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News from Head of School**Research Distribution (“Slush”) Budgets**

The annual research distribution within the school delegates responsibility to research groups for financial decision making in relation to academic staff equipment, travel and research consumables. University level financial pressures in recent years led to a suspension of the normal distributions, and the introduction of a strict budgeting regime seemed inconsistent with the slush account model. Anyway, delegation of responsibility without the associated resources seemed unsustainable, so a proposal is now being made for [Slush Budgets](#) that will hopefully fix the problem. The proposal is necessarily complicated by the fact that expenditure from slush accounts needs to be seen in the context of the school budget. However, the proposal has the following features, which seem not to represent a worst case scenario: (i) all balances from reserve accounts in both Informatics and Computer Science have been carried forward; (ii) distributions to groups have taken place every year, with no gaps; and (iii) the budget is transparent, so groups can plan and prioritise. These proposals have (prior to a few minor changes) been reviewed both by Research Group Leaders and by the School Board.

Claiming for Internet Usage Costs via Expenses

As some of you will know, we have recently had a problem with expense claims being returned where the cost of internet access has been included. The reason for this is that the Inland Revenue have become much stricter about what they believe is a non-taxable expense. As such, we have to provide a justification for any expense claim which includes internet access charges. We have, however, managed to get the Centre to agree some generic wording for Computer Science staff to attach to expense claims which include these charges. The wording which you will need to attach is:

I can confirm that the internet access costs included in this claim were incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively associated with University business whilst away from the University. The activities of the School of Computer Science rely heavily on the internet as a means of both communication and dissemination of information related to core business, both while at the place of employment, but also, and just as importantly, whilst away from the University on University business.

PLEASE NOTE: If the access charges are particularly high, you are advised to add some further specific details about the relevance the costs to avoid any problems.

EPSRC ICT Team Visit

The EPSRC ICT programme team will be visiting us on Monday 8th and Tuesday 9th December. The objectives of the visit are to:

- build relationship with senior management and leading researchers;
- enable focussed discussions with key groups in Manchester where we can both disseminate information and receive feedback from each other on mutual areas of interest;
- raise general awareness of EPSRC and ICT priorities; and
- engage with early career researchers, encouraging research excellence.

Could I encourage as many members of staff as possible to attend the EPSRC plenary presentation on Monday 8th December, 13:00-14:30, in Kilburn Building, Room Atlas 1.

Honorary Degree for Tim Berners-Lee

Sir Tim Berners-Lee will be receiving an Honorary Degree from the University on 3rd December. Tim Berners-Lee is credited with inventing the World Wide Web, for which he designed and built the first web server and browser; he is now the Director of the World Wide Web Consortium and a Professor at both MIT and Southampton. This Honorary Degree is being awarded in connection with Digital 60 (<http://www.digital60.org/>), the 60th Anniversary of the Manchester Mark 1 Computer, with which his parents were associated.

Invitation to attend the Installation of the Chancellor

3 Dec 08

As you may be aware, Tom Bloxham has been elected Chancellor of The University of Manchester and he will be formally installed at a special ceremony taking place on Wednesday 3 December 2008. Immediately following Mr Bloxham's installation as Chancellor, he will confer honorary degrees on Mr Eddie Davies, Professor Edward Gregson and Professor Sir Bernard Lovell. As the installation of the Chancellor only occurs every seven years, the President and Vice-Chancellor would like to invite as many members of staff as possible from across the University to attend this prestigious event.

Installation of the Chancellor: 3.30pm Whitworth Hall

Honorary Degree Ceremony: 4.00pm Whitworth Hall

Celebratory Reception: 4.45-5.45pm University Place

If you are interested in attending, please request a ticket by emailing [Liz Usher](mailto:Liz.Usher@man.ac.uk). Unfortunately, as the number of tickets available will be limited, they will be allocated on a first come first served basis. We will inform you whether we have been able to allocate you a ticket. You are asked to note that the ceremony will also be web cast on the day, and details of how to view this will be made available to you in due course.

Teaching Excellence Awards

'Teaching Excellence Awards' focus on achievement in relation to teaching over recent years and involve a grant of £5,000 for recipients to further develop their teaching or their career. The university hopes to make between three and five awards annually, subject to candidates' merit, with at least one for staff in a learning support role. These awards form part of the university's teaching and learning policy framework. The university not only rewards and recognises excellence in teaching and in supporting student learning through its promotion procedures, but it also supports a number of specific schemes at both Faculty and institutional level. For instance, the university operates a separate scheme for the process to nominate candidates for a National Teaching Fellowship.

[More Information](#)

Graduation Ceremony 17th December 2008

Unfortunately, so far we've not had many members of staff indicating their intention to process with the Platform Party for CS Graduation on Wednesday 17th December, following my email to acstaff on 13th November. As it is an important event for both students and family, please let [Susie](#) know by Monday if you are able to participate in representing the School and supporting our MSc and PhD students who are graduating, so that gowns can be ordered.

Running with dinosaurs: fossils, physics and physiology 1 Dec 08

Bill Sellers, Integrative Vertebrate Biology, Faculty of Life Sciences
2-3pm GMT Room 1.10, Kilburn Building

[More Information](#)

ART: ontology based annotation of scientific papers 2 Dec 08

Dr. Larisa Soldatova, The University of Wales
Room 2.048, MIB Building

[More Information](#)

Maths and the mind 2 Dec 08

Prof Peter McOwan, Queen Mary, University of London
6.45 pm Buffet in Schuster Bldg lobby

7.30 pm talk in Rutherford Theatre, Schuster Bldg

The event is free but please email events@ncetm.org.uk to book a place.

An Inverse Problems Perspective on Supervised Learning 3 Dec 08

Lorenzo Rosasco, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
1400, IT building room 407

[More information](#)

Open Meeting with the President and Vice-Chancellor 5 Dec 08

The Global Financial Climate and its Impact on The University of Manchester
1230, Cordingley Lecture Theatre, Humanities Bridgeford Street Building

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.

New Funding and Award Opportunities

None this week

Research Awards

None this week