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News from Head of School

CS-Informatics Review

As you all know, the external review of CS and Informatics took place at the end of last week. First of all, thanks to all of you who contributed to the preparations, and to the staff and students who spent time with the panel during their visit. I was impressed with the professionalism of the panel and the incisive approach they took to questioning. I think that we can be confident that they have done a thorough job. We are expecting a full report in about two weeks time, but the panel provided initial feedback on Friday afternoon. Their detailed comments are confidential and, in any case, incomplete, but I can provide a very broad-brush summary of their conclusions as they affect CS. It would be clearly inappropriate for me to pass on their comments regarding the School of Informatics. The panel felt that CS was in good shape, had made a realistic assessment of its own performance, and appeared to be maintaining the standards set at the last RAE. They noted that the model of two Schools – one with an EPS emphasis, the other based in the humanities – works elsewhere in the world, but requires both teaching and research activities to be clearly differentiated. They observed that communication between the two Schools is currently very poor, and suggested that there should be much more collaboration across the board – around teaching, strategy, and academic development. Overall, they did not seem minded to propose major structural change, but pointed out that it would take time, and possibly further investment, to realise the vision of distinct but complementary Schools. The panel will make specific recommendations in their written report, but I believe that both they and the Dean recognise the need to avoid damage to CS.

40th Anniversary Celebrations

As you also all know, we are celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of our Undergraduate School this Friday. We have invited back early alumni, and school children from across the region, to participate in a number of events both in the School and at the Museum of Science and Industry. Events during the day will be followed by an evening meal for alumni, members of staff, and friends of the School. We have also invited to the dinner heads of maths, science, and IT in local secondary schools, with a view to raising their awareness of CS as a discipline. The after-dinner speaker will be Chris Burton, the driving force behind the rebuild of the 'Baby'. We will also be taking the opportunity to present the University Outstanding Alumnus Award for 2005 to Tim Spiers, who studied for his PhD in the Department.

Student Symposium

A reminder that the School Student Symposium takes place this Wednesday and Thursday. Full details are given in the section on internal meetings and events, but I want to take the opportunity to emphasise the importance of the event, and encourage as many of you as are able to attend.

Faculty Performance Review

The Performance Review for EPS took place last Wednesday. This involved the President and Policy VPs crawling over performance data for the Faculty and its Schools, in an attempt to understand the extent to which we are making progress towards our 2015 goals. Overall, the event was very positive, with the President

making it clear that EPS had got its act together more effectively than any other Faculty. Two points came out that are worthy of note. First, CS performed particularly well in the student satisfaction survey, with one of the best average scores for every question on the survey, and the largest number of courses with an overall score, based on a significant number of responses, above 1.5 (range ± 2). Congratulations to all concerned. Second, there was clear dissatisfaction expressed in the management survey with services provided centrally by the Faculty. The President made it clear that he is following the Faculty review of administration with interest, and pressed for rapid and measurable progress.

Chair in Computational Biology

Jens Timmer, a potential candidate for the Chair in Computational Systems Biology, is visiting the University this week. He will be meeting with interested parties both within the School and elsewhere in the University, and will be giving a seminar, which I would encourage as many of you as possible to attend, on Tuesday – details below.

Seminars

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Design Principles of a Bacterial Signalling Network **Mon 31 Oct**

Dr. Jens Timmer, Dept of Maths and Physics, University of Freiburg
1415 – 1515, Room 2.15 Kilburn Building

Metaphors and Knowledge Modelling **Wed 2 Nov**

Professor Peter J Nurnberg, Aalborg University Esbjerg, Denmark
1415 – 1515, Kilburn 1.5

School seminars are held on Wednesday afternoons; [the programme](#) is available online.

Internal Meetings and Events

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2005 Research Students' Symposium **Wed 2 – Thu 3 Nov**

The Research School sees the Research Students' Symposium as having an important role in providing a window on the research that takes place within the School, as well as being a prime opportunity for our research students to practise the crucial skill of presenting their research results to an audience of peers. The programme for the 2005 Research Students' Symposium is [now available](#). The symposium is an open event. All research students, irrespective of year, are strongly advised to attend the full event. Masters students, full-time researchers and academics are also very welcome. As in previous years the event will take place during reading week, but please note the change of weekday (now Wed – Thu). The keynote speaker is **Prof. Joe Sventek** (Department of Computing Science, University of Glasgow). Joe is going to talk about his experience in doing research in both industry (for many years) and in academia (more recently). As always, prizes will be awarded at the symposium for the best PhD dissertation and (up to three) best papers. There is now a distinguished [list of previous winners](#) for all of us to live up to.

Presentations Kilburn 1.3, coffee, posters and free buffet lunch IT407.

Events Calendar

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40th Anniversary of first UG intake **4 Nov 05**

[More Information](#)

Manchester Turing Lecture **25 Jan 06**

[More Information](#)

IBM Lecture **18 Nov 05**

Enabling a Business Process Revolution
Dr Irving Wladawsky-Berger, VP, Technical Strategy and Innovation, IBM
Evening, venue to be decided.

EPSRC Public Engagement Workshops

8 Feb & 9 Mar 06

Following the recent ICT programme visit where public engagement was highlighted as a concern within the academic community, the EPSRC have organised two workshops. As you will be aware, the ICT Programme has one of the largest budgets in EPSRC but the community currently participates least in public engagement schemes. This was highlighted recently by the ICT Strategic Advice Team (SAT), who felt that many in the community were eager to promote their work but were unacquainted with appropriate mechanisms by which to stimulate public interest through their research.

