

Administration by BCS

c/o 3 Newbridge Square, Swindon SN1 1BY

COUNCIL OF PROFESSORS AND HEADS OF COMPUTING

Minutes of the Committee meeting of the Council of Professors and Heads of Computing held on **Thursday 8 October 2020** as an online meeting

PRESENT

Edmund Robinson (Chair)	Rob Aspin	James Davenport
Keith Miller (Vice Chair)	Ray Farmer	Carron Shankland
Atif Waraich	*m.c. schraefel	*James Dracott (EPSRC)
Liam Maguire	Mark Griffiths	Iain Phillips (BCS Academy Board)

IN ATTENDANCE (Secretariat)

Maxine Leslie (BCS)

APOLOGIES

Sally Fincher	Nick Savage	Paul Sant
Siobhan Devlin	Rhys Perry (EPSRC)	

*unable to join for the whole meeting

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Introductions were made and apologies for absence were received as above. Each Committee Member reported on how AY2020/21 was going so far.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (CPHC/2020/16)

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 30 June 2020 were accepted as a true record, with one omission that Iain Phillips had not been noted as attending, now corrected.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

For the matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda, ML undertook to liaise with action owners for updates on their actions. **ACTION: Secretariat/Members**

4. EPSRC Update (CPHC/2020/19)

This item was taken after item 5.1 Chair's communications

J Dracott gave a verbal update and a written report which has been distributed to all CPHC Members.

Future plans for spending are on-going pending the spending review. Digital is clearly a priority for UKRI and EPSRC including activity in AI and J Dracott/R Perry will forward information to the CPHC mailing list once available. All government departments have been putting forward plans for research spend. Currently looking at duplications in R&D (eg, overlap between DCMS and UKRI).

5. REGULAR REPORTS

5.1 Chair's Communications – The Chair reported that he had attended an EPC meeting the day before and interesting discussion points included the organisation of the EPC conference, conversations with government and planning a response to the Augar review. There are some concerns in relation to differential fees and metrics in looking into graduate level employment and how engineering will fare under this heading. It may be worth CPHC considering a response to this, especially in the context of CS graduate employment. There was positive news in the PM's announcement on training packages and budget for FE.

The Chair is also on the IoC2 Writing Group, which is continuing with input from government but no funding at present. It is looking at a restructured model for university education: smaller packages that can be recombined. This is a more specification-based approach and there was a suggestion that this be included in the spending review.

The Chair thanked K Miller, m.c. schraefel and N Savage for organising and running the first roundtables/seminar sessions, those which have run already have been successful as there is a lot of appetite for sharing expertise and knowledge. There are concerns over labs and how to run them, which is still being worked through, and concern over student numbers, although this has held up well across the discipline. Some institutions have had a 50% increase in acceptances, while others are worried about their students going to local competitors.

J Dracott joined the meeting at this point

Members discussed the promotion of the *Building the UK women into Computer Science Experience* seminar series being run by m.c. schraefel. The possibilities for writing press releases and re-tweeting articles were discussed and EPSRC and BCS staff present undertook to see what could be done on this. C Shankland also offered to circulate information to the Cygnets mailing list and her Scottish contacts [*post meeting note: actions complete*]

5.2 Treasurer's Report – R Farmer reported that expenditure is down and Members queried whether anything could be done for the Membership in terms of subscription fees. It was noted that the Committee had agreed at the May 2020 to retain the current fee for 2020/21. It was suggested that maybe a one-off discount of 50% could be offered on fees for 2021/22. ML undertook to add the subject of fees for 2021/22 to the draft agenda for discussion at the December meeting [*action complete*].

5.3 Learning Development Group Report – S Devlin sent her apologies for the meeting, but provided the following update (*edited*):

We were stalled by the effects of COVID-19; however, there are still contacts and data from I Allison's project last year if the Committee wishes to continue with it. There is also some appetite in the confidence and creativity group, but it might be preferable to pick up the reins of the coffee table discussion hosted by S Devlin and P Sant with Heads of Learning and Teaching, particularly as this new way of learning and teaching is not going away soon and there is much to follow up on. There were around half a dozen people who contributed well in the meeting and they would likely want to be further involved (workloads permitting). A general call could also be sent out.

5.4 Secretary's Report – Nothing to report.

5.5 UKCRC Report – E Robinson reported that there had not been a UKCRC Executive Committee meeting since the joint meeting on 30 June 2020 and therefore there was nothing to report.

5.6 EPC Report – See [item 5.1 Chair's communication](#) above.

5.7 Welsh HoS – M Griffiths reported that £27M of funding had been made available by the Welsh government for maintaining research and teaching during the Covid crisis. Also, help with maintaining jobs and for students experiencing hardship. There is specific funding for research related to Covid, including test development and data analysis.

Just entered the third year of implementation of Degree Apprenticeships in Wales. This is targeted at engineering, digital and advanced manufacturing and it all looks promising. In Wales, Degree Apprenticeships are in the last intake which is specifically funded as a pilot and stakeholders are awaiting news on the full roll out for next year.

