



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
informatics

School of Informatics General Meeting

Thursday 21st February 2019





Agenda

- Introduction Jane
 - Welcome to New Staff
 - Update on the School Plan
 - Town Hall Meetings – Feedback & Actions
- National Student Survey Neil
- PGR Student Intake 2018/19 Nigel
- REF Preparation Jane
- Q&A



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Introduction

Jane Hillston



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Welcome to New Staff



New Academic Starts – 2018/19

- Mohsen Khadem- Lecturer in Robotics, 1st November 2018
- Ohad Kammar, Senior Research Fellow, 1st January 2019
- Petros Papapanagiotou, Chancellor's Fellow in Digital Technologies, 1st January 2019
- Judy Robertson, Chair in Digital Learning (0.4FTE + 0.6 School of Education), 1st January 2019
- Steve Tonneau, Lecturer in Robotics, 1st January 2019
- Laura Sevilla-Lara, Lecturer in Image and Vision Computing, 1st January 2019
- Diego Oyaraun, Lecturer in Computational Biology (0.5FTE + 0.5FTE School of Biological Sciences), 28th January 2019
- Vesselin Velichkov, Lecturer in Security and Privacy, 1st February 2019



New Professional Services Starts -2018/19

- Graduate School Manager - Lindsey Fox, 12th November 2018
- Head of Finance and Administration - Evgenia Teplechuk, 1st December 2018
- Marketing and Communications Executive (Steve Ewing) - Jacqueline Clark, 7th January 2019
- Programme Manager (Sethu) - Tolga Ors, 21st January 2019
- Secretary and Administrator (Jim's team) - Jennifer Saunders, 21st January 2019
- Portfolio Manager - Ruta Bader - moved from secondment cover to permanent with us as of 1st February 2019
- Student Support Officer - Iain Dornan, 18th February 2019
- Student Engagement Officer - Melanie Bavajee, 25th February 2019
- Portfolio Manager - Barry Turner, joining in 29th April 2019
- Computing Officer - Ross Armstrong (internal move from the User Support Team), 20th May 2019



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Future planned recruitment



Academic posts being recruited:

- L/SL/R in Machine Learning - interviewing 26th + 27th February
- L/SL/R in Networked Systems - interviewing 14th + 15th March
- L/SL/R in Systems and Hardware Security - interviewing 18th March
- L/SL/R in Data Centric Systems - interviewing 19th + 20th March
- L/SL/R in Operating Systems - interviewing 19th + 20th March
- L/SL/R in Artificial Intelligence - interviewing 21st + 22nd March
- L/SL/R in Computational Cognitive Science - interviewing 28th March
- L/SL/R in Computational Neuroscience and Artificial Intelligence – interviewing 1st + 2nd April
- L/SL/R in Computational Social Science - interviewing 3rd April
- L/SL/R in Speech Technology - interviewing 4th + 5th April
- SL in Informatics Education - awaiting advert to go live
- SL/R in Quantum Computing - pre advert



Professional Services posts being recruited

- Director of Innovation Partnerships (Bayes) - at interview
- Business Development Manager - at interview
- Finance Officer (school accounts) - at advert
- Finance Officer (research accounts) - pre advert
- Staffing Support Officer - at advert
- Senior Administrative Secretary (Aggelos) - at advert
- Computing Officer (Tim Colles) - at advert
- Deputy User Support Manager (Alison Downie) - pre advert
- Programme Manager (Elham) - waiting for advert to go live
- Robotics Laboratory Manager (Sethu) - waiting for advert to go live



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School Plan



Strategic Objectives

- Further enhance our international leadership role in Informatics, including retaining the leading position in the UK.
- Provide world class high quality education in Informatics for a broad constituency of learners.
- Engage broadly with stakeholders in pursuit of our objectives.



Further enhance our international leadership role in Informatics, including retaining the leading position in the UK:

- Strengthen our links to other Schools across all three Colleges.
- Take advantage of opportunities arising in AI, DDI, ISCF etc.
- Potential investments in related and new areas of research, including translational research.
- Continue to ensure a good stream of high quality PhD students.



Provide world class high quality education in Informatics for a broad constituency of learners:

- Complete current curriculum review and explore opportunities for new programmes, including online programmes.
- Future growth in student cohorts will need to be planned and managed to ensure quality of student and staff experience.
- Support alternative career paths, including University Teachers and Student Support Officers.
- Improve support for students, particularly at induction and through transitions. The University has instigated a review of the PT role.



