News from Head of School

Preparing for REF

The school currently receives over £3 million a year from HEFCE through its quality related (QR) funding stream for research. This means that we receive an average of around £50K a year for each academic returned in the last RAE. As the current funding formula rewards only the top two quality bands, with a steep drop-off from the first to the second, it is crucial that the school prepares carefully for REF 2014.

With a view to ensuring that individuals make well-informed decisions when planning publications over the run up to REF 2014, the school is collecting information and carrying out consultations with potentially returnable staff, as described in Howard’s email of 3rd June. Although this is extra work, actions that improve our profile and increase the numbers of staff that can be returned will be crucial to our reputation and funding levels, respectively. As such, please take this as an opportunity to reflect on your publication practices, with a view to ensuring that the school comes out of the forthcoming REF in a strong position.

Legal Issues

This note seeks to bring to your attention two legal areas where caution is required:

- **Competition Law**: as universities have significant (and growing) flexibility in setting fees, care must be taken to ensure that we do not take actions that could be felt to reduce competition. Thus, for example, it is not appropriate to discuss future fee levels with colleagues from other universities until these are fixed and publicly available.

- **Borders Agency**: with overseas students, it is essential that the university knows of any periods of prolonged absence, and that there are never grey areas concerning registration status. For most periods in taught programmes there are mechanisms in place that should identify problems, but please ensure that the student support office is kept informed of any complications relating to research students and masters students on projects, where central day-to-day monitoring by the school is reduced.

Events

**Web sensing for real time disaster detection and tracking**  
10 Jun 11  
14:15, Atlas 1, Kilburn Building  
Prof Nigel Collier. National Institute of Informatics, Tokyo  
[Seminar homepage](#)

**Careers event for PhD researchers**  
10-15 Jun 11  
PATHWAYS 2011: the essential careers event for all PhD researchers  
*Friday 10th June*: Explore your Options A full day of Q & A panels with PhD qualified experts and professionals from a wide range of sectors including academia.

*Monday 13th June*: Succeed at interview and assessment A series of workshops and practical sessions to help you secure your ideal job, either inside
**Wednesday 15th June**: PhD and Research Career Zone
Talk to employers who recruit PhDs & researchers and learn how to market your experience effectively.

**Venue**: The University of Manchester

Free places for all University of Manchester PhD staff and researchers. One, two or all three days - your choice. Each year over 400 Manchester researchers attend. Find out more and book a place

**Beyond the PhD: Academia vs Industry**  
14:00 – Start of the session (participants introduce themselves)  
14:30 – Start of the panel discussion  
15:30 – End of Panel discussion followed by a networking session  
IT building room 407

Conventional myth that PhDs are for academia and bachelors and masters are for industry is changing as more and more companies focus on research and development activities as part of their business. Research methodologies and office culture being practised in the industry may or may not be similar to that of academia. It is interesting to see how the PhD program has helped individuals to succeed in both academia and industry and of course it might even help current PhD students to have a different perspective on their future. In the light of this, mentors of the School of Computer Science, University of Manchester, are organising an event in which people from industry and academia express their views on the subject.

**Participating People**
Dr. Daniel Owen – IBM (Manchester)  
Dr. Ugo Ekweozor – Solution Analyst at Computer Sciences Corporation  
Dr. Matt Horsnell – Research Engineer at ARM  
Dr Barry Cheetham – Senior Lecturer, University of Manchester  
Prof Ulrike Sattler – Professor, University of Manchester  
Dr Simon Harper - Lecturer, University of Manchester

Tea, coffee and snacks will be served throughout the session.

**Funding Opportunities**

**National Institutes of Health NLM Advanced Informatics for Health**  
25 Jun 11

The purpose of the NLM Advanced Informatics for Health grant is to foster exceptionally innovative informatics research that, if successful, will have an unusually high impact on a problem in health or biomedical research.

The research topic for this funding opportunity announcement (FOA) relates to computational support for complex health decisions: NLM seeks innovative applications to strengthen and support patients' decisions in complex health areas by taking advantage of advances in computational search and analysis techniques. More specifically, it seeks applications to construct an intelligent computer program that offers health advice to a person about a complex health problem, based upon knowledge from (1) the person's computer-based health records and (2) knowledge sources in the public domain. The personal information may be drawn from a personal electronic health record maintained
by the patient or from electronic medical records managed by a caregiver or hospital, or both. The intelligent computer program should be able to explain its reasoning and defend its conclusions to the patient, and state the certainty and reliability of its recommendations.

Website

Closing date: June 25th 2011

Royal Society Wolfson Research Merit Awards 7 Jul 11

Jointly funded by the Wolfson Foundation and BIS, this scheme aims to provide universities with additional support to enable them to attract to this country, or retain, respected scientists of outstanding achievement and potential. Awards are made to the university and as such researchers must remain at the university named on the application.

The focus of the award is salary enhancement. Research expenses are also considered for research costs not suitable for Research Councils' research grants applications and for overseas applicants to support integration into the UK research and funding environment.

Eligibility: Applicants can be of any nationality and must hold, or be guaranteed, a permanent post at a UK university. All applicants must have their basic salary wholly funded by the university.

Length of tenure: Five years funding after which the award holder continues with the permanent post at the host university.

Place of tenure: UK university. Please note that these awards are made to the host university and cannot be transferred to another university.

Value: Salary enhancements have been made usually in the range of £10K to £30K per annum.

Website

Closing date for approved applications: 07 July 2011