

Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday 31st January 2018



Attendees: Johanna D Moore (Chair), Jane Hillston, Stuart Anderson, Nigel Goddard, Nigel Topham, Martin Wright, Vashti Galpin, Frank Keller, Kousha Etesami, Jacques Fleuriot, Barbara Webb, Jim Ashe, Sharon Goldwater (for Item 4.2), Lorna Adams (secretary),

Apologies: Murray Cole

	Summary	ACTION
1.	PREVIOUS MEETING	
1.1	Approval of previous meeting minutes Minutes from the previous meeting were approved with no changes.	
1.2	Matters arising from previous meeting CDT Proposals: JH advised that there will be a review next week, which will be scored by HoS's. There are 14 proposals, four of which will come from Informatics, but only 10 submissions will be available across College. These will be ranked, and will be fed back to applicants. This exercise is being lead Dave Robertson, with support from Andy Mount. Allocation of Teaching Duties: SA to produce a briefing document to distribute to Dols for discussion. REF Coordinators: Dols to appoint suitable REF liaison for their respective institute and advise DoR – carry forward to next meeting.	SA Dols
2.	HEAD OF SCHOOL's BUSINESS	
2.1	Report from Head of School JM advised that the University will soon begin the recruitment process for the new Chancellor's Fellowship programme, with the advert going live on 9 th February 2018. These will be open for appointment to Grade 8/9 posts or, exceptionally, grade 10 and will be based around three themed areas; robotics, digital technologies, space and satellite. It was also noted that the Chancellor's Fellows will be attached to one of the three Institutes, i.e. Bayes, Usher or EFI. With this in mind, JM asked the Dols to consider which areas they felt would benefit from these appointments. MW said that he would utilise the priorities agreed by SC, late last year, but Dols could propose changes/updates, if they wished.	 Dols
2.2	Academic Recruitment Update MW provided an update on academic recruitment as follows: L/SL/R in Robotics L/SL/R in Security and IoT L/SL/R in Security & Privacy L/SL/R in AI/Machine Learning L/SL/R in Database Systems Senior Data Scientist L in Biological Informatics L/SL/R in Computational Biology Senior Lab Manager: Cognitive Science Chancellor's Fellow	Interviews 5+6 Feb Interviews 5+6 Mar Shortlisting stage Advert closes 31 Jan Advert closes 15 Mar Offer made Ian Simpson accepted PRAF submitted by SBS PRAF awaiting approval Advert will shortly go live

<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.1.1</p> <p>3.1.2</p> <p>3.2.3</p>	<p>RESEARCH BUSINESS</p> <p>Report from Director of Research</p> <p>JH reminded the Committee of the Research Day planned for 24th April and invited suggestions for suitable speakers to invite along.</p> <p>JH reported that the College EI team attended Monday’s Research lunch to provide an overview of IAA funding, Innovate UK Initiative and ISCF, however, only six academics turned up! JH expressed some frustration and advised that she was not going to continue arranging these, if no one is going to turn up. Appreciate that everyone is busy, but perhaps it would be a good alternative to send along postdocs if you are unable to attend.</p> <p>Action: Dols to promote these events more actively within their Institutes</p> <p>ISCF – JH will circulate the information as soon as it comes through. Unfortunately, as with most of these funding calls, you have to know when these are coming, as there usually is a very quick turnaround.</p>	<p>Dols</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p>	<p>TEACHING BUSINESS</p> <p>Report from Director of Teaching</p> <p>SA advised that he and MW had attended a meeting of the Informatics Teaching and Learning Enhancement Board earlier today, which he had felt was very useful. The group consists of Tom Ward; Alan Murray; Susan Rhind; Jon Turner; Gavin Douglas; Sharon Goldwater and two School student reps. This group is a supportive intervention to help us with NSS scores and other similar measures.</p> <p>SA reported that UG applications are up 20% compared to this time last year, while the rest of the College are generally down. PGT applications are up 70% - at least 50% of these will be international students. It was noted that it is intended to manage PGT admissions through a gathered field approach, so as to achieve a similar intake to 2017.</p> <p>It was also noted that the University Court has committed the University to ensuring that 10% of its Scottish student intake come from lower income backgrounds (SIMD20).</p> <p>It has also been suggested that the Special Circumstances process is to move to College, however, there was a lot of push back on this topic.</p> <p>Gavin McLachlan who leads the Online Distance Learning at Scale project, has wishes to develop a series of micro-masters, which would be delivered on a platform such as Coursera. Already progressing with developing this in AI and Data Science. The driver for this is coming from Information Services.</p> <p>Draft Proposal for a new UG Informatics Curriculum (Paper 4.2)</p> <p>Sharon Goldwater joined the meeting for this item, briefly stating that the motivation for doing this is that the field of computer science has changed significantly since the curriculum was last reviewed 15 years ago. During this time, there have been significant changes, and the difference between us and ACM are quite big now. From feedback from staff and students, it was noted that there was not enough coverage of ethics, or enough critical thinking.</p> <p>SG also noted that there are serious admin and resourcing issues which we are currently facing.</p>	