Engage broadly with stakeholders in pursuit of our objectives:

- Clearly our staff, students, collaborators and industry partners are important stakeholders.
- Beyond them there are also the potential students, employers of our students and funders of our research (including members of the public).
- Potential beneficiaries of our research, government and regulators.....



All underpinned by:

- Restructuring of academic line management and investment in professional service roles to reflect the size and ambitions of the School
- Continued enhancements in space utilisation (requires investment) but additional space required to accommodate further growth



Academic staff management structure

- The School has grown substantially over the last five years – we are now ~140 academic staff
- Notionally Head of School is line manager for all of them
- In practice much line management is devolved to Directors of Institute and others
- The senior leadership team within the School has been working with an external consultant to identify a more sustainable line management structure going forward which will take effect in August 2019
- This should have benefits for all academic staff (as well as Head of School)!



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Town Hall Meetings – Feedback & Actions



Town Hall meetings outcomes (staff)

- A mechanism for making suggestions and providing feedback in the School (non-cumbersome) : we will be installing a suggestions box outside the School Office
- The Professional Service Staff would like to feel more appreciated : foster a culture of kindness
- Poor performance was perceived to be a problem that was not adequately dealt with leading to increased load on others : seeking to make clearer arrangements for line management and support



Town Hall meetings outcomes (staff)

- People were uncertain what to do about bullying and harassment : poster campaign and better web pages
- PDRs are not always felt to be worthwhile : training sessions for both appraisers and appraisees
- More opportunities for community-building and well-being related activities : subsidised yoga sessions will start on 4th March



Town Hall meeting outcomes (tutors and demonstrators)

- Tutors and demonstrators would like more individual feedback, both on their own performance and the outcomes for their group
- TA role can be lonely and they would appreciate more opportunities to share their experience
- Better communication from course organisers, both in terms of timing and content.



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Miscellaneous



CDT update

The School submitted five full CDT proposals in August 2018:

- Robotics and Autonomous Systems (joint with HW) EPSRC
- Security, Privacy and Trust
- Biomedical AI
- Data Science and AI UKRI AI Call
- Natural Language Processing



CDT outcomes

The School submitted five full CDT proposals in August 2018:

- Robotics and Autonomous Systems (joint with HW)
- ✘ Security, Privacy and Trust
- Biomedical AI
- ✘ Data Science and AI
- Natural Language Processing



CDT outcomes

The School submitted five full CDT proposals in August 2018:

- Robotics and Autonomous Systems (joint with HW) Michael Mistry
- ✘ Security, Privacy and Trust
- Biomedical AI Guido Sanguinetti
- ✘ Data Science and AI
- Natural Language Processing Mirella Lapata



CDT outcomes

The School submitted five full CDT proposals in August 2018:

- Robotics and Autonomous Systems (joint with HW)
- Security, Privacy and Trust --- looking for alternative ways to get this started
- Biomedical AI
- Data Science and AI --- looking for ways to keep this going (one year support from Sol/SoM)
- Natural Language Processing



HR Office Restructuring

- Sam Black is now heading up the HR office as Staffing Support Manager, with new responsibilities of managing the service and team, alongside continuous process improvement. Congratulations to Sam as this is, effectively, a promotion.
- The HR team line-managed by Sam, now consists of a Staffing Support Administrator (Nicki Reid) and a Staffing Support Officer (previously Senior Administrative Assistant (HR)), currently vacant with the advert closing 26th February. All are members of InfHR as before.
- Staff room/desk allocations and issuing of keys, previously organised by the HR office, is in the process of being transferred to their new functional space by the end of the month – the Facilities Team (Carol Marini & Kirsty Derrins, room 5.41). This means from 1st March, the Facilities Team can be contacted for such matters.



Allocation of Duties

The annual allocation of duties process is reasonably advanced and many of you will have received messages or been involved in discussions about your admin and teaching duties for next year.

There are some duties where believe genuine interest and passion would be beneficial so we are advertising those:

- Director of Internationalisation
- Deputy Director of Equality and Diversity, with responsibility for Athena SWAN



New Policy on Disclosure of Intimate Relationships

The University has recently announced a new policy on the disclosure of intimate relationships. This is intended to ensure that relationships which have an imbalance of power are not misused.

“The University:

- strongly discourages relationships of an intimate nature between staff and students*
- requires staff to disclose an intimate relationship with:*
 - a University of Edinburgh student, or*
 - a member of staff with whom they have a line management/supervisory connection”*

Each School is required to have a Disclosure Manager – for us this will be DoPS: Martin Wright



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National Student Survey

Neil Heatley (on behalf of Stuart Anderson)



National Student Survey 2019

- The NSS 2019 opened on 4th February and will close on 30th April 2019
- Students have the opportunity to express their views
- In the 2016-17 NSS Informatics was one of two Schools seen as particularly problematic



What is NSS?

