

Plymouth EM Centre's Publication Policy

Core facilities provide the University research community with state-of-the-art instrumentation and expertise, which adds to and improves the research outputs. It is important to recognise the contributions of facility personnel to the advancement of scientific research, both formally and informally. The type of recognition that is most appropriate will vary dependent upon the contribution provided.

Important reasons for acknowledging contributions from core facilities in publications, by co-authorship or by formal mention in the acknowledgments section, include:

1. PEMC team members are scientists. When they make an intellectual and/or experimental contribution to a publication they deserve to be recognised and acknowledged, just as any other co-author would be.
2. The existence of core facilities depends in part on proper acknowledgment in publications. This is an important metric of value to most facilities, i.e. impact.
 - a. Proper acknowledgment of facilities enables them to obtain financial/other support.
 - b. It aids PEMC staff to advance their careers, adding to the overall health of the facility.
3. If PEMC staff have co-authorship where deserved, it will avoid the risk of misinterpretation and help ensure the data is accurately conveyed and described.

Core facilities must charge for services rendered according to agreed cost accounting practices within the university. TRAC rates are determined outside of PEMC, calculated by Finance according to actual costs & associated overheads involved in running the centre. However, the emphasis on cost recovery is at risk of damaging the scientific reputation of our facilities by diminishing their efforts. They could be seen by the research staff merely as a straightforward service they have to pay for, analogous to hiring a car mechanic.

In reality, core facilities are not just instruments provided in a room; they are populated by highly-skilled and experienced individuals who can make complex experiments possible and provide essential support in very specialized technologies, often with an intellectual contribution to the project. Charging for these services helps bring awareness of the investment in a project but should not preclude authorship on manuscripts. Core facility staff should have the opportunity to participate in drafting the pertinent part of the paper, and give final approval to the wording and conclusions drawn before publication.

Generally speaking, university staff are good at recognising the efforts of all individuals involved within a project, including those sat outside of research groups and in core facilities such as PEMC. However, after several serious incidents of academic misconduct with respect to publications recently, we do not wish to rely solely on good will. We risk widening the gap between academic and technical staff if this is to continue, with the latter seen as *lesser* individuals; purely technologists without the necessity of recognition or advancement within a career structure. Instead, the research community as a whole, academic and technical alike, should work towards the mutual goal of research excellence across the university. Acknowledgement of everyone's efforts in presentations and publications must be an accepted baseline.

Proper acknowledgement provides a visible measure of the impact and success of the facilities and helps to secure support and funding.

As a core facility within an academic institution, PEMC follows the same internationally established guidelines as departments or schools throughout the University, stipulated by journals and the publication houses themselves. We have, therefore, implemented a new publication policy within the centre.

1. All publications resulting from the use of instruments within the facility should, at the very least, acknowledge the Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre (PEMC) as a whole, e.g. *'the authors gratefully acknowledge the Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre for their support & assistance in this work'*
2. Where users have had significant help from a particular member of PEMC staff, or PEMC staff have generated additional data personally, this staff member should be acknowledged by name, alongside the centre if applicable, e.g. *'the authors thank *** of Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre for their support & assistance in this work'*
3. If scientists from PEMC contributed more than just routine techniques, they should be co-authors of papers that use data.
 - a. *Development or adaptation of protocols to suit samples or materials, (re)designing experiments, extensive data analysis and interpretation are not routine and constitute contributions meriting co-authorship.*
 - b. *Simple acquisitions of raw data or routine sample preparations alone normally would not merit co-authorship but should still be acknowledged.*

Authorship decisions are generally made at the preparation stage of a manuscript, rather than at the initiation of the work, however PEMC staff will now ask what the desired outcome of any new research project is and expect to be informed of any potential publications resulting from the work. If you are uncertain about co-authorship or have any questions or concerns about this, please discuss this issue with the facility manager in advance.

Please send a reprint of the paper, or an e-mail including the reference information for the publication, to the facility concerned, where a PEMC publication number will be generated. We also politely request that you remember to acknowledge use of the facilities in your presentations and cite core facilities in grants, as appropriate.

This publication policy has been compiled by Natasha Stephen (PEMC) after discussions with the RMS EM-UK community and gratefully acknowledges all contributors, particularly Kim Findlay of the John Innes Centre, whose contribution was used as an early model of this document.

Please sign below to confirm that you have read, and have understood, the PEMC Publication Policy, and that you agree to abide by it in future publications resulting from your collaborative efforts with PEMC facilities & staff;

Name:

Signature:

Date: