

Administration by BCS
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COUNCIL OF PROFESSORS AND HEADS OF COMPUTING

Minutes of the Committee meeting of the Council of Professors and Heads of Computing held on **Wednesday 9 December 2020** as an online meeting

PRESENT

Edmund Robinson (Chair)	Rob Aspin	James Davenport
Ray Farmer	Sally Fincher	Mark Griffiths
Keith Miller (Vice Chair)	Rhys Perry (EPSRC)	Carron Shankland
Iain Phillips (BCS Academy Board)	Atif Waraich	

IN ATTENDANCE (Secretariat)

Maxine Leslie (BCS)

APOLOGIES

m.c. schraefel	Nick Savage	Paul Sant
Siobhan Devlin	James Dracott (EPSRC)	Liam Maguire

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received as above.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (CPHC/2020/21)

The minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 8 October 2020 were accepted as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Matters arising, not covered elsewhere on the agenda were as follows.

8 October 2020

Regular reports – DisDis report (item 5.10): Members discussed how to handle the appointment of a new DisDis Committee Chair. The current Chair, I Phillips indicated that everyone that he has asked so far has declined. There were inevitable delays in the current competition timetable due to Covid and work pressures. The Chair will liaise with I Phillips and the Academy Board Chair, Alastair Irons, in the New Year on how the administration of the Distinguished Dissertations competition will work in future.

ACTION: Chair/I Phillips/(A Irons)

30 June 2020 CPHC-UKCRC Collaborative Working

Collaborative activities (item A): the Chair and J Davenport had discussed MSc programmes in AI and developing material in ethics. It was noted that more materials were available through the IoC and it would be good if these could be shared more widely.

30 June 2020

Member communications (item 9): K Miller had contacted S Devlin about whether learning resources online will be circulated. It would be helpful to get more promotional material out.

4. EPSRC Update

R Perry gave a verbal update and subsequently provided a written report which has been distributed to all CPHC Members and is [appended](#) to these minutes.

Currently, there were not that many funding calls open. Changes have been made to the UKRI website which should make it easier to identify funding opportunities as they are now located in one place.

J Davenport asked whether there was news about the next step on the Future Leaders Fellowships Round 6. R Perry replied that there were no concrete plans as yet and it was uncertain whether there will be a short hiatus between schemes, particularly in the context of the spending review and budget allocation across UKRI; however, funded EPSRC Fellowships were continuing.

5. REGULAR REPORTS

5.1 Chair's Communications – The Chair reported that there had been EPC meetings on 7 July and 7 October. Also, the UKCRC Executive Committee on 27 October, from which there was little to report. From EPC, there is quite a lot of concern about university funding and the government attitude towards university provision, which is also reflected in discussions via the IoC, who are attempting to put together a bid for a second tranche of funding. The IoC's current funding ends in March 2021 and currently attracts matched funding from universities. The government cut short the spending review, so that the DfE has committed 1 year's funding, but the future is uncertain. A three year spending review had been planned for the next calendar year. It is understood that university funding still a concern for DfE, particularly in the areas of value for money, equality of access and both social and regional deprivation. There is also concern about the likelihood of a huge increase in unemployment in the UK, which will lead to a large number of people looking for career changes, in turn feeding through into pressures on universities to do things differently, and focus on a need to engage with local areas. It is possible that levels and methods of funding will be looked at. The investment in building and senior staff salaries is not viewed favourably and it will be important to monitor the situation and respond wherever possible, particularly as levels of DfE funding are significant.

The roundtable discussions have been well received and there is an appetite for more. Thanks were expressed to m.c. schraefel for organising a very interesting and effective series on diversity. The format of relatively short meetings over a few weeks seemed to work well and it had been easier to secure good speakers for online meetings. Efforts have shifted to following through on this. Gender diversity has been a topic for a long time, the needle is moving so we need to be offering something that's different. The Chair also thanked the coffee table organisers, S Fincher for organising the Policy Engagement event on 15 January 2021 and N Savage and m.c. schraefel for the Chair in 10 years events.

C Shankland noted that in Scotland, there is a current tender to develop role modelling initiatives, looking at which kinds of initiatives work in particular universities in particular geographical areas, and a range of other parameters eg, more women from middle classes go to Russell Group universities. This will be run at the beginning of next year and it would be good to see it rolled out to outside of Scotland to gather more evidence. It was AGREED that this would be useful to take forward, particularly as industry has expressed interest in investing in this area. The Chair and C Shankland undertook to continue this discussion further.

ACTION: Chair/C Shankland

J Davenport flagged one of the findings from the IoC/Deloitte survey related to the image of the industry and concluded that academia must be more robust and proactive in looking at its own image. This also relates to diversity and US colleagues during the

Seminar Series communicated what had worked for them, but this does not necessarily mean it will work in the UK. I Phillips flagged that EDI issues are prevalent in the IT community and also more widely across institutions and the interaction of different schemes is causing difficulty, flooding the market with different workshops. It was agreed that there is inclusion initiative fatigue, with people having to make choices about which one to do, and often working at cross purposes.