- 27 Questions
- Run by IPSOS MORI
- Cohort is all final year students
- Finds its way into many league table formulas

Primary Theme	Question
The teaching on my course	1. Staff are good at explaining things. 2. Staff have made the subject interesting. 3. The course is intellectually stimulating. 4. My course has challenged me to achieve my best work.
Learning opportunities	5. My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth. 6. My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics. 7. My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt.
Assessment and feedback	8. The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance. 9. Marking and assessment has been fair. 10. Feedback on my work has been timely. 11. I have received helpful comments on my work.
Academic support	12. I have been able to contact staff when I needed to. 13. I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course. 14. Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course.
Organisation and management	15. The course is well organised and running smoothly. 16. The timetable works efficiently for me. 17. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively.
Learning resources	18. The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well. 19. The library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well. 20. I have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections) when I needed to.
Learning community	21. I feel part of a community of staff and students. 22. I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course.
Student voice	23. I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course. 24. Staff value students' views and opinions about the course. 25. It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on. 26. The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests.
Overall Satisfaction	27. Overall I am satisfied with the quality of the course.
Personal tutor	B14.1 I am satisfied with the support provided by my Personal Tutor.
Employability and skills	B15.1 My Higher Education experience has helped me plan for my future career B15.2 My institution offered activities and resources designed to prepare me for the next step in my career B15.3 The skills I have developed during my time in Higher Education will be useful for my future career



Edinburgh does badly

Primary Theme (% Agree)	2018			UUK Rank	Russell Group Rank
	UoE	vs UUK Upper Quartile	vs RG Upper Quartiles	2018 UUK Out of 119	2018 Russell Group Out of 22
Overall satisfaction	77.4%	-8.7%	-7.8%	109	21
The teaching on my course	82.0%	-4.1%	-2.9%	90	18
Learning opportunities	77.1%	-8.0%	-5.4%	114	20
Assessment and feedback	60.8%	-14.5%	-10.7%	115	21
Academic support	71.1%	-10.8%	-7.6%	112	19
Organisation and management	69.3%	-8.3%	-7.8%	99	21
Learning resources	85.7%	-2.7%	-3.0%	75	15
Learning community	69.9%	-9.9%	-6.4%	108	18
Student Voice	59.6%	-12.8%	-9.9%	114	21

