



## Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019

**Attendees:** Jane Hillston, Martin Wright, Stuart Anderson, Ian Simpson (for Chris Williams), Bob Fisher, Keith Edwards (for Jim Ashe), Matthias Henning, Barbara Webb, Jacques Fleuriot, Mahesh Marina, Frank Keller, Kousha Etessami, Angela Sturniolo (minutes).

**Apologies:** Nigel Topham, Chris Williams (Ian Simpson), Jim Ashe (Keith Edwards), Lorna Adams

	Summary	ACTION
<b>1.</b>	<b>PREVIOUS MEETING</b>	
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Approval of previous meeting minutes</b> Minutes from the previous meeting were approved with no changes.	
<b>1.2</b>	<p><b>Matters arising from previous meeting</b></p> <p><b>Research Ethics:</b> Qualtrics will be demonstrated at the next Research Committee meeting. Action discharged.</p> <p><b>Ethics of AI and DS seminar series:</b> KEt, Michael Rovatsos, CW have been soliciting suggestions until the end of June. Invitation emails have been sent and some invitations have been accepted. KEt reported that from the emails received it seems the first seminar will probably take place in the second semester 2019/2020.</p> <p><b>2.3 - Simons Foundation Program:</b> No suitable nomination was identified.</p> <p><b>4.1 – DSTI Distance Learning Program:</b> SOA will include Bob Fisher on any DSTI related communications and activities. Action discharged.</p> <p><b>4.2 - Online learning proposal - Action 1:</b> Budget for the online learning activity has been allocated and the students are being employed to undertake the work. Action discharged. <b>Action 2 –</b> Kobi Gal and SOA will bring a paper on the online learning strategy specifically focussed on how online can ease the feedback/assessment load in large classes.</p>	KG/SOA
<b>2.</b>	<b>HEAD OF SCHOOL'S BUSINESS</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<p><b>Report from Head of School</b></p> <p>Two additional academic posts have been advertised during the summer. Six candidates for the post of L/SL/R in Quantum Computing will be interviewed on 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Twelve candidates applied for the post of Senior Lecturer in Computer Science Education. None were suitable for a UE09 appointment, so the post will be re-advertised as L/SL in in Computer Science Education, shortly.</p> <p>The identity of the successful candidate for the Baillie Gifford chair should be announced, soon.</p> <p><b>Centre for AI for Social Good –</b> JH briefly introduced the proposal to the committee members. She noted that it would be appropriate to set up the centre as part of the School of Informatics, with the physical centre being within EFI. The project will consist of different areas of research based on the research activities already within the School of Informatics and new ones. It will be led by Sol, but staff from other Schools will be</p>	

involved. The proposition of 'AI for Social Good' (or some similar phraseology) will act as a motivator for students and staff and will appeal to philanthropic donors as well as attracting funding from UKRI and others. Jane has spoken to D&A who are enthusiastic about the proposal.

In the longer term opportunities coming from the project could be:

- MSc programme in AI for social good;
- CDT programme;
- Physical Centre within EFI;
- Visitor programme (of Newton Institute type);
- Companies interested in funding the programme.

The initiative will be led by a new Chair appointment. There would be a relationship to the Baillie Gifford chair, but it will be separate to it.

The proposal received the support of the committee.

JH reported that because of a prospective under-recruitment of taught students across the College, especially PGT students, there will be restrictions on funding, for example for new posts, in the coming year. Informatics may be impacted less than some other Schools, but the expectation is that School budget holders will need to operate within already agreed funding.

## **2.2 Academic Line Management – Update on changes**

It is anticipated that in academic year 2020/21, Frank Keller will assume the role of the new Deputy Head of School, with responsibility (shared with HoS) for line management of UE10 academic staff. In the meantime, Frank will join the Executive Group.

## **3. RESEARCH BUSINESS**

### **3.1 Report from Director of Research**

Ian Simpson reported on behalf of Chris Williams

Update from previous minutes:

Qualtrics will be demonstrated at the next Research Committee meeting by Maria Wolters. This is currently in use for Ethics approval. The system is, in effect, very similar to the previous one but because entirely online it will speed up the process, hard-coding the responses and assessments.

There is no further news on the University-wide Infonetica procurement and implementation timeframe.

Potential resource implications have been discussed between IS and Peggy Series for setting up the Ethics Committee which Peggy will take forward as Convenor of the Ethics Committee. It was also noted that a modest request for admin support will be necessary.

