

Guidance for Speakers and Chairs

Please read this document carefully. If you have any questions, please email rsc2022@plymouth.ac.uk.

Guidance for Speakers

The BFE/RMA Research Students' Conference 2022 is hybrid this year. This means that all events will simultaneously take place in Plymouth and on Zoom. Speakers will be able to present in-person or online.

There is a **single** Zoom link for the conference. Within it, there will be breakout rooms for each physical location: RLB Lecture Theatre 2, RLB 206-207, RLB Jill Craigie Cinema, Sherwell Upper Theatre and the House Stage.

<https://plymouth.zoom.us/j/93304648220?pwd=dXlZNkxiVDZjdEtZR2RRSnNJSy9xdz09>

Meeting ID: 933 0464 8220

Passcode: 486195

There will be a **technical chair** in each of the physical spaces who will run the Zoom session and help with any technical issues you may have, such as sharing your slides. There will also be a **session chair** (named in the programme handbook) who will take care of the content of the session.

If you are presenting **in person**, you will be asked to play your slides from the PC in the room. You should therefore bring your slides on a USB stick or stored online.

You should aim to enter your session **15 minutes** before it starts in order to check that your slides and sound work. This applies to in-person and online speakers.

The conference hub is the University of Plymouth's **Roland Levinsky Building** (Drake Circus **PL4 8AA**). The ground floor of the building (also called **Crosspoint**) is where the registration desk will be, and where tea and coffee will be served. Lunch will not be served, but there is a café in the building (Container Café), as well as numerous cafes and shops in near proximity (see 'Food and Drink').

- The **Lecture Theatre 2 (LT2)** is on the **Roland Levinsky Building** ground floor, the door is near the Container Café.
- The **Jill Craigie Cinema** is on the **Roland Levinsky Building** ground floor, the door is near the Container Café.
- Room **206-207** is on the **Roland Levinsky Building** second floor. Take the lift (directly opposite the Container café) and go to the second floor. The room is directly opposite the lift, across the bridge.
- The **Sherwell Upper Theatre** is on the **Sherwell Building** second floor. From the Roland Levinsky Building, walk up the hill along North Hill (the road between campus and the Box) towards the Sherwell church. The entry to the building is not on the roadside, but on the campus-facing side of the building. Take a sharp left when entering the building, walk through the door, and take lift or stairs to the second floor. The door is directly opposite the lift.
- The **House Stage** is on the **House** ground floor. The building is directly opposite the Roland Levinsky building, next to the North Hill road. It is a ‘rusty’ building with a giant screen on the front.
- Room **303** is on the **Roland Levinsky Building** third floor.

All the conference rooms have fully networked PC, data projector, integrated sound, USB dock, camera and microphones to relay live content to Zoom.

Covid-19 Information

This is the guidance issued by the University of Plymouth in response to the Covid-19 response. A risk assessment is available from the conference organisers.

- It is recommended that **face coverings** are worn in public and communal areas, as well as teaching spaces (unless medically exempt). The person speaking to the room can remove their mask while they do so.
- It is recommended that you test negative (**Lateral Flow Test**) before accessing the University facilities.

Additionally, the following measures are in place during the conference to facilitate a safe experience.

- **Face masks and hand sanitiser** are freely available in University buildings.

- All sessions will take place in rooms with large capacity allowing for **social distancing**.

Guidance for Chairs

You have various roles as the chair of a session, which include:

- Introducing the session and the speakers
- Keeping the session running on time
- Take questions from the audience

Here are some tips on how to be a good chair for your session.

Prepare for your session by reading the abstracts and biographies. You might wish to contact the speakers and ask them how they would like to be introduced. The ‘minimum’ introduction should include the speaker’s name, their affiliation and the title of the paper. However, it might be more interesting for your audience if you also include some details on their research interests, for example. A word of caution: you are only the chair. You should not give an overly long speech either, as this cuts into the speaker’s allocated time.

You are the **timekeeper** of the session so do not be afraid to keep proceedings moving along. You should start the session on time (not before or after the published time). The papers are 20 minutes long with 10 minutes for questions (lecture-recitals are 30 + 15). You should give the speaker a **time warning** when they get towards the end of their time (e.g. 5 minutes left or 2 minutes left). Try to get the speaker’s attention without distracting them or the audience; this can be difficult at times! Some chairs might whisper or show the number with their fingers, others might bring a paper with the number written on. If you are chairing a session with an online speaker, you might also write the number in the chat.

In the case, that one of the speakers of the session has **not turned up**, you should try to stick to the schedule. If the first speaker is absent, for example, you should wait for 30 minutes until the second speaker begins their presentation. This is because delegates might be coming from other rooms to hear that specific paper. That can only work if the sessions are running as scheduled. Although this might be frustrating, it can also be a chance to have a discussion with people waiting in the session!

It is your job to organise the **question time** effectively. You should aim to have a range of questions from different people. You will find that some enthusiastic delegates will want to ask many questions or take a long time with their question or comment. In the interest of the session, you should politely move the questions on if this happens. Similarly, you may feel that the speaker is engaging in a discussion with a single delegate for too long, and interject to offer the next question.

If you are chairing a hybrid session, you should pay particular attention to both 'rooms', in-person and online. Be sure to check for raised hands so all delegates feel included.

Sometimes, there will be no questions for the speaker. It is your job to ensure that **every speaker gets questions**. You should therefore take notes during the presentations and start thinking of questions. This might be tricky if you do not understand the topic very well, for example. There are some good starter questions, which might generate further discussion in the room:

- How did you become interested in the topic?
- What will be the next steps in your research?

Finally, you may have thought of plenty of good questions but you may need to be selfless and let others ask their questions first.

You will **end the session**. If you have kept to time and run the question time smoothly, you should be able to invite everyone to continue their discussion over a cup of coffee, for example. Delegates might choose to stick around for longer to chat, but you have given the official end to the session.

Be organised, be firm, be inclusive, be selfless.