

Strategy Committee Minutes

26th April 2017 at 2pm, Turing Room



Attendees: Jane Hillston (Chair in absence of JM), Stuart Anderson, Murray Cole, Kousha Eteessami, Bjoern Franke, Nigel Goddard, Jon Oberlander, Michael Rovatsos, Kami Vaniea, Barbara Webb, Martin Wright, Magdalena Mazurczak (secretary), Sharon Goldwater (PGT student cohort item and Paper 5.1 only).

Apologies: Johanna Moore, Nigel Topham.

	Summary	ACTION
1.	Approval of previous minutes Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as a true representation of the meeting.	
	Matters arising from previous meeting:	
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Erasmus exchanges: Action on BjF to form a working group to look at Erasmus exchanges – this is no longer necessary. b) Edinburgh Teaching Award and HEA Fellowships: Following previous discussions about increasing the number of Informatics staff who hold a teaching qualification, it was agreed that action should be taken to raise awareness among staff of these qualifications. Include on General Meeting Agenda. c) PhD submissions: We are actively contacting students five months prior to their submission date to remind them of their deadlines and individually speaking to them. Action: NT will present a paper at the next meeting which will show our completion rates by PhD students. Carried forward. d) Internships and tier 4 students: College and the Graduate School are in discussions about this. Action: NT to provide update. Carried forward. e) Technical support. BW noted the need for computing support for specialist research. There is an additional Computing Support role in the 2016/17 plan and a further support role in the new plan. Action: PS to take this request to Computing Strategy Group, getting full details from BW. Carried forward. f) PGR desk proposal MJW and NT have completed this. g) Athena Swan Action Plan. KV reported on the consultations with E&D committee and HR about recruitment. h) Strategy day proposal is on hold to be reviewed following Research Day and Teaching Day. 	<p>MJW/JM</p> <p>NT</p> <p>NT</p> <p>PS</p>
	Strategy Committee Business	
3.	<p>Head of School business</p> <p>Academic hiring update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MJW reported on academic recruitment, on behalf of HoS, presenting a list of 21 posts in total currently being recruited. Providing offices for additional academic staff will require further office conversions within the Informatics Forum. • It has been noted that the Communication Team has created a very useful link to Informatics job adverts on the Informatics Web. <p>Academic Hires – assessment of teaching ability (Paper 3.1) In future, academic recruitment will be required to include an assessment of teaching ability, involving students.</p>	
4.	<p>Report from Director of Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoR reported on the recent ‘REF readiness’ exercise. Steve Renals and JH reviewed research staff publications and had identified a small number at risk of not meeting the expected submission requirements. 	Dols

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JH asked DoIs to make all members of the institutes aware that in January 2018 there will be a mock REF exercise to review future submissions. • “A 100 words workshop” will be organised to help with the REF submissions. • The Research Day will bring an opportunity to meet Liam Blackwell and his EPSRC replacement Samantha Francis who will present a short talk that day. • JH announced the success of the Huawei grant award where six Informatics proposals were granted the award and the funding secured 50% of the original budget. The future call for proposals is scheduled for October 2017. <p>The Internet of Things initiative (Paper 4.1) The collaboration of Ewan Klein and The College of Art in a programme of installing mobile and static sensors to gather data for research purposes was supported by Strategy Committee.</p>	
5.	<p>Teaching business Student Recruitment update Undergraduate: SEU is on target overall but with a fall in Scottish applicants and SIMD applicants. RUK and Overseas show growth above target. Postgraduate: applications are up but offers are down, in part due to stricter application of admissions criteria. It is too early to assess the impact of the PGT deposit scheme, introduced part-way through the cycle.</p> <p>Any substantive changes to admissions criteria (eg English language requirements) will require to be evidence based and are unlikely to be introduced for the 2018 entry cycle (starting September 2017). The focus for now should be on collecting evidence for any proposed changes.</p> <p>PGT student cohort [SG joined the meeting] Other than absolute numbers, issues are mainly with projects.</p> <p>It was noted that projects do not necessarily need to include original research. It was suggested that IRP might be renamed ‘Informatics Project Proposal’. The use of group projects could extended, as long as there is an individually assessable element. Proposals would need to be taken to Teaching Committee and Board of Studies.</p> <p>Undergraduate degrees (Paper 5.1) SG presented Paper 5.1. The main question is around simplification and reduction in the number of named degrees offered by the School. There was discussion about the expectations of potential students and the message that the School wishes to communicate about the breadth of its undergraduate offering. It was suggested that ‘more courses equates to more applications’, however it was noted that the School is currently experiencing growth in the number of applications. Discussion focused on the Software Engineering and the Artificial Intelligence degrees.</p> <p>Strategy Committee supported the principle of simplification and a reduction in the number of named degrees on offer. It was suggested that the AI/Maths and AI with Management and Software Engineering with Management degrees be withdrawn.</p> <p>Proposals to be presented to Teaching Committee and Board of Studies.</p> <p>[SG left the meeting]</p>	<p>Recruitment Committee</p> <p>SG/DoT</p> <p>SG/DoT</p>

	<p>National Student Survey. The NSS response rate is just below the publishable threshold but it advised not to chase students for feedback as this may aggravate them causing negative response.</p>	
6.	<p>Equality and Diversity KV provided a report on current E&D activity. Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An easy idea to advertise among wider potential job candidates would be to utilise the academic contacts. • Publicise vacancies more widely within the School (all vacancies are listed on the School website). • Change the wording of the job title that is undervalued in US meaning: “a lecturer” in US means “an instructor” only. • Seminar organisers to invite more female speakers that in the future could be potential job candidates. • It would also be beneficial to organise Distinguished Lectures with a female speaker and advertise among undergraduate students. 	
7.	<p>Commercialisation business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MJW announced that Jim Ashe has been appointed to the position of Director of Commercialisation. He will officially start on the 3 July 2017 however is already very proactive and is holding meetings with George Baxter (ERI) and others to establish the operational protocols. • Discussions are continuing with Scottish Enterprise regarding the proposed Bayes Centre Industry Engagement programme and continuation of Informatics Ventures activities. • JH pointed out the importance of the relationship with the industry because of the recently introduced Industry Challenge funds. 	
8.	<p>Strategy and planning Teaching and Admin Work Allocation model – revisions (Paper 8.1) Strategy Committee approved the necessary changes to bring the School’s recently agreed model into line with the newly published University guidance in relation to the naming of the model and the ‘right of appeal’ to the HoS. Strategy Committee noted the expectation that the work allocation model (WAM) be based on an allocation of time expressed in hours. Having recently consulted on the School’s WAM and decided against an hours-based model, Strategy Committee was not minded to change the School’s position.</p>	
9.	<p>Any other business MJW provided an update on the return of teaching and other activities to Appleton Tower. A phased return is planned, but the main move of teaching and Student Services is planned for the weekend of 25-28 August.</p>	
10.	<p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 2pm, 28th June 2017. Turing Room, Informatics Forum</p>	