#### **DoR Items**

EPSRC Capital Award – a proposal for a research GPU compute cluster (c. £250) will be submitted to College. It is a competitive process and there will be only one award for the University.

Research KPIs – The year’s figures will be discussed in detail at the next Research Committee meeting on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September.

- Number of applications are down by 6.3% compared to LY;
- Number of awards are down by 39.9% compared to LY.

The overall pattern is similar across the University and the College, with a few exceptions. Of particular concern for the School is the fall in UKRI funding, although industry funding continues to be strong.

Fellowships update:

- RAEng Fellowship: three candidates from Sol to go forward to RAEng Research Fellowship.
- Other candidates preparing applications for:
  - 1 Royal Society URF;
  - 1 ERC starting grant;
  - 1 ERC advanced grant.
- Call for the UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship applications have gone out and applications to be received by 5<sup>th</sup> September as an internal date. Internal interviews will likely take place w/c 16<sup>th</sup> September and the College interviews 27<sup>th</sup> September.

#### 4. 4.1 **TEACHING BUSINESS** **Report from Director of Teaching**

Stuart Anderson reported the following:

##### Staff

Three new people appointed to two FTE University Teacher positions:

- **David Sterratt** (full time, starts in October) – initially responsible for the Fintech instance of IAML.
- **James Garforth** (50% time, starts in September) – responsibility for practical courses (ILP, SDP).
- **Claudia Chirita** (from Royal Holloway, 50% time, starts in September) – recently completed PhD entitled “**Logics and reasoning for computational creativity**” – she has worked as a university teacher at Royal Holloway and has experience of presenting and supporting AI courses.

A Deputy Teaching Office Manager is being recruited. Initial responsibility will be for compliance issues, especially UKVI. Permission has been given to appoint a further full FTE University Teacher. In addition, two FTE University Tutor Grade 6 positions are being advertised.

##### Student intake numbers

MJW reported that indications are that undergraduate admissions are substantially oversubscribed. PGT admissions, by contrast, look to be significantly below target and substantially below 2018 entry numbers. A review will be undertaken in conjunction with the College admissions team, to inform the approach to applications and offers for the coming cycle. It is anticipated that there will be one closing date and gathered field for PGT, at the end of March.

##### Other issues

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NSS:</b> We are considering immediate actions to tackle low scores on Feedback and Assessment and on Personal Tutoring. Student Support and Personal Tutoring is under review across the University. The review team is consulting and details on how to be involved will be circulated.</li> <li>• <b>University common marking scale,</b> we are finalising a School-level description and supporting interpretation. This will be the subject of a teaching lunch in October where we will aim to identify examples of the types of work that justify A1 and A2 grades.</li> <li>• <b>DPMT and Supervision Allocation:</b> We have started to experiment with the allocation algorithm and have demonstrated that it is possible to have DPMT allocate supervising loads more evenly. This should avoid the high second marking loads we have seen this year.</li> <li>• <b>Teaching Exec:</b> we have established a fortnightly teaching exec meeting that will result in flow of better prepared items for teaching committee and will ensure TC decisions are enacted.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5.</b></p> <p><b>5.1</b></p> <p><b>5.2</b></p>	<p><b>GRADUATE SCHOOL BUSINESS</b></p> <p><b>Report from Director of Graduate School</b> Nigel Topham was not present at the meeting</p> <p><b>PGR Desk Allocation Policy</b> MJW advised that discussions had taken place regarding a refinement to the School’s PGR desk allocation policy. With the support of the Graduate School management team it is proposed to add a clause stating: <i>Unless there is a good reason otherwise, PGR students whose work is lab-based should, where available, occupy PGR desks in the relevant lab.</i> This is required because of the current pressure on PGR desk space within the Informatics estate.  The proposal was endorsed by the committee. <b>Action:</b> MJW to advise IGS to update policy.</p>	<p>MJW</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p> <p><b>6.1</b></p>	<p><b>COMMERCIALISATION BUSINESS</b></p> <p><b>Report from Director of Commercialisation and Industry Engagement</b></p> <p>Keith Edwards attended on behalf of Jim Ashe and reported on the following items.</p> <p>We will work with Student Enterprise Services (formerly Launched) to create a student enterprise hub for the start of the new semester. This will provide an opportunity for us to showcase BIG, EIE, Wayra together with the traditional EI Student Enterprise service offerings. This will be housed in the “pop up” Café area at the east entrance to Appleton Tower.</p> <p>Discussions are taking place regarding funding for a third (Jan to June 2020) Bayes business accelerator cohort in the Wayra series. The first DDI funded Bayes accelerator is likely to be July to December 2020. Discussions include if and, if so, how, the Bayes accelerator fits within the University’s wider plans.</p> <p>The next BIP Board meeting is the 26th September.</p> <p>Industry days for Robotics, Data Science and IOT:</p>	