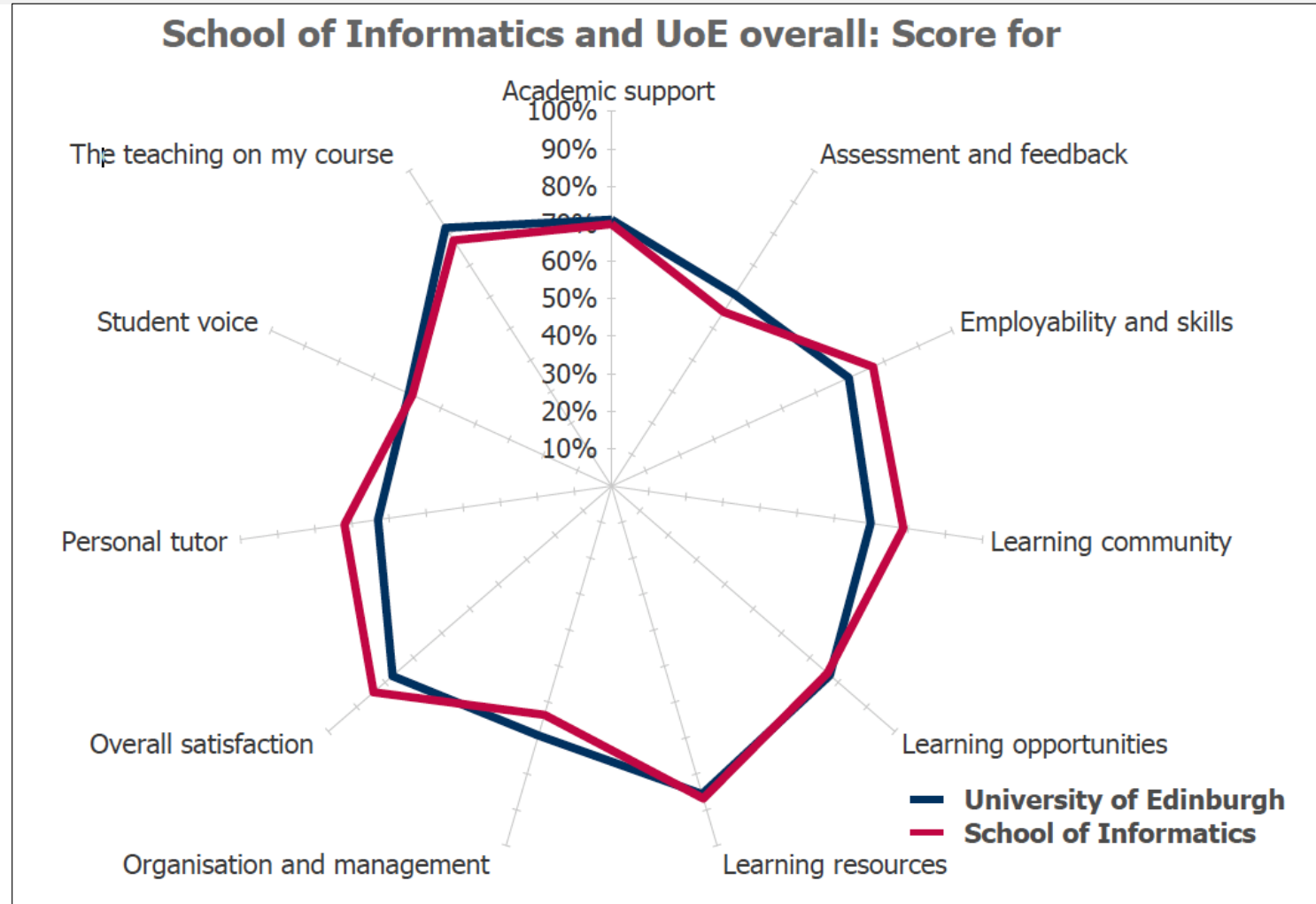


Informatics has improved from a low base

School	NSS Overall Satisfaction Rating 2018	Contribution to sample 2018	Change from NSS Overall Satisfaction Rating 2017	For every 1% School rating rises, overall score rises by (%)	Impact of change on Overall Satisfaction Rating
INF	84.0%	3.7%	11.3%	0.04%	0.4%
VET	99.3%	3.4%	6.4%	0.03%	0.2%
BIO	87.7%	3.4%	4.3%	0.03%	0.1%
LLC	78.8%	8.9%	1.5%	0.09%	0.1%
PHY	81.5%	2.4%	2.9%	0.02%	0.1%
ECN	72.5%	4.1%	0.3%	0.04%	0.0%
PPL	82.5%	6.1%	0.0%	0.06%	0.0%
CHE	86.7%	2.3%	-1.2%	0.02%	0.0%
LAW	85.8%	5.0%	-0.7%	0.05%	0.0%
DIV	92.5%	1.9%	-7.6%	0.02%	-0.1%
MAT	79.2%	2.7%	-6.3%	0.03%	-0.2%
BMS	75.8%	3.9%	-4.7%	0.04%	-0.2%
HEA	71.9%	0.8%	-28.1%	0.01%	-0.2%
HCA	75.7%	7.0%	-4.6%	0.07%	-0.3%
SPS	75.3%	6.0%	-6.4%	0.06%	-0.4%
BUS	73.3%	5.4%	-9.8%	0.05%	-0.5%
MED	70.5%	4.8%	-12.7%	0.05%	-0.6%
EDU	72.3%	5.7%	-12.8%	0.06%	-0.7%
GEO	66.7%	5.1%	-16.5%	0.05%	-0.8%
ENG	66.0%	6.8%	-16.1%	0.07%	-1.1%
ECA	72.7%	10.7%	-11.6%	0.11%	-1.2%



Informatics 2017-18 Summary





National Student Survey 2019 – What Next?

- The NSS 2019 opened on 4th February and will close on 30th April 2019
- Last year we targeted a participation rate of 50%
- This year we are targeting a participation rate of 75%
- Comms group have a communication plan using social media, email, events
- Personal communication is important is getting students to participate, so:
 - Remind you final year dissertation student to complete their NSS
 - Mention it in lectures, tutorial groups or labs with final year students
 - Please try to communicate that the School cares about students completing the NSS
 - **Don't try to influence their response**



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Informatics Graduate School Update

Nigel Topham



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Informatics Graduate School Update

- Recruitment summary for 2018/19
- Current applications status for 2019/20
- Studentships and funding for 2019/20

