as they come. We will begin to arrange talks for the PMP projects seminar series on the **3 January** to give those speaking early in term as much warning as possible.

**Mondays in Lent term:** PMP Project lunchtime seminar series - sign up for a slot to present your project to potential student.

**3 March:** Deadline for students to express interest in a project

**10 March:** Host supervisors should make offers to first choice students on this day.

**17 March:** PMP applications due. Requests for bursary funding for consideration in the first round should be received by this date.

**Late April:** First round funding decisions announced.

**8 May:** Final round bursary funding application deadline

**Late May:** Final round bursary funding decisions announced.

**17 August:** Project presentation day.

**30 September:** Reports, end of project feedback forms due.
PMP programme FAQ's

I am just a PhD student. Can I have a PMP student working with me? Yes. The application form includes a statement from your PhD supervisor to the effect that he or she is happy to support the student working with you (arrange whatever access requirements need to be made) and that he or she is happy for you to spend time working with the student.

I am a member of staff. Can I have a PMP student working with me without a more junior scientist partnering the PMP student? Yes, but be aware that particularly in the early weeks the PMP student will require a lot of your time. If you are applying for bursary funds, be aware that we do take into consideration the support of the PMP student within the research environment of the project.

When do these placements take place? During the summer, but generally, at your convenience, as agreed between you and the student. The period of research is generally 8 weeks, but shorter periods may be considered. Longer periods are possible if the host department can find complementary funding.

What are the responsibilities of the host department? Costs: the host department is expected to cover any costs of the student working in the host department. The bursaries are not intended to cover such overheads as computing facilities, use of equipment, training courses.

The host department should provide a desk/bench and a computer. In rare instances students have spent a significant proportion of their time working outside of the host department, for example, in the Centre for Mathematical Sciences. If this is to be the case, plans should be made so that students are not left to work in isolation.

What about the bursaries? The Bridgwater Bursary fund comes from personal donations (77% in 2016) and donations from industry (7%) supplemented by a contribution from the mathematics departments (16%). The fund supports not only PMP projects but a Centre for Mathematical Sciences Summer Undergraduate Research programme. The Bridgwater Bursary fund made contributions to 17 of the 26 PMP students in 2016. Most applications received some funding.

What are the criteria on which applications for bursaries will be judged? While the bursary fund supports summer undergraduate research within the mathematics departments, we give some priority to supporting PMP projects. In general the project is scrutinised rather than the academic standing of the PMP student, although students who have demonstrated energy, determination in engaging with the proposed project will earn credit for the application. The following considerations (in no order) will influence our decisions:

1. We wish to maximise the number of placements. Therefore projects which can offer support will have some priority.
2. Similarly, students who can find means of support through College or other bursaries will have some priority.
3. We wish to develop new links with labs we have not worked with.
4. We wish to recognise students and hosts who have evidently put a lot of thought and energy into their proposed project.
5. We wish to encourage students whose mathematical interests are not normally considered applicable (pure subjects and theoretical physics).
Evidence of a supportive environment: we have learned that PMP students working closely with a PhD student or post doc as PMP partner, or are in working groups which meet regularly for coffee tea and seminars have a more rewarding experience and contribute more to the project. We wish to support successful projects; therefore evidence of a lively research environment.

If a bursary is not required, when will decisions be made? Whenever suits you and the student. The arrangement is entirely between you and the student. We do ask that the student completes the application form for our records, and to ensure that he or she is included in all correspondence about the PMP programme.

Who decides which student we get if more than one student shows an interest in our project? You do. The process is that students will approach you if they are interested in your project. How you decide between them, whether you interview, whether you post a deadline for expressions of interest is up to you. If you can use two students, you may take two, although if we are short of funds for bursaries, we may prefer to give others the chance of having a student before enabling you to take two.

Keep asking questions. We are learning how to make this programme work well for all of us.

11 November

Dr. Marj Batchelor, PMP programme coordinator,
Department of Pure Mathematics and Mathematical Statistics
Centre for Mathematical Sciences,
Wilberforce Road,
Cambridge, CB3 0WB

tel: 01223 (7) 65818
e-mail: mb139@cam.ac.uk