	<p>In the interests of expediency, rather than talking through the whole document, the paper was taken as read, so as to allow for any specific questions or comments from the Committee.</p> <p>Comments and feedback from the Committee was noted as follows :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KE voiced concern over the reduced mathematical content, as there is too much material to be combined into a single course. There are standard text books which we should be following. • JF questioned if we would be missing “reasoning” and didn’t feel these should be optional. However, in response SG was clear that students should have the option. • NT noted that some courses are not as popular and can see the rationale to squeeze these down. Courses should be smaller and lighter. Perhaps the threat of removing courses, may lead to more focus? AR is now a pre-requisite. <p>Be good to see a plan of proportion time students spend in each of the areas. Be good starting point as a check.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BW felt that there some really good ideas in the proposal, however, was keen to stress that it’s important to show what makes us unique, i.e. keep the “flavour” in the curriculum (eg AI). • JH queried why theory courses are worth 10 points and other courses are 20. In response SG advised that she was trying to find something that would bridge year 2 & year 4, and would be happy to have a further discussion on how we can have some 20 point theory courses. NT - Points should be related to the amount of hours spent on work. • Students shouldn’t have to take more than four courses per semester. <p>Following discussion, SA stated that this was definitely the right thing to do and we should continue with this exercise. He would like to see the curriculum be more resilient to changes in student preferences and we should offer more compulsory courses. In terms of space issues – other universities offer five year masters, something which would give us the space and flexibility to do other things. These are things that could ease tension. Keen to explore these further with SG.</p> <p>Action: SG will update this draft document, which she will then circulate to the DoI’s for discussion and feedback from their respective institutes.</p> <p>It was agreed that we need a broader consensus on the direction of travel, before consultation with students.</p>	SG / Dols
<p>5. 5.1</p>	<p>GRADUATE SCHOOL BUSINESS Report from Director of Graduate School Applications up on last year – 19% higher than last year. Female applications up as well.</p> <p>Two Microsoft scholarship applications in process, however will probably only fund one. In discussion with Microsoft.</p> <p>Global studentship scheme – FK commented that the name is pretty generic and would like to propose that this should be renamed in memory of Jon Oberlander. It was agreed that a sub-group (NT; JH; SA; FK) of this committee would be set up to discuss this and other memorial proposals. This sub-group will meet and bring suggestions to a future Strategy Committee meeting.</p>	NT/JH/ SA/FK

<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Nominations for Honorary Degrees and Honorary Fellowships 2019 Nominations for the above are to be submitted to Lynn Forsyth by 8th March 2018, to be considered by CSMC on 22nd March 2018. For further guidance, please refer to the two electronic links below.</p> <p>Electronic copies of the Procedural Guide and Nomination Form for Honorary Degrees are available at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/graduations/honorary/degree-procedure.</p> <p>Electronic copies of the Procedural Guide and Nomination Form for Honorary Fellowships are available at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/graduations/honorary/fellowship-procedure.</p> <p>Issues with procurement procedure (Paper 9.2) BW referred to the tabled paper and was raising this issue as she felt that current processes are not aligned and are getting in the way of progressing with things.</p> <p>Although there is a procurement procedure within the school, when it comes to day-to-day items, there needs to be more common sense applied.</p> <p>It was also noted that the critical path does not always have sufficient staffing, so things often get held up or delayed, particularly if there is only one person responsible for this.</p> <p>Can we have some common sense for small items or time critical?</p> <p>MW agreed that if there are good reasons why items without a defined procurement route need to be purchased, then the need and reason should be documented along with the expenses claim.</p> <p>However, equipment purchases are an issue and we do need someone within the school for supporting mid-scale non-IT equipment purchases. Action: MW/BW to meet with Alastair Scobie to discuss.</p>	<p>MW/BW/ AS</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28th March 2018, 2pm, Turing Room</p>	