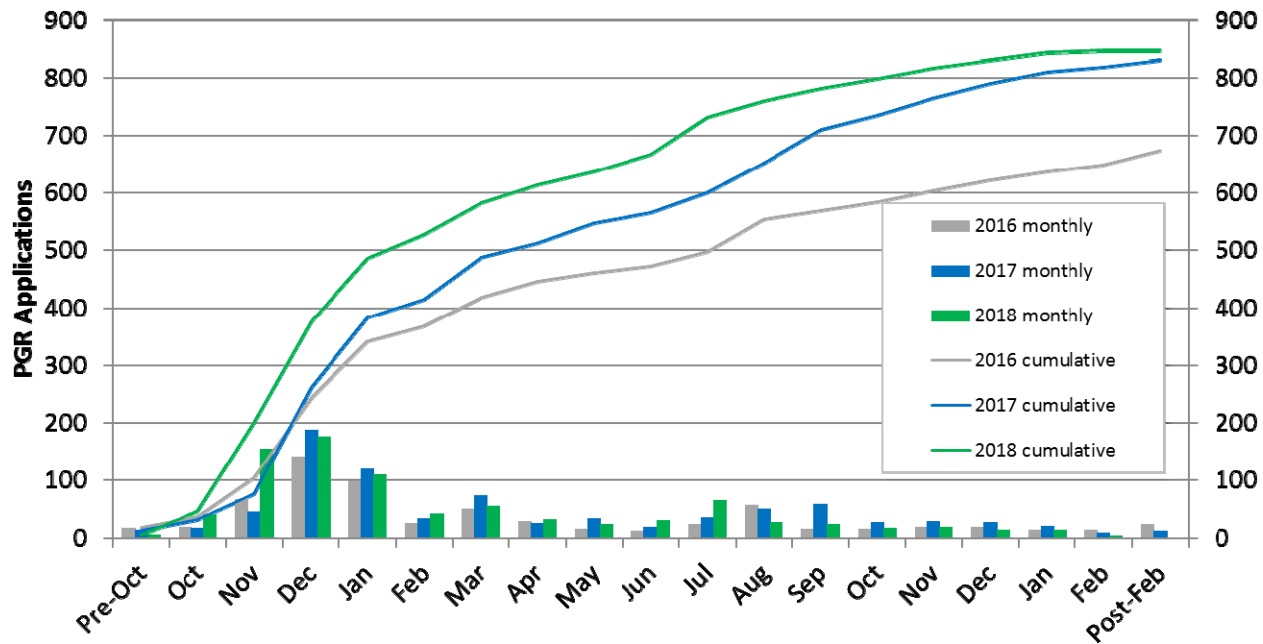


Summary of PGR Recruitment for 2018-19 Entry

- **362 research students currently studying in Informatics¹**
 - From 56 countries: 29.3% UK, 40.1% EU, 30.7% OS
 - Spread among 6 Institutes (20-70 in each)
- **Applications for entry in 2018-19 were up 2% on 2017-18**
- **Increasing proportion of applicants were Overseas fee-status**
 - Increase was not matched by a capacity to fund substantially more Overseas students
 - As usual, funding limited our ability to expand PGR numbers
- **87 new PGR students this year, selected from 846 applicants**
 - 22% female, 78% male
 - 17% UK, 43% EU, 40% International
- **58 new PhD students, 3 new MScR students**
 - Starting Sept (32), Oct-Feb (22), Mar-May (7 expected)
- **26 new students in Centres for Doctoral Training**
 - 13 in Data Science
 - 5 in Robotics & Autonomous Systems (10 more at Herriot Watt)
 - 8 in Pervasive Parallelism