	<p>Robotics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Turing Institute/ECR UK-Japan Robotics and AI Research Collaboration Workshops - 17-18 September 2019</u> in Edinburgh. These will bring together leading researchers and industry representatives in AI and robotics from Japan and the UK. There will also be a London event on 19<sup>th</sup> September.</li> <li>• <u>Edinburgh Centre for Robotics Annual Conference - 8th October 2019</u>, expecting industry participation from: Honda Research Institute, Toyota, Shadow Robot Company, Hanson Robotics, Costain, Amazon, and many more.</li> </ul> <p>Data Science:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry day planned for <u>1<sup>st</sup> November 2019</u>, 50 industry attendees booked.</li> <li>• Plan to hold a series of focused sessions in the afternoon looking at emerging issues from industry and align with specific academic expertise to identify concrete collaboration topics.</li> </ul> <p>IoT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry day planned for <u>5<sup>th</sup> December 2019</u>.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>7.</b> <b>6.1</b></p>	<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b> <b>Report from Director of Equality and Diversity</b></p> <p><b>Unconscious biased training</b> - 80% of Sol staff have completed the online training.</p> <p>Our Athena SWAN renewal application is progressing. Julian Bradfield is taking lead responsibility for submission. A meeting of the self-assessment team will take place on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August</p> <p>BF is considering further initiatives to promote the diversity of the Informatics community in the coming year.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b>  8.1  8.2</p>	<p><b>STRATEGY AND PLANNING</b></p> <p><b>Size and Shape Exercise (Paper 8.1)</b> Following an initial meeting with the Dols, JH, SOA and MJW submitted the ten-year student number projections to College by the required deadline of 19<sup>th</sup> August. The accompanying narrative is still to be submitted and is provided in paper 8.1 for comment. Overall, the projections show little growth in UG cohorts, over the period, but some growth in PGT cohorts, based on the introduction of new programmes. The base year is 2018/19. A School-owned distance programme is envisaged, from 2022.</p> <p><b>Proposal to Recruit Academic Staff as a Pool (Paper 8.2)</b> BF introduced his paper and his proposal, which is intended to increase the number of female applicants for academic posts and contribute to enhanced gender balance within the School.</p> <p>There was support for what the proposal was seeking to achieve, but a number of concerns were raised about the practicalities of implementation and other potential consequences of the approach. It was agreed that further consideration needed to be given to these.</p>	

8.3	<p><b>Action:</b> Everyone to send feedback and comments to Bob.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> BF to prepare a paper on the detailed operation of the process for the next meeting of this committee.</p> <p><b>Academic Recruitment 2019/2020 – Proposals</b></p> <p>MJW circulated a document with a brief update of the position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four open chair positions;</li> <li>• Three positions previously advertised but not filled;</li> <li>• Three new posts in the School 2019-22 plan (subject to budgetary approval by College);</li> <li>• Another three posts arising from Fellowships/resignations/retirements.</li> </ul> <p>It was stated that there may be one or more additional posts, depending on clarification of potential developments.</p> <p>Dols presented the following proposals for new academic posts:</p> <p><b>ANC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer/Reader in Biomedical AI/Data Science – potentially jointly with IGMM</li> </ul> <p>Supported. MH to pursue option of joint appointment with IGMM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer/Reader in Machine Learning</li> </ul> <p>Supported.</p> <p><b>CISA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explainable Artificial Intelligence</li> </ul> <p>Supported.</p> <p><b>ICSA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Reader in Data-Centric Systems</li> </ul> <p>Supported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Reader in Hardware and Systems Security</li> </ul> <p>Supported.</p> <p><b>ILCC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Reader in Computational Social Science</li> </ul> <p>Supported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Reader in Natural Language Processing</li> </ul> <p>Supported.</p> <p><b>IPAB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial Robotics (plus lab facilities) – possibly in conjunction with Engineering</li> </ul> <p>Supported. It was noted that the School already has budgetary approval for a Chair in Industrial Robotics and for a UE08/09 post. <b>Action:</b> Possible collaboration with Engineering</p>	<p>All</p> <p>BF</p> <p>MH</p> <p>BW/JH BW/DoPS</p>
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