The Chair indicated that although a lot of courses in England had been developed, QMUL has found that companies are putting Degree Apprentices on furlough, leaving courses with some issues. There is also a reluctance of companies to commit to apprenticeships at present.

M Griffiths had not seen furlough, but there had been a reduction of half in the number of companies coming in. Unexpectedly the smaller companies are accepting apprentices whereas big multinationals have said no at the last minute. So, it is hard to predict who affected most.

5.8 NI HoS – L Maguire reported that the city deal projects are taking up a lot of time. In local government, the digital section has held up well due to the need for digital upskilling and recruitment has been strong in short (60 credit) courses. There have been recent consultations on AI and the Turing review. It is anticipated that 2021 will be challenging in the context of Brexit, and work is continuing between Ulster and Queen's and the island of Ireland.

5.9 Scottish HoS (CPHC/2020/20) – RECEIVED and NOTED the paper. C Shankland reported on the SICSA conference and two reviews which had been published in Scotland. In addition, the Ada Scot Fest had been held on Ada Lovelace day, which brought together resources to support EDI (see <https://ada.scot/>).

5.10 Reports from Other Organisations & Activities (IE/PICTFOR; Distinguished dissertations; IoC) (CPHC/2020/12)

On the subject of BCS, I Phillips reported that the review of academic accreditation had been the subject of a press release in July and was continuing with an aggressive schedule. A steering committee had been formed and a further update was expected at the next BCS Academy Board meeting on 21 October.

I Phillips indicated that he had chaired the Distinguished Dissertations committee for 3 years and was now looking for a volunteer to take over. There have been 18 entries this year which are with the first set of reviewers, and the second set are due by Xmas with a decision to follow in the spring, which is slightly behind schedule. No-one on the DisDis committee has stepped up to take over. It was agreed that IP, the CPHC Chair and the Academy Board Chair should discuss how to handle the appointment of a new DisDis Committee Chair, possibly after the next Academy Board meeting. **ACTION: Chair/I Phillips/(A Irons)**

6. SUBSCRIPTIONS (CPHC/2020/18)

RECEIVED and NOTED the paper.

7. CONSULTATIONS & RESPONSES

7.1 Establishing a joint consultation panel – nothing to report.

7.2 Advocacy and training for responses & government enquiries – S Fincher had sent apologies for the meeting, but had emailed in advance to say that she was in conversation

with Chris Johnson (UKCRC) about holding a training day and will send an update following their next meeting at the end of October. *[post meeting note: online training event to be held on 15 January 2021]*

[main items of business]

8. PROGRAMME of WORK

8.1 Planning for the year – Members were keen to follow up with further Head of Department/Directors of Teaching/Research round table sessions. It will be good to get dates into diaries to keep the momentum going and Members undertook to discuss this offline, allowing 2/3 weeks of lead time to promote each session. **ACTION: Members**

It would also be good to involve EPSRC in research discussions. J Dracott confirmed his willingness to be involved in sessions relating to research and the Chair undertook to add J Dracott to the DoR distribution list. **ACTION: Chair/J Dracott**

8.2 Future conference strategy

This item was taken early. m.c. schraefel joined during this item

R Aspin reported that his former HEI, Salford will not be able to host the 2021 conference. Members discussed options and agreed that it would be important to plan for a virtual as well as a physical conference in 2021, particularly as any last-minute physical event cancellation following the 2020 cancellation without contingency would look like poor planning.

Possible options for a physical conference were Liverpool John Moores University (via A Waraich), QMUL (via the Chair) and the University of Bath (via J Davenport), but this would be likely to be in the 2021/22 academic year. The 2020 conference plan could be rolled over as it was fairly well defined. R Aspin undertook to liaise with potential hosts on a physical conference. **ACTION: R Aspin**

It will be important to plan out a series of online events, including the structure and timing. CPHC Members may be more likely to participate if they do not have to take a block of 2-3 days away from their institutions. However, the downsides of number of registrations vs actual attendees and the absence of networking were acknowledged. Members agreed to start planning virtual events for the second half of the 2020/21 academic year. A useful topic for a virtual conference might be sharing practice on online learning. A well-designed virtual event could reasonably easily be translated into a physical event. **ACTION: Chair/K Miller**

It was noted that the AGM would still need to be held in March/April 2021 and it would be important to arrange it to coincide with another event, to maximise Member attendance.

ACTION: Secretariat/A Waraich

m.c. schraefel reported that there were healthy registrations for the *Building the UK Women into Computer Science Experience* seminar series commencing on 14 October. It may be our experience with this structure of events will help inform planning. For this series of topics, one idea was to have an on-going series of local events in spring 2021. One possible structure was a series of mornings across a week, targeting specific topics and energising the best person from the group to go back to the community to spread the message.