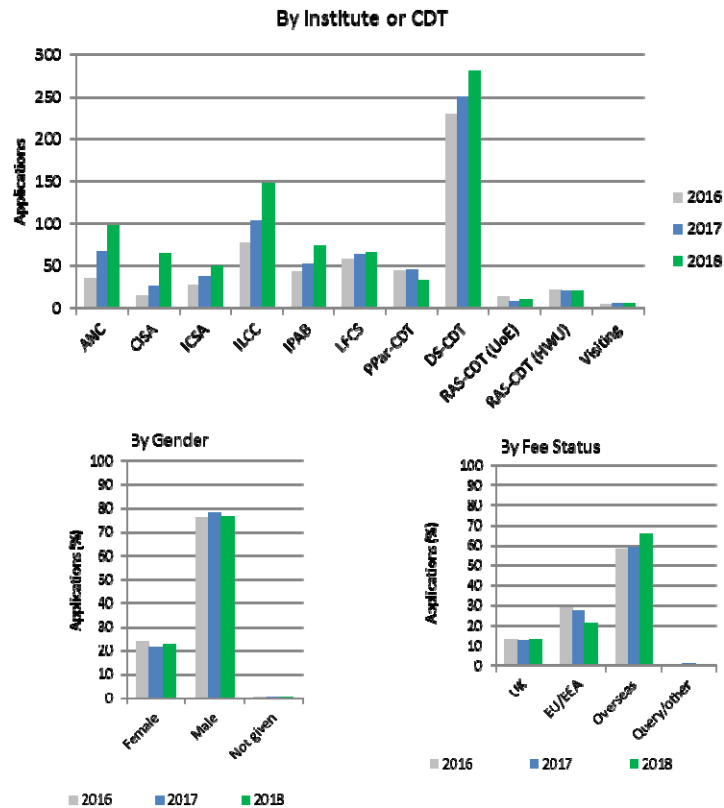
PGR applications for 2018-19 Entry



- Overall 2% increase in PGR applications for 2018-19 entry, versus previous year
- Applications for 2018-19 entry continued to arrive through to the end of 2018



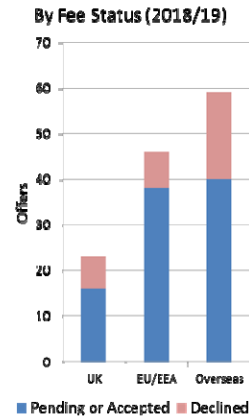
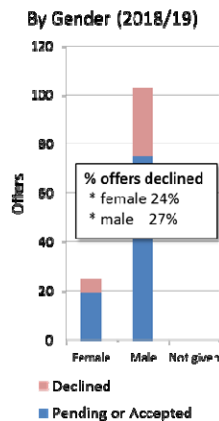
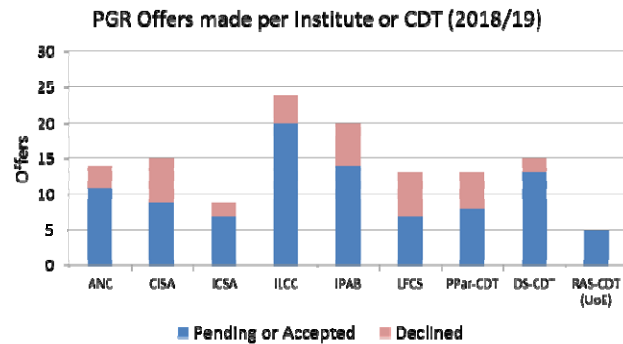
Analysis of PGR applications, 2018-19 Entry



- **Highlights**
 - Applications up across most Institutes, except LFCS
 - Data Science CDT remained popular
- **Lowlights**
 - PPar-CDT applications down 29%
- **Observations**
 - Slight improvement in gender balance of applications compared to 2017
 - DS-CDT received 36% of all PGR applications



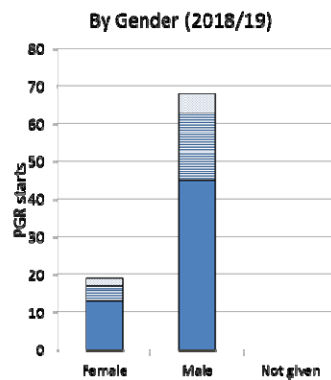
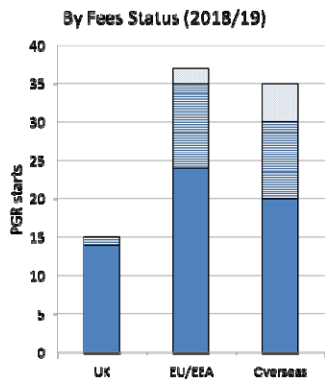
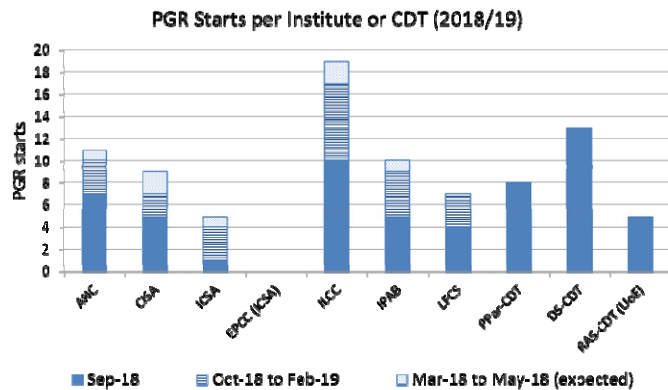
Analysis of PGR offers and conversions



