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News from Head of School**League Tables**

Most of you will have seen the very disappointing result for the School in the Guardian Higher Education League Tables. There are two distinct problems: we are listed under tariff band 5, and our overall score is not particularly good. Of these, the first is probably the most important – it tells the most able students, who expect to gain A-level grades that would place them in tariff band 6, not even to consider Manchester. Eleven of our key competitors are recommended to students in band 6. Our overall score conspires to make matters worse. We are currently trying to get to the bottom of exactly what happened but, to a first approximation, the answer is simple: we were lumped in with the School of Informatics. Their lower offer level will have pulled down the overall entry standard – hence the tariff band 5 designation. The two dominant factors in the overall score (accounting for 40% of the total) are A-level score at entry, and student:staff ratio. The former is a double whammy, because being grouped with Informatics again pulls down our score to below that of our competitors. As regards the latter, our score is comparable to those of most of our competitors but, on our own, we would probably have scored better than most. There are one or two other difficult to explain scores (eg spend per student), but these are less significant. Overall, this fiasco emphasises the importance to the School of the outcome of the current review of Informatics. Most of the problems will be addressed if the recommendations of the Implementation Group are accepted (we should hear soon).

Undergraduate Teamworking Awards

Congratulations to the CS team who finished in the top four in the University Undergraduate Teamworking Awards. The competition involves teams from across the University and making it to the final shortlist was a significant achievement. Thanks also to the members of staff who supported the team.

National/International Student Awards

As you know, I am keen that we should do everything we can to raise the profile of the School, particularly in ways that might attract outstanding students (despite our league table position). I have come across a number of relevant national and international competitions for students, but we do not seem to have made a point in the past of actively pursuing these. This is a pity, since success in such competitions is potentially good for both the students and the School. Two examples are <http://www.setawards.org/index.vc> and www.imaginecup.co.uk. Toby Howard has agreed to take on the role of promoting participation in such events (for which many thanks). We would both be keen to receive details of any relevant competitions you come across.

Events this Week[top](#)**Learning and context in spoken dialogue systems****10 May 06***Recent results from the TALK project*

Dr Oliver Lemon, University of Edinburgh

1415 – 1515, Lecture Theatre 1.5, Kilburn Building

[More Information](#)

Finite satisfiability for the guarded two-variable fragment **11 May 06**

The finite satisfiability problem for the guarded two-variable fragment with counting is in EXPTIME

Dr Ian Pratt-Hartmann, School of Computer Science, UoM
Room G.16, Newman Building (time not available at time of writing)
[More Information](#) (though not posted at time of writing)

Regular Seminar Series

See links in contents bar for information on seminar series organised by the School of CS, E-Science North West and National Centre for Text Mining.

Future School Events

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BCS/IEE Accreditation Visit **17-18 May 06**

Those who will definitely need to be involved should already know and have these dates in their diaries, but could all staff involved in teaching please note the dates and try to ensure they will be available if required. PLEASE NOTE there was a misunderstanding over dates and this was originally advertised as taking place on the 18 – 19 May.

Requirements and Technologies for Provenance **23 May 06**

ENSW technical meeting. Volunteers required to give 10-15 min presentations.
1400 – 1700, Atlas 1
Email [Dean Kuo](#) or visit [wiki](#)

Research Retreat **29-30 Jun 06**

Palace Hotel, Buxton
Programme under development, input welcomed ([email Ursula](#))

School UG Graduation Party **5 Jul 06**

We will (hopefully) be celebrating the graduation of our UG students
1430 – 1530, prize-giving 1445, graduation ceremony 1645.