8.3 Workshop Programme:

- **LDG [S Devlin]** – see [item 5.3](#) above
- **Pipeline [N Savage]** – nothing to report
- **EDI Seminar Series inc embedding EDI master class [m.c. schraefel]** – see items [5.1](#) and [8.2](#) above
- **Outreach Network [S Fincher]** - nothing to report

9. MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS – October/November

It was agreed that summaries of the seminar series should be circulated via the Member Communications. **ACTION: m.c. schraefel**

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Review of Subject Benchmark statement for Master's degrees – not discussed at this meeting.

10.2 Roles on external committees – although S Fincher had sent some notes on this in advance of the meeting, due to limited time it was agreed to defer this discussion until the next meeting.

Outstanding Actions from Committee Meetings – 8 October 2020, 30 June 2020, 11 May 2020 & 3 February 2020

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETING – 8 OCTOBER 2020				
MATTERS ARISING Actions	3	Liaise with action owners below for updates	M Leslie/ Members	On-going
REGULAR REPORTS DisDis report	5.10	Discuss how to handle the appointment of a new DisDis Committee Chair, possibly after the next Academy Board meeting	Chair/ I Phillips/ (A Irons)	On-going
PROGRAMME OF WORK Planning for the year	8.1	Liaise on further HoD/DoT/DoR round table sessions	Members	On-going
Future conference strategy	8.2	Add J Dracott to the DoR distribution list	Chair	On-going
		Liaise with potential physical 2021 conference hosts (LJMU/QMUL/Bath) on feasibility/availability	R Aspin	On-going
		Start planning virtual events for second half of 2020/21 academic year	Chair/ K Miller	On-going
		Arrange 2021 AGM to coincide with another event to maximise Member attendance	M Leslie/ A Waraich	On-going
MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS	9	Circulate summaries of seminar series to the Membership	m.c. schraefel	On-going
CPHC-UKCRC COLLABORATIVE WORKING – 30 JUNE 2020				
Collaborative activities	A	Liaise on planning a jointly promoted variant of the 'A Chair in 10 Years' workshop which is research themed.	N Savage/ J Hillston/ E Robinson	Complete
		Liaise with J Dracott on MSc programmes in AI and developing material in ethics	E Robinson	On-going
		Consider role of BCS Academy Board in supporting UK research in liaison with UKCRC	(A Irons)	On-going
OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETING – 30 JUNE 2020				
REGULAR REPORTS Treasurer's report	5.2	Liaise with LDG to brainstorm activities to provide budget for	R Farmer/ S Devlin/ P Sant	On-going
REGULAR REPORTS Treasurer's report	5.1	Meet to brainstorm possible LDG work for investing subscription funds	S Devlin/ R Farmer/ Members	On-going
EPC report	5.6	Include information on meeting practical experience requirements for engineering accreditation in a monthly update to Members	R Farmer	On-going

SUBSCRIPTIONS	6	Forward outstanding debtors for 2019/20 to R Farmer to chase	M Leslie/ R Farmer	Complete/ On-going
CONSULTATIONS & RESPONSES Establishing a joint consultation panel	7.2	Report on further progress on advocacy and training for responses & government enquiries	J Dracott	On-going
MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS	9	Contact S Devlin about whether learning resources online is to be circulated	K Miller	On-going
OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETING – 11 MAY 2020				
REGULAR REPORTS Treasurer's report	5.2	Let R Farmer know of any suggestions for activities that require budget to be allocated	Members	On-going
		Liaise with S Devlin to draft a list of ideas for activities along with evaluation criteria	R Farmer/ S Devlin	On-going
ANY OTHER BUSINESS	11.2	Check whether the award of an annual commemorative prize is permissible under the CC and OSCR rules	R Farmer	On-going
		Explore how the proposed prize would be administered and liaise with the DisDis Committee Chair, Iain Phillips	Chair	On-going
OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETING – 3 FEBRUARY 2020				
REGULAR REPORTS: Chair's Communications LDG Report	5.1	Liaise with BCS Academy Board Chair and UKCRC Chair about ways of working together	E Robinson	On-going
	5.4	Look at possibility of staging a second automation workshop to help write a funding bid to IoC/OFS	(I Allison)	On-going
		Talk to UKCRC Chair about CPHC/UKCRC roles	Chair	On-going
SUBSCRIPTIONS	6	Send reminder to University of Bristol for their 2018/19 to check if they are resigning or continuing their subscription	M Leslie/ R Farmer	Complete/ On-going

FUTURE MEETINGS

All online and commencing at 11.00am, unless otherwise stated

COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2020	CONFERENCE DATES
NOTE DIFFERENT DATE: Wednesday 9 December 2020	To be confirmed
COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021[#]	
Monday 1 February 2021 Thursday 13 May 2021 *Tuesday 29 June 2021 Tuesday 5 October 2021 Wednesday 8 December 2021	

Physical meetings to be located at BCS Offices, London and commencing at 11am unless otherwise stated

**To be co-located with UKCRC Executive Committee meeting starting with lunch at 13:00 if possible; BCS rooms subject to availability on these dates*