

## Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017



**Attendees:** Johanna D Moore (Chair), Stuart Anderson, Murray Cole, Kousha Etessami, Jacques Fleuriot, Michael Fourman, Nigel Goddard, Jon Oberlander, Nigel Topham, Martin Wright, Vashti Galpin, Steve Ewing (for Jim Ashe), Catherine McDonald (secretary), Boris Grot (item 5.1), Don Sannella (item 8.1)

**Apologies:** Jim Ashe, Jane Hillston, Barbara Webb

|     | Summary   | ACTION |
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| 1.  | <b>PREVIOUS MEETING</b>   |        |
| 1.1 | <b>Approval of previous meeting</b><br>Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as a true representation of the meeting.   |        |
| 1.2 | <b>Matters arising from previous meeting</b><br><i>Internationalisation:</i> Agenda.<br><i>Microsoft Scholarships:</i> JA will be speaking to NT about the lack of take up of Microsoft PhD scholarships.<br><i>Efficiency/administrative burden:</i> On-going.<br><i>Academic recruitment:</i> Agenda  | JA     |
| 2.  | <b>HEAD OF SCHOOL'S BUSINESS</b>  |        |
| 2.1 | <b>Report from Head of School</b><br>The post of Chair in Software Engineering has not been filled. The option of making an appointment to the post of Reader is being considered.<br><br>HoS reported that the School was hopeful of confirming an appointment as Reader in Business Informatics. This will be on a part-time basis, initially. In view of this, the appointment of a second post as Lecturer (UE08) in Business Informatics will be sought.<br><br>It was noted that the School had achieved a 100% success rate in a recent audit of its UKVI Tier 4 student monitoring. The Committee commended those involved on this achievement. |        |
| 2.2 | <b>Academic Recruitment update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The post in Robotics will be advertised shortly.</li> <li>• Details are awaited of the Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning post.</li> <li>• Details are awaited for the Security/Internet of Things Post. MC advised that these will be available shortly.</li> <li>• Details have been received for an additional post in Security. This is being taken through the necessary processes.</li> </ul> Other posts, or multiple appointments to the above, may be considered, once the budget position is clearer.   |        |
| 3.  | <b>RESEARCH BUSINESS</b>  |        |
| 3.1 | <b>Report from Director of Research</b><br>JH not present at meeting – will provide an update at Research Committee.  |        |
| 4.  | <b>TEACHING BUSINESS</b>  |        |
| 4.1 | <b>Report from Director of Teaching</b><br>SA reported on a meeting with the College Head of Admissions regarding PGT admissions for 2018/19. The deposit scheme introduced as a pilot in 2017/18 will apply to all students in 2018/19. Also, admissions will operate on a gathered field basis, which will enable better management of numbers.   |        |

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|     | <p>The School has agreed to the purchase of 200 additional GPUs to meet the computing needs of this year's MLPR student cohort.</p> <p>Following approval by College, a new post of Student Support Officer is to be advertised to support Personal Tutors in providing pastoral care. A Learning Technologist is also being recruited to assist in the development of materials for distance and blended learning.</p> <p>SA highlighted the success of the recent staff/student Coffee Morning. Another social event is proposed, towards Christmas, in the form of a Mulled Wine evening (with soft drinks available).</p>   |  |
| 4.2 | <p><b>Curriculum Review – update</b> (Papers 4.2a &amp; 4.2b)<br/>Sharon Goldwater who is leading the curriculum review had provided papers 4.2a and 4.2b, but was unable to attend the meeting.</p> <p>SA outlined some of the current proposals to make the teaching workload more manageable. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More structure to degree programmes</li> <li>• Some courses will be offered in every year and these will be clear to students and applicants</li> <li>• Availability of some other courses may be dependent on resources</li> <li>• There will still be a small number of large courses but these will be better resourced</li> <li>• In some cases, UG4 and PGT cohorts to be taught separately</li> <li>• Overall fewer courses but better resourced</li> </ul> <p>Other measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduction in summative assessment</li> <li>• Diagnostic testing to assist students in selecting courses that are relevant to their skills base (especially in mathematics)</li> <li>• Changes to how teaching and demonstrating is organised with different working patterns (eg tutors repeating the same tutorial for different groups over a short period)</li> </ul> |  |
| 5.  | <b>GRADUATE SCHOOL BUSINESS</b>   |  |
| 5.1 | <p><b>Report from Director of Graduate School</b><br/>NT advised that the revised assessment regulations require double independent marking of MSc(Res) theses. This will significantly increasing the workload involved and will impact, in particular, on the Centres for Doctoral Training.</p>  |  |
| 5.2 | <p><b>Informatics PhD Fellowships proposal</b> (Paper 5.2)<br/>Boris Grot presented the paper on a revision to the process of the recruitment of postgraduate students</p> <p>The principal change would be for promotion to be undertaken on a School-wide basis rather by individual Institutes, with applicants identifying research areas in which they are interested, rather than having to understand the research scope of the different Institutes. The promotion of funded Informatics PhD Fellowships Scheme would be used to raise the profile of the School. The number of such Fellowships in any year would be determined by the overall budget for the PGR intake, with a proportion allocated to Informatics PhD Fellowships.</p> <p>Following the presentation, NT suggested improved advertising for the next programme would be an advantage.</p>   |  |