Future External Events

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OPEN MEETING ON eLEARNING **10 May 06**

You are invited to an Open Meeting on eLearning at which Professor Bob Munn, Vice-President for Teaching and Learning, will make a brief presentation and respond to questions about current initiatives to enhance e-learning. [Full details](#)

Building the Business Infrastructure for the 21st Century **11 May 06**

North West Grid Seminar hosted by the Advanced Internet Methods and Emergent Systems (AIMES) Centre, Liverpool.
0930 – 1230, AIMES Centre, 10 Duke Street, Liverpool
[More Information and Registration](#)

Metamorphosis – Induction Issues **11 May 06**

So how can we encourage students to use the academic and non-academic support systems that are available so that they will achieve their full potential? What additional support strategies need to be put in place? A range of speakers will consider the development of student support strategies – particularly induction programmes – from a student perspective, discuss the issues that need to be addressed, and what the student satisfaction survey can tell us.
1200 – 1330 (lunch included), CEU Suite, 4th Floor, Simon Building

[Email](#) to book (for catering purposes) at least two days in advance.

HL7 Clinical Genomics Family History Specification New 15 May 06

Amnon Shabo (Shvo), Ph.D, IBM Research, Haifa

Amnon is Co-Chair of the HL7 SIG and Co-Editor of the Clinical Document Architecture developed by the Structured Documents Technical Committee. HL7 is the computer coding system used to exchange information between medical software systems - it is the coding that has been chosen for messaging in the NHS Connecting for Health systems. The SIG is tackling one of the main concerns of genetics health care professionals looking at clinical coding systems – their inability to represent both genetic data about people, and family data such as the patient's pedigree (family tree) and family history of disease.

1100, [NoWGEN building](#), Grafton Street, Manchester, M13 9WU

Email [Andrew Devereau](#) for more information.

E-learning for the Physical Sciences New 16 May 06

Guest speakers from the Universities of Hull, Bristol, Edinburgh and Manchester
Organised by TSU and the HEA Physical Sciences subject centre.

On line-testing; use WebCT or build your own system; principles of e-learning design; teaching students on work placement.

1200 – 1400, 7.27 & 7.28, Chemistry Building, Brunswick St (lunch from 11.45)

Email [Sue King](#) to reserve a place

TRDN Annual Symposium 23 May 06

Manchester: a learning community?

Alison Johns, Head of Leadership, Governance and Management, HEFCE

In addition to the keynote address, there will be sessions dealing with the University as a community, and with its relationships with the wider community both locally and nationally/internationally. Posters are invited on the theme of 'community' or on wider educational issues.

1000 – 1500, Hulme Hall

Email [Veronique Rizzuto](#) to book or offer a poster

EPSRC Regional Academic Seminars 26 May & 14 June 06

Presentation by Professor John O'Reilly, Chief Executive of EPSRC, Question and Answer session, session on Peer Review and the grant application process. At the Manchester event, there will also be a session on opportunities for interaction between industry, academia and other organisations.

26 May 2006 London: The Royal Society (register by 18th May)

14 June 2006 Manchester: Manchester Conference Centre (register by 2ns June)

[More Information](#)

Lunchtime Yoga Classes – Karon Mee Every Thurs

People have been practicing yoga for over 3, 000 years. The benefits of practice can be experienced on many levels, physical and spiritual. A healthy spine, improvement to physical health and body awareness in general is experienced through asana (postures), while calmness of the mind and improved use of the respiratory system are effects of meditation and breath awareness. Classes are non-competitive and suitable for all levels. Do not eat at least an hour prior to class. UMSA members £1.50; non-UMSA £2.00 per class

1310 – 1400 Thursdays, Staff House

Funding Opportunities

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BBSRC International Scientific Interchange Scheme (ISIS) Open

BBSRC's International Scientific Interchange Scheme (ISIS) provides support to

help scientists make and establish new contacts with their international counterparts. Funding is available to BBSRC grantholders, and researchers working on BBSRC-supported projects at BBSRC-sponsored Institutes for travel and subsistence for three main types of visit. The scheme is open to bids at any time (at least 6 weeks before travel) with payments being made in advance of any visits. Please note BBSRC-supported students are not eligible to travel under ISIS support.

