

Strategy Committee Minutes

22nd February 2017 at 2pm, Turing Room

Attendees: Johanna Moore (Chair), Stuart Anderson, Murray Cole, Kousha Eteessami, Vashti Galpin, Nigel Goddard, Sharon Goldwater, Jane Hillston, Ewan Klein, Jon Oberlander, Perdita Stevens, Kami Vaniea, Barbara Webb, Martin Wright, Anda Nicolson (Secretary)

Apologies: Björn Franke, Michael Rovatsos, Nigel Topham

| | Summary | ACTION |
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| 1. | Approval of previous minutes The minutes of the meeting held on 14 th December 2016 were approved. | |
| 2. | Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erasmus exchanges: Action on BjF to form a working group to look at Erasmus exchanges. Ongoing. • 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. Action 14/12/16: MJW/JM to discuss the best way to achieve this. Ongoing. • 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 14/12/16: NT will present a paper at the next meeting which will show our completion rates by PhD students. • Internships and tier 4 students: College and the Graduate School are in discussions about this. Action: NT to provide update. • 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 | BjF MJW/JM NT NT PS/BW |
| 3. | Head of School business | |
| 3.1 | Academic hiring update The committee discussed the current plans for recruitment. The Chair in Computer Science shortlisting process has been completed, but we will not be inviting any of the applicants for interview. | |
| 3.2 | Update on meeting with Jonathan Seckl JM, MJW and JH attended this meeting on the 15 th of February. He was very enthusiastic about the School's achievements – for example, we have the highest open access compliance in the University. MJW noted that this success was as a result of the work that Pim Totterdell and the KM team did on the open access process. | |
| 4. | Research business | |
| 4.2 | REF readiness exercise The School has to look at all of the REF-able staff we have available as part of this exercise. JH and SR will look to identify three returnable papers for each member of staff. The report is due by the end of March – this will cover the experience and the process of identifying staff who don't have three papers. This may not be required as part of the Stern recommendations, but we are hopeful that an average of three | |

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| | papers per person will be allowable. This would allow for us to submit one to six papers per person. | |
| 4.3 | Research Day This will take place on the 2 nd of May. Research Committee will meet next week and will be asked to consider themes for discussion. We will definitely be looking at GCRF and ISCF. | |
| 4.4 | EPSRC news EPSRC Balancing Capability has been announced, and it is broadly as expected. They are stopping platform grants after May but with no implications for existing platform grant holders. | |
| 5. | Teaching business | |
| 5.1 | Student recruitment update Our undergraduate applications are up 10% on last year. We are expecting around 2,000 applications this year. AI applications are up and MInf is down (around 32%) although this data is based on small numbers of applications. PS noted that it would be useful to know the number of students who switch to MInf on arrival. Action: SA to pass this information on to PS. Masters applications are up by 29%, and offers are down 28%. Acceptances are down by 30%, but this is down to us managing numbers. 386 have accepted at the moment – we aim to have 350 Masters students. | SA |
| 5.2 | PG student cohort issues There have been issues with the student quality and around MSc projects. Sharon Goldwater joined the meeting for this discussion as she is involved in the curriculum review. Suggestion for 2017/18 – change the structure of MSc projects so some students are involved in a group situation but still have an individual project to complete. They would still have to fulfil the requirement for an individual document at the end of the project for accreditation purposes. We could possibly incentivise staff for support this with teaching credits, as it would be more like teaching than project supervision. It was stated that we offer a research degree, but many students are looking for practical experience to take back to the workplace. JH pointed out that our MSc isn't a research degree and shouldn't be seen as for people who are purely on a research track – it's a taught course. The issues we are seeing at the moment are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student numbers • Projects • Quality of students A group should look at these issues and come back to the next meeting with suggestions. Sharon will lead this group and any suggestions from this committee should be fed back to her. | |
| 5.3 | Specification of DoT/DDoT role The document relating to this (paper 5.3) was noted for information. | |
| 6. | Graduate school business | |
| 6.1 | Student recruitment update A closed update circulated by NT was noted by the committee. | |

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| <p>6.2</p> | <p>PGR desk proposal The proposal in paper 6.2 around creating a hot-desking room in 2.33 was discussed by the committee. SA suggested that lockers could be given to students who will need to hot-desk.</p> <p>It was noted that there are available meeting rooms in Wilkie which are being under used. Action: MJW to send communication to staff reminding them that these rooms are available.</p> <p>The proposal was approved in principal, but the Graduate School is encouraged to consult with students about possible alternatives to hot-desking.</p> | <p>MJW</p> <p>NT</p> |
| <p>7.</p> | <p>Equality and diversity</p> | |
| <p>7.1</p> | <p>Athena SWAN Action Plan – Director of Institute actions We would like to increase the number of female staff to around 15% or more across all institutes, recognising that this is more of a challenge to some of the institutes within the School. It may be useful for us to directly approach strong female candidates that we are aware of to encourage them to apply for advertised posts. We could also be aware of potential recruitment opportunities when attending conferences or networking events. Action: KV to discuss the above with the E&D committee and follow up with HR about the recruitment process.</p> | <p>KV</p> |
| <p>8.</p> | <p>Commercialisation business</p> | |
| <p>8.1</p> | <p>Report on behalf of Commercialisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are having ongoing discussions with Scottish Enterprise about the industry engagement project with Bayes. Some of the things which are currently done by Informatics Ventures (such as EIE, IVTuesday) could migrate to the new Bayes industry engagement programme. • There is work to be done on the BDE role and making sure that the relationships with institutes are working on all levels. | |
| <p>8.2</p> | <p>Recruitment update – Director of Commercialisation and Industry Engagement The panel will meet on March 1st to interview five candidates. The panel will be chaired by Jonathan Seckl.</p> | |
| <p>9.</p> | <p>Strategy and Planning</p> | |
| <p>9.1</p> | <p>Teaching and admin workload policy and model Paper 8.1 was discussed by the committee. It was suggested that moving the upper time limit for course rotation would give stability. The committee felt that was not required as the phrasing is currently enough to allow for exceptions.</p> | |
| <p>9.2</p> | <p>Strategy Day proposal The idea of a Strategy Day was welcomed in principal, but with the proviso that the agenda for this be clear. Action: Executive Group will provide an updated proposal in time for the next meeting of this committee. Action: Dates to be circulated by Doodle poll</p> | <p>MJW</p> <p>AN</p> |
| <p>10.</p> | <p>Any other business It was noted that the deadline for Head of College prizes is the end of March. Action: AN to circulate the link.</p> | <p>AN</p> |
| | <p>Date of next meeting 2pm, Wednesday 22nd February 2017. Turing Room, Informatics Forum.</p> | |