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|     | <p>In discussion it was recognised that current recruitment and admissions processes would require adaptation and that there may need to be a transitional process before the proposals can be fully functional on an operational level.</p> <p>The Committee supported the proposal in principle and asked NT and BG to work with the IGS team on the details and logistics of implementation.</p>  |                      |
| 6.  | <b>COMMERCIALISATION &amp; INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT BUSINESS</b>  |                      |
| 6.1 | <p><b>Report from Director of Commercialisation and Industry Engagement</b><br/>Steve Ewing reported on behalf of Jim Ashe.</p> <p>SE outlined the activities of Informatics Ventures and its background. He highlighted the recent Women in Technology summit, which the School had sponsored. There were speakers from Sky Scanner and Heriot Watt. Ninety people had attended the event, from the 142 that registered.</p> <p>SE advised that the 2018 Engage, Invest, Exploit (EIE) technology investor showcase will be held in the McEwan Hall in April.</p> <p>From January 2018, Informatics Ventures will be part of the new Bayes Innovation Programme, linked to the new Bayes Centre for Data Technology and Data Science and supported by Scottish Enterprise.</p>  |                      |
| 7.  | <b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b>  |                      |
| 7.1 | HoS reported that it is hoped to make an announcement of a new School Director of Equality and Diversity in the near future.   |                      |
| 8.  | <b>STRATEGY AND PLANNING</b>   |                      |
| 8.1 | <p><b>International Strategy</b> (Paper 8.1)<br/>Don Sannella, Director of Internationalisation, presented his paper on International Strategy.</p> <p>There was general support for the actions included in the plan and the requested budget.<br/><b>Action:</b> MJW to make the requested budget allocation</p> <p>It was suggested that the scope of the plan should be broadened to deal more comprehensively with areas of internationalisation, beyond student recruitment. SA highlighted various University strategies which he suggested might be referenced in the paper. <b>Action:</b> SA to provide relevant links to DS.</p> <p>Other suggestions included linking to Bayes Centre initiatives in the Bay Area, considering the role of alumni, and building relationships that may assist in making GCRF applications.</p>                   | <p>MJW</p> <p>SA</p> |
| 8.2 | <p><b>School Plan 2018-21</b><br/>This is being progressed as reported at the previous meeting.<br/>MJW reported that it is intended that the way that funding is allocated to Colleges (and therefore, potentially, to Schools) will change with effect from 2018/19. Colleges will be credited with all attributable income (including student fees). An allocation of central costs will be made and each College will be set a 'contribution' target, after all income and costs. NPRAS will no longer be operated by the University (although a version of it may be retained within the College). This will have significant implications for budgeting and forecasting and is likely to mean that Schools will no longer benefit from the fixed proportion of any increase in fee income (as under the NPRAS model). Further details are awaited.</p> |                      |
| 9.  | <b>OTHER BUSINESS</b>  |                      |

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| 9.1  | MJW advised the Committee that it had been highlighted that the School is not currently compliant with regulations in relation to the procurement of delivered catering. It is likely that action will be required to address this in the relatively near future. |  |
| 10.  | <b>NEXT MEETING</b>   |  |
| 10.1 | <b>Date of next meeting:</b> Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November, 2pm, Turing Room.   |  |