The events have been scheduled for early 2006 but due to the interactive content of the day, places are limited to a maximum of 30 per workshop. The sessions are designed to target researchers that are new to the field of Public Engagement, who would like to gain a better understanding of the area and learn best practice from more experienced members of the community.

The workshops will take place on:

8th February 2006 - Centre for Life, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

9th March 2006 - Harbourside, Bristol

Registration is now open and forms can be completed on the [EPSRC website](#).

Funding Opportunities

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EPSRC e-Science Core Programme Senior Research Fellow 10 Nov 05

EPSRC invites expressions of interest from people with outstanding and internationally recognised academic credentials in a relevant aspect of e-Science research for a new appointment at the heart of the UK's e-Science Core Programme research effort. The appointment will be made on the conditions used for EPSRC Senior Research Fellows and will be full time for 5 years. The successful candidate will be expected to spend 30-50% of their time advising and supporting EPSRC on the e-Science Core Programme and serving as an ambassador for e-Science more generally. The rest of their time will be devoted to their own research programme.

[More information](#)

Leverhulme Research Fellowships

10 Nov 05

The Leverhulme Trustees are offering approximately 90 Research Fellowships to support experienced researchers in any subject area, particularly those who are or have been prevented by routine duties from completing a programme of original research. Awards are not limited to those holding appointments in higher education. Applicants should be resident in the UK; should normally be age 30 or over; should be able to demonstrate experience and academic background sufficient to confirm their ability to complete the proposed programme of research. The duration of awards will be between 3 and 24 months. Awards made in 2006 to be taken up between 1 June 2006 and 1 May 2007.

[More Information](#)

Leverhulme Study Abroad Fellowships

10 Nov 05

Study Abroad Fellowships support a period overseas in a stimulating academic environment. These differ from Research Fellowships in that the awards support a range of activities other than straight-forward research (e.g., the exchange of ideas or the development of new lines of research and collaboration). Applicants must be resident in the UK and be aged 30 or over.

They should have held an established full-time post in a UK institution of higher education, or in a museum, art gallery or comparable institution for at least five years. They are available for all fields of study with duration between 3 and 12 months. Awards made in 2006 to be taken up between 1 June 2006 and 1 May 2007.

[More Information](#)

EPSRC Senior Research Fellowships

10 Nov 05

Applications are invited for the 2006 Senior Research Fellowships exercise. Senior Research Fellowships are awarded to outstanding academic scientists and engineers of international repute, to enable them to devote themselves full-time to personal research. Up to 6 of these most prestigious EPSRC awards are made each year. The proposed research must be important and timely and should offer opportunities for major scientific advances. Fellowships are full-time for up to 5 years and are tenable in the UK. A comprehensive list of research areas for the 2006 call is also available on the research noticeboard opposite office 2.10.

[More information](#)

Royal Society Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowships

14 Dec 05

The Royal Society Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowships were established through the generosity of the Leverhulme Trust and seek to provide opportunities for academic researchers to be relieved of all their teaching and administrative duties. These appointments enable academic researchers to concentrate on full-time research for up to one year.

Applicants must be of postdoctoral status or equivalent, hold a permanent post in a UK University and be at a stage in their career when they would particularly benefit from a period of full-time research.

[More Information](#)

Toshiba Fellowship Programme 2006

15 Dec 05

Toshiba, supported by the EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council) is offering outstanding European scientists the opportunity to join one of its high-technology research teams in Japan for up to two years. The Toshiba Fellowship Programme is open to PhD level researchers of EU nationality currently working in a UK academic institution. The research areas vary broadly from year to year in the field of science and engineering. The Programme offers the successful Fellow a generous package including a fixed salary and travel to and from Japan.

[More Information](#)

Prize and Award Opportunities

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We have acknowledged the need to raise the profile of the School both nationally and internationally. Nominating individuals for awards, and working actively with others to ensure that deserving individuals are nominated is one way of doing that.

Roger Needham Award

21 Dec 05

The Roger Needham Award, sponsored by Microsoft Research, and established in memory of the late Roger Needham, is for a distinguished research contribution in computer science by a UK based researcher within ten years of their PhD. It consists of a £5000 prize together with an opportunity to give a public lecture on their work.

[More information](#)

Research Awards

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Travel Grant

A Novel Computing Architecture for Cognitive Systems based on the Laminar Microcircuitry of the Neocortex.

Funding Body: EPSRC

PI: Prof S. Furber

Award Amount: £4358

Staff News

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Awards and Promotions

None this week

Academic Arrivals

None this week

Academic Departures

None this week

Research Arrivals

Yevgeny Kazakov – IMG

Christopher Armstrong - CNC

Research Departures

None this week

Administrative Arrivals

None

Administrative Departures

None

Sabbatical Leave

Andrei Voronkov: Microsoft Research, Redmond USA

Aug 05 – Aug 06.

Ian Horrocks: University of Bozen-Bolzano, Bell Labs, and Stanford University

Feb 06 – Sep 06.

Peter Aczel: Nijmegen University, and Maths Institute at the University of Munich

Jan 06 – Sep 06.

Alasdair Rawsthorne: 80% secondment to Transitive Technologies

Oct 05 – Sep 06.

Alvaro Fernandes: IBM Almaden Research Centre US

Jul – Dec 06.

Vacancies

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Academic Staff

None

Research Staff

None

Administrative Staff

None