- 130 offers made
 - 97 funded
 - 33 self-funded
- Wide variation in conversion rate by Institute and CDT
 - 87% & 83% conversion for DS-CDT and ILCC
 - 60% & 54% conversion for CISA and LFCS
- Higher conversion rate among female candidates than male candidates
- Lower than average conversion rate for Overseas candidates



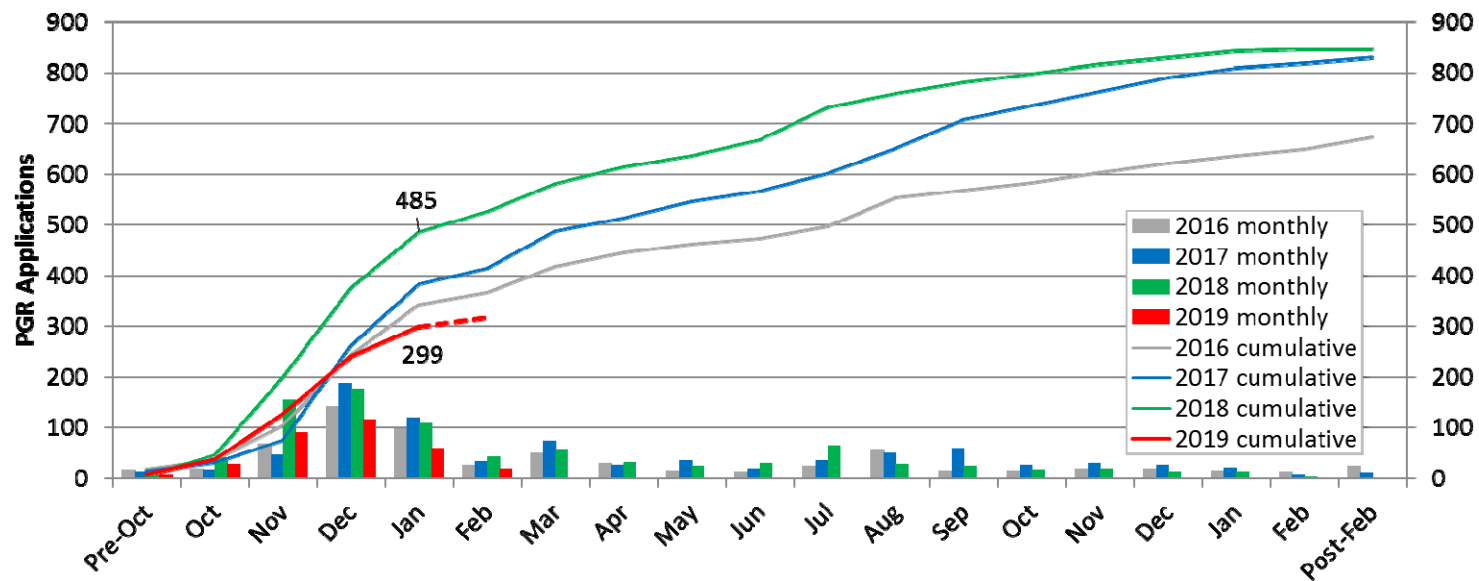
PGR starts in 2018-19



- CDT students started Sep 2018
- Most Institutes had significant numbers of PGR starts in Oct '18 – Feb '19
- Another 7 expected after Feb '19
- Desk space was almost (but not quite) a limiting factor in 2018 recruitment
- Desk space not likely to be a limiting factor for 2019 recruitment
 - Space in Bayes
 - Changes to CDT profiles
 - Reduced PhD application numbers for 2019 ...



