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News from Head of School

Student Numbers

The following table outlines the current understanding of the numbers of new students who will be joining us in the new academic year:

		2009	2010	2010	2010
		Registered	Registered	Expected	Target
UG	H	180	208	219	210
	O	36	36	46	42
	Total	216	244	265	252
PGT	H	56	51	54	55
	O	89	90	100	92
	Total	145	141	154	147
PGR	H	25	22	25	26
	O	10	10	19	18
	Total	35	32	44	44

The *expected* column is the total number of students we expect to have registered by the time September registration closes. The following are an attempt at pulling out the key lessons:

- *UG*: Given that the Target is really for 1st December, and we always lose some students in this period, for example to other programmes, we are very close to target. This is a good outcome, as the targets are known to be challenging and there are higher average entry grades.
- *PGT*: The anticipated flood did not materialise, although we are close to target for home and expect to exceed the target for overseas. The lack of a flood will make the new programmes much more manageable in their first year, but also means that PGT is not in itself going to get us through the forthcoming government cuts.
- *PGR*: There has been an encouraging improvement in overseas numbers from the worryingly low figure in 2009.

Overall, the targets this year were challenging, and it is a significant achievement to be at or slightly ahead of the targets. The increase in the predicted number of registrations is worth (back of an envelope calculation) over £400K to the school compared with the previous year, at a time when explaining why this is important is surely not good use of space.

Many people contribute to our large and diverse recruitment activity in many settings throughout the year, and I am grateful for the professional and effective way this activity takes place.

Animation11

The School has launched Animation11, the 4th Annual UK Schools Computer Animation Competition. The goal, as ever, is to enthuse kids about Computer Science. The 2010 competition attracted over 1,300 entries from more than 200 schools, with 50 prize-winning students, and over 400 children, teachers and families attending the Animation Festival and Inspirational Computer Science Day at The Lowry, Salford Quays. You can see a video about the day, and see all the winning entries, at:

www.cs.manchester.ac.uk/Animation

Animation11 is funded by Google, Electronic Arts, The Granada Foundation, in

association with BBC21CC and cs4fn.

Text Mining Competition Success

Congratulations to the NaCTeM team (X. Wang, R. Rak, A. Restificar, C. Nobata, C.J. Rupp, T. Batista-Navarro, R. Nawaz, S. Ananiadou) on their recent success in the BioCreAtivE (Critical Assessment of Information Extraction in Biology) challenge for 2010. The team participated in the protein-protein interaction (PPI) challenge and achieved the best performance, in the Interaction Method Task (IMT). This involves automatically detecting experimental techniques used in research articles that support given PPIs. Such detection is crucial not only for the correct annotation of experimentally determined protein interactions but also for other annotations, such as evidence codes in the Gene Ontology, and assigning other controlled vocabulary terms to an article. Among systems submitted by 8 international teams, NaCTeM's yielded the best overall performance as measured by a range of evaluation metrics.

Widening Participation Award

Congratulations to Dave Thorne and Chris Morrison, who have been appointed Computer Science Widening Participation award holders by Faculty. Their role over the next year will be to support Widening Participation and Public Engagement activities, and in particular the Computer Science Discovery Days for young people.

Toby Howard.

Events

Introductory Courses to Research Computing and UNIX

The Research Applications & Collaborations team of IT Services are running two courses to introduce postgraduates and staff to the concepts of Resource Computing (eg how to get your computer-based research completed quicker) and UNIX (this course explains the basic concepts of the operating systems (inc. Linux) of most high end computing).

The courses run on Tues 28 Sept (Intro to Resource Computing) and Tues 5 Oct (Intro to UNIX). Full details and instructions on how to apply are available at:
<http://www.rcs.manchester.ac.uk/education/skills/introResearchComputing>
<http://www.rcs.manchester.ac.uk/education/skills/introUnix>

A web-based method for improving dementia care

4 Oct 10

1 pm lunch, 2-4 pm seminar, Boardroom, Arthur Lewis Building (2.016 and 2.017).

Booking: micra@manchester.ac.uk

Leading dementia researcher and clinical Professor Ken Rockwood shares his insights and experiences of using a web-based method for improving dementia care. Professor Rockwood of Dalhousie University is the principal investigator of the Canadian Research to Action Program in Dementia (RAPID), a national, multicentre project to provide better care for people with dementia by facilitating and carrying out translational research and knowledge translation. This seminar will be followed by a public lecture by Professor Rockwood on 'Facing up to frailty' at 6.30 pm, Lecture Theatre B, University Place. Events run by the Manchester Interdisciplinary Collaboration for Research on Ageing (MICRA).