University of Portsmouth

School of Computing

Research and Knowledge Services Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2013, 14:30 in BK1.15

Present

Jim Briggs	Chair
Djamel Ait-Boudaoud	Dean, Faculty of Technology
Annette Wilson	Head of School
Alexander Gegov	Reader
Mo Adda	Pervasive Computing Group
Mohamed Gaber	AI group
Carl Adams	IS group
Nedyalko Petrov	PhD Student Representative
Angela Muscat	Minutes Secretary

1. Apologies for absence
Ivan Jordanov

Jie Tong

2. Approval of previous minutes
The previous minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Matters arising
1. Alex Gegov confirmed he had emailed other departments promoting the second seminar. At present there has been no obvious affect, numbers of attendees remained the same although it is hoped this will change   **Action Complete.**

4. Reports on recent activity
Jim Briggs had distributed graphs previous to the meeting.

    a. Funding. Jim explained that the red line on the graph represents money brought in from external sources. The blue line represented expected funding. Jim has happy to report that funding appears to be increasing and the graph shows an increase in bids. Historically there are 3 or 4 members of staff who actively seek funding and this needs to increase. There is a new bid for £300,000 submitted by Ben and Gareth and Jim gave credit to them for this.

    b. Publications. Jim tabled the latest list of SoC publications. It was noted that there had been a declining trend of publications over the past few years but fortunately publications picked up towards the end of 2012 and has shown an increase. The signs for 2013 are promising.

    c. Research students.

        (i)   Completions. Ivan was not available to give an update on completions although Jim noted that there are not many students due to complete at the moment.

        (ii)   Progress. Jim reported that there were 6 new students in October and currently 3 new students on the system for February. There are

> 3 students awaiting ATAS clearance and also another possible 2 students that will start late.
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> (iii) Admissions. Alexander Gegov announced that there had been a steady flow of applications. He reflected that this increase could be due to funding becoming available to Iraqi and Malaysian applicants through their governments. In addition, the University has gone up in the league table, making it more attractive to students. He also added that Jim's information to new students was very helpful and wanted to credit him with this. It was agreed that resources need to be made available for new PhD students prior to their arrival at the Uni. The student experience of the School of Computing has to be a good one and positive feedback will influence future applications. Problems relating to delays in processing applications were discussed. It was agreed that it is mainly a University issue and not something the Department could change. Jim stated that the Graduate School are currently reviewing the admissions process. Djamel suggested feeding back concerns to Rob Crittenden.
>
> **ACTION Jim to ask Ivan to raise problems with the admissions process at the FRDC**

d. SoC and CSI seminars. Alex commented that despite promoting the seminars to other departments, there has not been any significant difference. It was hoped that this will change as the message gets around.

e. New appointments and departures. Jim reported that Paul Gnanyutham had retired due to ill-health and hopefully there would be a replacement for him in September 2013. Philip Scott had recruited a KTP Associate (Eligio Becerra-Zavala) who will start in February.

f. Incoming Visitors. Jim reported there is an increasing number of visitors to the Department. Tomorrow there is a seminar by two visitors from Finland. He encouraged as many staff as possible to attend.

g. Outgoing visits, meetings, conferences attended. It was noted that this area has been particularly quiet at the moment. It seems that activity tends to decline in the Autumn.

h. Web pages. Jim reported that initiatives were being taken at Faculty and University level to ensure the appropriate information is on the web pages prior to the REF.

5. Report from Faculty R&KT Committee

The Committee has not met since our last meeting.

6. REF update

Jim reported that he attended an informative talk given by Tara Dean on Monday which covered the process, deadlines and summary of work towards the REF. He reported that the University intends to submit in more units of assessment than 2008 and a higher total of people. All universities submitted estimated numbers in December and the national figures showed the total was up by 3% with Science/Technology/Engineering up 10%. He reiterated that this is just an indication and the complete picture is still not clear. In Computing there are 5 case studies of which 2 are good ones, the others require further evidence to make them stronger. Djamel commented that the quality of the papers is the main driver. The list of which staff will be submitted is not final and can change. Mohamed was concerned that the process was not an open one and had not provided much feedback. Djamel explained the process and the need for confidentiality and he noted Mohamed's concerns were a fair point. He also reiterated that 'quality' was of the foremost importance.

7. Strategy and goals

Jim Briggs reported that the Faculty strategic plans had been circulated in December. The research and Knowledge services parts of the SoC Action Plan were reviewed and the following comments were made:-

1. It is hoped that replacements will be made for Hossein, Angela Fletcher and Paul G. Hopefully the replacements will be research active.

2. It was noted that research group leaders and project co-ordinators should try to ensure that there are an appropriate number of research based projects. There is value in research based projects.

3. It was noted that there was no evidence of proposals not having been reviewed under the University's procedures.

4. Annette agreed to encourage impact of all research proposals. Staff development session Weds 5 to talk about impact for REF2020.

5. The need to actively seek KTPs was discussed. There needs to be an increase in the amount of staff talking to industry. Weds 5 sessions are planned to highlight this.

6. Exploring strategic alliances with industry employers was discussed. IBM are intending to re-engage with the University more. A meeting with IBM has been organised which will be an opportunity to showcase research work.

7. It was agreed there is a need to get more out of student placements, including the potential for KTPs. Usually, contact on sandwich placement visits is very low end management so it would be useful to have a pack of information that could be left and hopefully filter up to the top of the company. Jim suggested that Deans could write to MDs of companies taking students. Djamel commented that he would be happy to write a letter and expected that the Vice Chancellor would also do this.

8. Djamel reminded the Committee that there is a further resource which may be useful in Learning at Work. Bernard Webster is assigned to help and has secretarial support.

9. Djamel commented on student projects. He said that the good projects would make excellent publicity for the School. Perhaps samples of the best work could be placed on the web. This would increase traffic and provide advice for new potential students. It is worth exploring the possibility of creating a repository for artefacts.

8. Any other business

None

9. Next Meeting

Wednesday 5th June 2013 at 2.30pm.