

APPROVED BY CHAIR

University of Portsmouth

School of Computing

Research and Knowledge Services Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2013, 14:30 in BK1.15

Present

Jim Briggs	Chair
Djamel Ait-Boudaoud	Dean, Faculty of Technology
Ivan Jordanov	AI Group
Alexander Gegov	Reader
Benjamin Aziz	Pervasive Computing Group
Mohamed Gaber	AI group
Carl Adams	IS group

Angela Muscat Minutes Secretary

1. Apologies for absence

Jie Tong
Annette Wilson
Nedyalko Petrov
Mo Adda

2. Approval of previous minutes

The previous minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Matters arising

1. Jim confirmed he had spoken to Ivan regarding problems with the slow and confusing admissions process and requested him to raise it at the FRDC meeting. Ivan confirmed that Rob Crittenden is aware of the problems and was taking matters in hand to centralise the Faculty admissions system. Djamel advised that Technology were looking into introducing Prof Docs and MRes in the future. **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 reported that the trend is still upwards, but has slowed of late. This could be due to under-reporting. Faculty has set a target for £200k of research (but excluding KTP) funding won for 2013-14. We need to ensure that all research groups are contributing to achieve that
- b. Publications. Jim reported that we are on course for the second-highest year since records began for quantity of publications. However, the quantity is not our primary goal. The focus should also be on quality. One good journal paper a

year is sufficient for most REF purposes. It was also recognised that it might take a couple of conference papers to set up a good journal paper.

- c. Research students.
 - (i) Completions. Adesina Iluyemi completed this year. There are currently 3 students in their final year.
 - (ii) Progress. There were 7 new students that started in February 2013 and 2 students starting in June.
 - (iii) Admissions. The trend is firmly upwards. There are currently 36 PhD students, 20 part-time and 16 full time. The highest number ever. We have a lot of students in years 3 and 4 (or 5-8 part-time). Longer-term with 20-25 research active staff, we have the capacity to supervise 60-75 PhDs at a time so we have room to grow.
- d. SoC and CSI seminars. Alex commented that this year the attendance was better however the attendance from other departments is still poor. Alex has been in contact with Honghai and is optimistic that this will encourage more attendance from other departments. Location was discussed but it was agreed that the subject area was an important factor. PhD students should be encouraged to attend and present more regularly as this was compulsory for them. Djamel suggested introducing a 'reading club' whereby PhD students could be given a paper to read and analyse. Supervisors could also be encouraged to do this. It was also agreed that if possible the time slot available on a Wednesday could be extended to allow for more presentations.
- e. New appointments and departures. Jim reported that Jacek Kopecky would be joining the department soon.
- f. Incoming Visitors. There were no reported visitors. Alex queried whether Erasmus academics could be included and it was agreed that unless some research could be identified, they should not.
- g. Outgoing visits, meetings, conferences attended. Alex has just returned from a conference in Valencia which he combined with some Erasmus teaching. Jim went to a 2 day conference in London. Carl will be the keynote speaker at a conference in Portugal in June/July. Ben is going to a conference in Prague in August and Jim is going to London again in July.
- h. Web pages. Jim reminded everyone to keep their web pages up-to date. Jim congratulated Alice Good on her success in the press with social media to do with the use of Facebook. She attracted more Twitter readers than any other tweet from this University.

5. Report from Faculty R&KT Committee

Jim reported that a while ago he encouraged staff to register with the University Directory of Experts. He was happy to report that Computing staff were well represented among those who had registered.

6. REF update

Djamel reported that he sent out to staff a background email explaining the current status of the REF. At present, a mock submission has been sent to an external assessor and we are currently awaiting his decision. This is expected within the next month. The current sub-set consists of 13 staff, 2 impact case studies and 1 environmental statement. Only if the assessor returns a positive answer is it likely that the submission will proceed. It was reiterated that the emphasis will be on quality of papers not quantity. It was better to produce only one quality paper per year than many inferior ones.

7. Research Group Objectives

Jim questioned whether Research Group Leaders should be doing more to target research income and invited comments. Ivan stated it was already obvious what should be done, i.e. knowledge transfer, research funding, publications – good journal publications, successful PhD completions and international collaborations. He said that it is tricky setting up targets. He suggested following the Strategic Plan for the Faculty and the University. Workloads were discussed and timetabling issues seemed to be a major challenge. It was desirable to compact timetables to allow more time for research but this was proving difficult with the timetabling system. Djamel suggested that any challenges relating to workload within the department should be addressed locally. Carl asked whether you could bring in money to free up teaching time. Jim advised that this would be difficult to implement due to short notice and availability of cash. Jim invited emails with ideas about what objectives research groups should have.

8. Any other business

Carl reported that there are changes to the way ethics are reported. All researchers should fill in forms. There are University wide changes. We are currently undergoing an Ethics Audit. This will also apply to students.

Carl requested more information regarding the signing off process of bids. Djamel replied that guidelines had been given out including time frames.

Jim reported from the Health Development Forum that it is has become apparent that the processes at Portsmouth are more complicated than at many other universities. Tara Dean has a plan with the new VC to try to bring a more streamlined system in relation to Research, Finance, HR, etc.

Carl noted that there was a gender bias present at the meeting. He said there are many research active female members of staff who would be eligible to attend.

Alex has been forwarded a request from the Graduate School regarding the areas of expertise of Research Staff. They are compiling a list. He has circulated the request but has not received many responses.

9. Next Meeting

TBC