

## **SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS**

### **Strategy Committee**

**22 November 2017**

#### **School Plan 2018-21 - Headlines**

##### **Author**

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##### **Background**

The School expects to be asked by College to make its 2018-21 planning submission before the end of the calendar year.

##### **Action requested from the committee**

Strategy Committee is asked to comment on the 'headlines' that it is anticipated will feature in School's 2018-21 planning submission, prior to wider consultation within the School.

##### **School Plan 2018-21**

Detailed planning guidance is awaited from College. Unless required, it is not intended to make major changes to the style or content of the School Strategy and Plan.

Information in the plan will be updated and actions reviewed, including progress against actions.

Research Committee and Teaching Committee have been asked to review the relevant sections of the plan. These and other sections will be reviewed by those with functional responsibility (academic and/or support).

Depending on the timescale required by College, it is anticipated that the draft updated plan will be brought to the December meeting of Strategy Committee.

The appended paper identifies some key themes and factors that may feature in the updated School Plan. It proposed that these are put out to wider consultation within the School. Strategy Committee is invited to comment on these prior to wider consultation.

##### **Equality and diversity implications – Y**

The School Plan will include information on policies, procedures and actions to address equality and diversity.

##### **Resource implications (staff, space, budget) – Y**

The School Plan will inform allocation of resources over the planning period.

**School Plan 2018-21 – Headlines** (provisional)

***Environment - external***

Potential impact of 'BREXIT' on staff and student recruitment and research funding.

Potential changes to student funding (especially in England).

Pressure on Higher Education funding in Scotland.

Uncertainty in international markets.

Opportunities in research and teaching in many areas where the School has strengths.

***Environment – internal***

Completion and occupancy of Bayes.

City deal – opportunities and challenges for the School.

Changes to internal funding regimes for Colleges and Schools within the University (less certainty for School of share of future changes in income).

Service Excellence – especially impacting on systems, finance, human resources, student administration. Disruptive in short to medium term with effectiveness and efficiency gains expected thereafter. Tendency towards centralisation.

School needs to be engaged in University-wide initiatives but also needs to be focused to make best use of available resources (high expectations on School – sometimes unrealistic).

Continued but more modest growth in staff numbers in School. Need to ensure adequate support staff commensurate with increased student numbers and research income.

***Learning and teaching***

Consolidation on student numbers with little or no targeted growth in intake of 'on-site' students (although total cohort size will continue to grow as recent increases in UGT cohort feed through).

Increased focus on widening participation (Scotland) – School will be set targets that it will be expected to meet.

Emphasis on growth in online distance learning. Development of use of online tools and materials will also be used to enhance learning for on-site students.

School needs to adjust curriculum, delivery, support and administration to address challenges of recent and continuing growth in taught student cohort to around 1300 students in 2020/21.

Challenges in improving NSS and similar survey results.

***Research***

More of the same. Continue to develop strengths. Still looking to recruit to Chairs in Algorithms and Complexity and in Software Engineering.

Uncertainty about future EU funding. Continued diversification.

Increasing importance of GCRF, ISCF and similar initiatives.

Continue preparation for REF2021 (inc impact case studies).

***Doctoral training***

Improved cross-School promotion of PGR studentships.

Applications for renewal of existing CDTs and possible new ones in NLP and Security.

***Enablers***

**Finance:** the School is currently in a relative strong financial position, but is vulnerable to significant reductions in EU students and/or a reduction in EU funding for research.

**People:** an increased focus on staff development (for academic, research and support staff) with management/leadership being a priority.

**Infrastructure:** Preparation for move to Bayes; continued reconfiguration of space within the Informatics Forum to meet changes in need; continued development of teaching spaces in Appleton Tower to reflect changing teaching methods.

***Other***

**Internationalisation (students):** limited opportunity for further 2+2 and similar arrangements for strong entrants.

**Internationalisation (other):** selectively build international partnerships. Align with University strategy and initiatives, as appropriate.

**Alumni:** Introduce structured engagement programme.