Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday 28th November 2018

Attendees: Jane Hillston (Chair), Kousha Etessami, Jim Ashe, Nigel Topham, Nigel Goddard, Frank Keller, Chris Williams, Bob Fisher, Martin Wright, Sharon Goldwater (for item 4.1), Dave Murray-Rust (for item 9.1), Lorna Adams (secretary).

Apologies: Jacques Fleuriot, Mahesh Marina, Stuart Anderson, Barbara Webb

	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** *Allocation of Teaching Duties* – The model developed by SOA was discussed by the School Executive Group. It was not considered to be a replacement for the current School duty allocation model, which will continue to be used for 2018/19 and 2019/20 duty allocations. *Vacancy for Distance Education Co-ordinator* – SOA has spoken to the member of staff who has expressed an interest in being involved..	
2. **2.1**	**HEAD OF SCHOOL's BUSINESS** **Report from Head of School** JH gave a brief update as below: - JH has already circulated slides from A* (Singapore) to DoIs, with ILCC and ICSA both expressing a keen interest to get involved. A* will come back to us with a proposed date for next steps in Singapore, at which point we need to tell them the areas in which we would be interested. - Staff Survey – JH noted that as a School we were slightly above the College/University average in terms of engagement. Our weaker areas included, satisfaction with salary and package; PDRs; staff development. JH will be holding Townhall meetings for various groups within school in January to discuss the results and how to strengthen our weaker areas. - KB Centenary in 2020 – All schools have been asked to contribute 100 objects and 100 faces of relevance as part of the celebrations. Each school has been asked to nominate 15 objects that represent their school, as well as 15 faces. **Action:** JH will circulate document from CSMC to Committee. In addition there will be a series of lectures. Mike Fourman is SoI lead on our contribution to the Centenary events..	JH
2.2	**Academic Recruitment Update** All new posts that were discussed and approved at the September meeting are all now live. MJW extended his thanks to everyone involved in progressing these so quickly. **Action:** MJW will circulate the link for all the vacancies details to the Committee.	MJW
	Action: JH would like the list of potential candidates from NG and FK, and in particular, would like a list of potential female candidates.	NG & FK
2.3	**Review of academic management** JH advised that we have appointed an external consultant, David Fraser, to undertake this review. David has been in contact with those involved, to set up individual meetings over	

informatics

		the next few weeks, to understand their respective experiences. This will be followed by a half-day workshop, which will take place on Monday 14th January 2019. There will also be a wider consultation and a school meeting in due course.	
3. **3.1**		**RESEARCH BUSINESS** **Report from Director of Research** CK provided the following update: - **Plan S:** There will be a Research Lunch held in January to aid a better understanding of this new initiative. In brief, the main principle of this is that *"by 2020 scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants provided by participating national and European research councils and funding bodies, must be published in compliant Open Access Journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms."* See http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/open-access/plan-s for current information. - The Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) was discussed at CRC in November, see https://sfdora.org/. Its general recommendation is "*do not use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist's contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions.*" It is not clear if the University of Edinburgh has signed up to DORA (EDINA has), but researchers are encouraged to examine their practices to ensure DORA-compliance, and develop (discipline-adapted) examples of good practice. - As SoI was unable to see the benefit of a possible collaboration with InnoHK (Hong Kong), it was decided not to progress this any further as a School, although one or more academics may participate on an individual basis. JH noted that there be another similar opportunity in Bangalore coming up soon and it would be useful to know if we have any existing connections in the area. **Action:** KE will send JH details of LFCS's known links to Bangalore. If anyone else is aware of other links, please pass this information to JH. - CW also briefly mentioned two European AI-related initiatives that are currently active, **ELLIS** (European Laboratory for Learning and Intelligent Systems - https://ellis-open-letter.eu/) and **CLAIRE** (Confederation of Laboratories for Artificial Intelligence Research in Europe - https://claire-ai.org/).	 KE/ALL
4. **4.1**		**TEACHING BUSINESS** **Report from Teaching Committee/Work Allocation – Paper 4.1** Sharon Goldwater attended the meeting to talk to this item in SOA's absence. SG briefly summarised the options that had been tabled at the recent Teaching Committee regarding resourcing of student MSc projects, however the committee had been unable to make a decision on either of these and felt that this should come to the Strategy Committee for further discussion. There was some debate, with possible solutions including introducing cluster projects, which may go some way to alleviate the current problem, as well as also looking into using external supervisors.	

