



Department of Computer Science HEADS OF RESEARCH GROUP MEETING

Thursday 21st November 2013
14.00 – 16.00 Malet Place Engineering 6.12a

MINUTES

Present: Massi Pontil (MP), Jun Wang (JW), Simon Arridge (SA), Duncan Brumby (DB), Olivier Delacroix (OD), Tim Weyrich (TW), John Shawe-Taylor (JST), Mark Harman (MH), Anthony Hunter (AH), David Jones (DJ), Jill Saunders (JS), Daniel Hulme (DH), Philip Treleaven (PT), Jane Butler (JB), Angela Sasse (AS)

In attendance: Melanie Johnson (MJ)

- 1. Apologies for absence: Anthony Steed (replaced by Tim Weyrich), Ingemar Cox (replaced by Jun Wang), Yvonne Rogers (replaced by Duncan Brumby), Brad Karp, Tomaso Aste (replaced by Philip Treleaven), Graham Roberts**

- 2. Confirmation of agenda**

- 3. Introduction from the new Director of Research**

MP introduced himself as the new Director of Research. He set out his main objectives while in the role: to help colleagues to increase their research output, to help the department to become the best in the UK, to promote more interest in research among groups and to increase research funding. He would also like to ensure that the best students from the department's Masters programmes proceed onto its PhD programme and to promote international collaborations. He would like to see the department compete with the very best labs.

- 4. Notice of any other business**

CS unveiled
EPSRC visit

- 5. Centres for Doctoral Training – outcome of bids and the next steps**

The Department was unsuccessful in the majority of its Doctoral Training Centre bids. However a decision has not yet been made on the Financial Computing and Quantum Technologies Doctoral Training Centre bids led Philip Treleaven.

TW suggested a number of groups could look at opportunities to collaborate with the Centre for Doctoral Training in Science and Engineering in Arts, Heritage and Archaeology (Seaha), which is jointly run by the Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment and the Centre for Digital Humanities.

JST mentioned the possibility of creating a new Masters/MRes programme, which could lead onto the PhD programme. The fees received from the new programme would fund the stipend for the PhD programme for outstanding students from the programme, so it would be cost neutral, with the fees for the PhD programme being waived by the department.

JST envisaged that the new programme be a core computer science programme with a specialist project placement. The industry element of the Masters/MRes programme might lead to industry sponsored PhD students.

It was suggested that students from the department's specialist Masters programmes would be good candidates to go onto the new programme.

6. REF update

MH commented that the department was approaching the end of the REF and that the department's submission was due to be made on the 22nd November 2013.

7. Recently awarded students

See appendix 1

8. Completion rates

AH remarked that efforts were being made to improve completion rates through a more rigorous selection process, where there is shared scrutiny of applications.

He commented that he was keen to see studentships brought into this process.

AH stressed that it is very important for first year vivas to be undertaken in the first 8 or 9 months of study. It is an important opportunity to assess whether the student has the right skills and aptitude for successful PhD studies. If there are problems, the sooner we find out, the sooner we can act on them.

He also suggested that supervisors could make use of the MPhil route for students who won't successfully complete a PhD.

JW suggested a review of PhD student progression in groups.

AS proposed that students might present before a panel of four to five academics in their group.

The Intelligent Systems group agreed to try out the group panel presentation for first year students.

9. Recently awarded research grants (OD)

OD reported that income was slightly down in comparison to the previous six month period; however, he was not overly concerned at this stage.

10. Any other business

DH gave an update on the developments in the arrangements for the proposed new Masters/MRes programme:

- HP labs have been signed up to the 2-year Master's programme
- The 2-year Masters program can allow for their year placement to be in UCL as a kind of MRes
- The new HEFCE bid win (where we're a participating department) will provide scholarships for Masters students into industry, specifically underrepresented students and particularly SME's

The 'CS unveiled' event will take place on the 9th December 2013. In the afternoon there will be the unveiling of CS research impact. There is strong encouragement to attend, especially if you are a case study owner.

The EPSRC visit will be on the 12th December 2013. Heads of Group should let Steve Marchant know if their group requires any space for the break out sessions, as soon as possible.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 27th February 2014, 2-4pm in 6.12 MPEB.