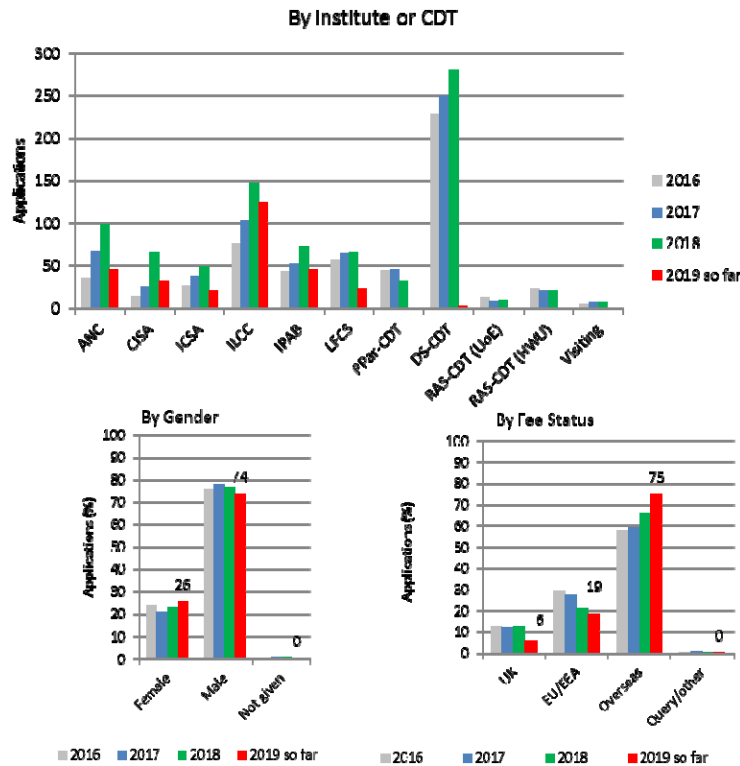
PGR applications received for AY 2019



- Current applicant levels are significantly lower than this time last year
- Slower start to 2019 applications in Autumn of 2018
- Applications in January reduced to 53% of 2018 levels
 - UK applicants waiting for CDT announcements
 - EU students applying in fewer numbers



Analysis of PGR applications for AY 2019-20



- **Highlights**
 - ILCC and IPAB PhD applications look strong
 - Further improvement in gender balance of applications compared to 2017 and 2018
- **Lowlights**
 - LFCS, CISA and ICSA applications not so strong
- **Observations**
 - Lower percentage of applications from EU/EEA countries, probably due to Brexit uncertainties
 - Lower percentage of UK applications, probably due to late announcement of CDTs



PGR studentship funding for AY 2019-20

- IGS budget for studentship support
 - Modest interim IGS intake budget for 2019 was set, pending CDT bid outcomes
 - CDT outcomes now known, and IGS intake budget has been revised upwards
 - Similar level of support available compared to average over last 2 years
 - 3 UK/EEA studentships ring-fenced for Data Science
 - Funds are accessed via nominations to IGS from Institute Selectors
- 10 x EPSRC DTA studentships
 - 1 ring-fenced for Design Informatics
 - 2 ring-fenced for Data Science
 - 1 may be allocated to an International student (not ring-fenced)
- University Scholarships
 - 3 x Principals Career Development scholars (PCDS)
 - 2 x Edinburgh Global scholars (EGRS)



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Any questions?



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REF Preparation

Jane Hillston (on behalf of Steve Renals)



Research Excellence Framework – REF-2021

- National assessment of research quality in universities
- Measured in terms of
 - Outputs (60%) - ~320 papers from Informatics and EPCC
 - Impact (25%) - ~10 impact case studies
 - Environment (15%) – vitality and sustainability of research environment
- REF is important since it is used to determine our funding
- Lots of information on the Informatics REF web pages
<http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/ref>
- Informatics REF team
 - Bjoern Franke (Impact)
 - Victoria Lindstrom (Admin)
 - Steve Renals (REF Coordinator)
 - Janet Ball (Research Services)



REF Outputs

- REF-eligible staff each return 1–5 outputs (averaging 2.5/FTE) from the REF period 2014-2020
- Outputs will be assessed from 1* – 4*
 - 4*: “world-leading”, “agenda setting”, “major influence”, “great novelty”
 - 3*: “important contributions”, “significant influence”
 - 2*: “useful knowledge”, “incremental advances”, “influence”
 - 1*: “minor influence”
- Quality not quantity
 - We need to return ~320 outputs from the REF period
 - The most important thing for returned staff is to have at least one output with as a high quality as possible



REF Outputs in Informatics

- Continue to make sure that you deposit publications in PURE in a timely fashion (as is happening now – thanks!)
- **The “100 words”**
 - A 100-word statement for each output that you write to support the quality of the output (significance, rigour, originality) – very different to the abstract!
 - Will be particularly important in REF-2021 as panels will be looking to avoid grade inflation
 - The 3*/4* boundary will be a difficult one!
 - Don’t assume a good publication venue (low accept rate) will guarantee 4*!
 - Improving our 100 word statements
 - Work with one or more colleagues within your institute to improve the 100-words
 - School-level workshops on writing the 100 words
 - School REF committee will also review and improve 100-word statement
 - See <http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/ref/outputs/outputs-in-informatics>



REF Timetable

- March-April-May 2019: Focus on preparing our draft REF submission
- Late 2019 – Early 2020: Improving our REF Submission
- November 2020: University submission to REF
- See the key dates for REF-2021 at <http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/ref/key-dates>



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Q&A



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