	It was noted that we may have a situation, whereby staff could be supervising projects that are not in their particular area of expertise. If there are less popular courses or projects, it is inevitable that there will be less supervision responsibility. However, JH advised, that there would be an expectation that those who are running smaller courses, or whose projects are not selected by students, will be supervising other projects outside their area, therefore spreading the load equally across all supervisors.	
	It was agreed that a decision could not be made on this without SOA being present. **Action:** This will be discussed in more detail at the next Committee meeting on 19th December.	SOA
	Actions : MJW will update project supervision duty allocations in Theon. JH will ask Neil Heatley to update student cohort numbers (excluding EPCC students). SG will raise with SOA the issues of Maths i.e. we are currently supervising some of their students, but would like them to reciprocate.	MJW JH/NH SG/SOA
4.2	**Report from Director of Learning and Teaching - (Paper 4.2)** SOA submitted a late paper to the Committee which was taken as read.	
5. **5.1**	**GRADUATE SCHOOL BUSINESS** **Report from Director of Graduate School** NT advised the Committee that applications are extremely low at this time of year, but will expect these to pick up again in December/January. He also noted that there were some issues with the scholarships website, which experienced a three week downtime that coincided with the PhD deadline.	
6. **6.1**	**COMMERCIALISATION BUSINESS** **Report from Director of Commercialisation and Industry Engagement** JA provided the following update: - Huawei are now resident in the Bayes Centre. However, there is already an issue regarding space. **Action:** JA will pick this up with JH separately. - Options are being explored to provide more space for Bayes commercial tenants. - EIE 2019 is oversubscribed and the call has now closed. The cohort will be announced on 14th December 2018. - Industry days for Data Science and Robotics initially set for 12th and 13th February 2019 – but most likely to be realigned with Data Fest. - Working on a membership model for Bayes and intends to provide further details at either the January or March Strategy Committee meeting.	JA
7. **7.1**	**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY** RBF briefed the Committee on E&D activity as follows: - We are planning to hold a one hour lunchtime event on the 'Neuroscience of Unconscious Bias', which will be open to all staff and PGR students. As a follow-up there will be two, three-hour, unconscious bias sessions for 25 registered attendees, with a focus on ethnicity. Dates are being set and will be advised shortly. It is also worth noting, that there is a proposal going to the Teaching Committee that advises, from 2018/19, all PGR tutors will be required to complete the 15 minute Unconscious Bias course, as part of their paid T&D training.	

	- The Athena Swann submission now covers all staff, not just academic staff. We will therefore need to review the action plan from this perspective. RBF also advised that he is investigating the prospect of a 'secret shopper' to review our current recruitment materials and Open Day activities. JH queried how RBF would go about recruiting a suitable candidate. **Action:** RBF will look into this in a bit more detail and will provide MJW with a draft proposal for consideration.	RBF
8. 8.1	**STRATEGY AND PLANNING** **Draft School Strategy and Plan - (Paper 8.1)** An updated draft of the School Strategy, prepared by JH, was circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting. JH advised that she would welcome any comments from the Committee. RBF felt that it did not mention student project supervision, but was advised that this would be picked up in the teaching section, however JH was happy to have a look at this. MJW thanked CK and JA for submitting their contributions for inclusion in the School Plan and reminded others to pass on their sections as soon as possible.	
8.2	**Investment Proposals - ILCC** New Research Group in Conversational AI – (Paper 8.2a) – FK spoke to the paper which Steve Renals had written, proposing a new Chair and an associated research group in this particular area. It was noted that it was a well written proposal and one which the Committee were happy to support. JH advised that College will be looking for similar business cases for additional potential future investment opportunities. NT stated that ICSA will likely bring a similar proposal to the next Strategy Committee meeting. KE proposed a new research area around the ethics of Machine Learning and AI. JH strongly recommended that KE speak to Michael Rovatsos and submit a proposal, ensuring that it mentions the University's donor gift from Baillie Gifford. **Large scale AI infrastructure** – (Paper 8.2b) – FK introduced this proposal for a substantial new compute facility. It was noted that the School had recently agreed to procure an additional compute facility, primarily for PGR students, but this may have some spare capacity that could also be used by others. The two initiatives should not be seen in isolation of each other. It was felt that this proposal was not fully developed and there were significant omissions. It should also be considered as part of the School's wider Computing Strategy, which is currently being reviewed by Alastair Scobie. Whilst the Committee were in agreement that we do need to address the need for additional computing capacity, it was suggested that the authors engage in further consultation with Alastair Scobie to fully develop a proposal, in the context of the School's updated Computing Strategy. It was noted that Alastair Scobie had been asked to present the updated Computing Strategy to the January meeting of this committee.	

	MJW further noted that the proposal would probably not meet the criteria for the College call for investment opportunities, which require a business case with a financial payback, so an alternative funding route would need to be found.	
9. 9.1	**ANY OTHER BUSINESS** **Inspace Proposals – Paper 9.1 (CLOSED)** Dave Murray-Rust (ECA – Design Informatics) attended for this item. DMR gave a short presentation to the Committee in respect of developing uses for InSpace. It is evident, particularly since the launch of the City Region Deal, that there is strong interest in having a central hub to showcase our work. We are keen for this to be a multi-functional area, which incorporates some display space, as well creating a space for student shows; seminars and public talks; workshops and other relevant events. DMR stressed that we would see this space as having a wider representation and should not just be seen solely as Design Informatics. DMR was keen that Design Informatics should have security of tenure in InSpace, to justify the investment required to make it fully operational again. The challenges in relation to space faced by the School were noted, however It was agreed that the School should provide an assurance of a minimum of two years with a review in the autumn of 2020. There was discussion regarding the composition of the proposed Advisory Board. JH felt that there was also a need for an Executive Board of those with direct operational responsibility for InSpace; principally Design Informatics and SoI. Based on previous experience, there were concerns raised regarding disturbance to other Informatics Forum users from noise caused by events held in InSpace. It was agreed that limits should be applied to noise levels and that particularly noisy events should not be hosted within InSpace.	
9.2	**Head of Finance and Administration** Evgenia Teplechuk our new Head of Finance and Administration, will be starting with us next week, Monday 3rd December 2018, and will be based in the HR office.	
10.	**Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 19 December 2018, 2pm, Turing Room	