[More Information](#)

Wellcome Trust Equipment Grants

Apr/May 06

The Wellcome Trust consider applications for multi-user items of equipment, including equipment required to create a central resource for a number of disparate scientific programmes. The maximum amount awarded is £1 million. It is expected that applications will include a contribution from the university, or other source, proportional to the total request. Applications for less than £10 000 will not normally be considered under this scheme. Small, project-dedicated items of equipment can, however, form part of a project, programme or fellowship application.

[More Information](#)

European Science Foundation EUROCORES Scheme New

1 Jun 06

The aim of the ESF European Collaborative Research (EUROCORES) Scheme is to enable researchers in different European countries to develop collaboration and scientific synergy in areas where European scale and scope are required for leading-edge science in a global context and in this way create the critical mass necessary for scientific excellence. The scheme provides a flexible framework which allows national basic research funding organisations to join forces to support top class European research in and across all scientific areas.

[More Information](#)

RAEng Industrial Secondment Scheme

Open

The Industrial Secondment Scheme provides an invaluable opportunity for university lecturers in engineering to gain state-of-the-art industrial experience. Applicable to engineers of all disciplines, the Scheme's objective is to enable the secondees to impart the fruits of this experience to their students through teaching, through case studies using up-to-date material and, in the longer term, through course design. The benefits also accrue to the host organisation which gains a temporary but highly qualified member of staff, and to the university which has the opportunity of strengthening its links with industry. The Scheme provides funding for the university to employ a temporary replacement for the secondee. In this way it minimises the effects on the normal flow of teaching, and makes it easier for universities to release members of staff for secondment. The Scheme has also been well received by industry, and many organisations have indicated a willingness to offer places to engineering academics: where possible The Royal Academy of Engineering helps in the 'matchmaking process'.

[More Information](#)

RAEng Global Research Awards

Open

Global Research Awards provide an opportunity for engineers currently engaged in research and development to undertake projects in centres of excellence overseas. Projects should focus on activities which could help stimulate wealth creation and improvements in the quality of life, supporting the international development of research networks and encouraging the uptake of globally competitive technology in the UK.

[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.

The IEEE Richard W. Hamming Medal

1 Jul 06

The IEEE Richard W. Hamming Medal was established by the Board of Directors in 1986 'for exceptional contributions to information sciences, systems and technology.' The award is named in honour of Dr. Richard W. Hamming, who has had a central role in the development of computer and computing science, and whose many significant contributions in the area of information science include his error-correcting codes. Recipient selection is administered by the IEEE Medals Council through the IEEE Awards Board. It may be presented to an individual or group, up to three in number. The award consists of a gold medal, bronze replica, certificate, and honorarium.

[More Information](#)

The IEEE John von Neumann Medal

1 Jul 06

The IEEE John von Neumann Medal was established by the Board of Directors in 1990 and may be presented annually 'for outstanding achievements in computer-related science and technology.' The achievements may be theoretical, technological, or entrepreneurial, and need not have been made immediately prior to the date of the award. Recipient selection is administered through the IEEE Medals Council of the IEEE Awards Board. It may be presented to an individual or group, up to two in number. The award consists of a gold medal, bronze replica, certificate and honorarium.

[More Information](#)

Microsoft European Science Award New

31 May 06

This prestigious new award, sponsored by Microsoft Research, is designed to recognise and reward scientists working in Europe who have made a major contribution to the advancement of science through the use of computational methods. The 2006 award is open to any research scientist who has made a significant contribution at the intersection of the biological sciences and computing. (In 2007, the award will focus on computing and the physical sciences.) The award will comprise a trophy and a monetary amount of 250,000 EUR, of which 7,500 EUR will constitute prize money with the rest earmarked for further research. The award will be presented at a ceremony in October/November 2006

[More Information](#)

Research Awards

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None this week

Staff News

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Awards and Promotions

None this week

Academic Arrivals

None this week

Academic Departures

None this week

Research Arrivals

None this week

Research Departures

None this week

Administrative Arrivals

None this week

Administrative Departures

None this week

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

Research Associate in Automated Reasoning and Web Ontologies

[More Information](#)

Administrative Staff

None