This was also true of structural racism. A Waraich noted that following the UK report, there should be an imperative to pressure institutions to enact and properly resource the recommendations. In difficult times, it seems that there is little impetus for change. K Miller noted that the attainment gap problem was being used as a way to push action on resourcing.

R Farmer flagged the OfS data science project, which involved 11 universities and provided scholarships for female and BAME students. Perhaps a significant scholarship programme could be set up. This has previously failed as it has been too small scale.

Any initiatives would need funding as currently staff are only undertaking core activities, as there is no spare time.

5.2 Treasurer's Report – R Farmer reported that BCS had provided an audit sheet for the current state of play with the CPHC bank account and the balance is currently £127k, which is significantly greater than this time last year. It is really important to ensure that expenditure is for activities that are worthwhile and effective for CS, eg, employing a couple of research associates to 'make things happen'. It is crucial not to build up too much cash in the bank and it was queried whether there was a maximum in the Charities Commission or OSCR rules and the bank guarantee limit (£110k and £85k respectively). R Farmer undertook to check this and the Secretariat to check the situation with the Lloyds bank government guarantee. **ACTION: R Farmer/M Leslie**

5.3 Learning Development Group Report – S Devlin had sent her apologies for the meeting, but circulated an email to CPHC Officers about the actions related to discussions about providing funds for LDG activities. This discussion is still pending.

ACTION: R Farmer/S Devlin

Via email, S Devlin indicated that plans have slipped during the year largely due to the pandemic. There is a lot of feedback that could be captured now that we are approaching the end of the first semester in 'new approach' mode (rather than the reactive mode from March to May) and this could be a starting point, either via a survey or another coffee-table discussion. In the last meeting update, there were outcomes of the coffee table discussion that S Devlin and P Sant held that could lead to useful projects and also people who may be happy to be involved. It may be that there are some ideas arising from m.c. schraefel's seminar series that also could use some LDG support/resourcing, such as curriculum change.

5.4 Secretary's Report – A Waraich reported that he was receiving some error messages on the CPHC conference JISCMAIL list, which were being investigated by Jisc.

5.5 UKCRC Report – See item 5.1 [Chair's report](#) above.

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

5.7 Welsh HoS – M Griffiths reported that activities were fairly quiet, with university-wide issues being discussed and acted on, rather than at department level. There will be a range of seminars in the New Year to share lessons learned and best practice. Some people are against online learning, but it is generally felt that elements of this are useful to put in a box for the next academic year. The question was asked about whether English institutions could do anything to help as Westminster is very England-centric.

However, it was noted that Wales is very focussed on issues due to devolution. One problem is that some institutions have a lot of face-to-face teaching, meaning there is a need to repeat lectures, alongside providing online learning. This is hard on staff, increasing the workload. One of the biggest problems is the changes in policy, which happen at different times, coupled with unclear government messaging.

5.8 NI HoS – No report.

5.9 Scottish HoS – C Shankland reported a similar situation in Scotland, to that in Wales.

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

BCS Academy Board – R Farmer had some notes from the last meeting and undertook to forward them to the Secretariat for circulating to the Committee.

ACTION: R Farmer/M Leslie

I Phillips had also been in attendance and reported that the review of BCS accreditation was on-going and that he had taken part in a focus group the week before, and that discussions took place under Chatham House rules. It was thought that the withdrawal of Durham from BCS academic accreditation was indicative of the value placed on it by institutions. S Fincher had participated in a 'vocal critic' focus group and felt that there was little in the way of value for employers.

Item 11.1 Committee roles was taken at this point in the meeting – see [below](#)

6. SUBSCRIPTION UPDATE AND 2021/22 FEE REVIEW (CPHC/2020/23)

RECEIVED and NOTED the paper. The Chair asked Members to read the contents of the paper and R Farmer and the Secretariat undertook to take discussions on the 2021/22 fees offline with Committee Members.

ACTION: R Farmer/M Leslie

For Birmingham City University, a payment of £720 was made on 23 November, which we believe is a duplicate payment. BCU owes CPHC for 2 years @ £540 each, and if we keep this payment for one and part payment for the other, they will still owe us £288. The Committee was asked to discuss whether to write off the outstanding £288 and Members AGREED that this should be written off. Secretariat to liaise with P Henderson to arrange to write this off *[post meeting note: action complete]*.

7. CONSULTATIONS & RESPONSES

7.1 Establishing a joint consultation panel – nothing to report yet.

7.2 Advocacy and training for responses & government enquiries – See item 5.1 [Chair's report](#) above.

8. CPHC/BCS 2021 Contract

The Chair reported that he had received the draft contract from BCS and following consultation with CPHC Officers, proposed to accept the terms of the contract for 2021. Members AGREED and the Secretariat undertook to arrange for signatures via the BCS Legal team.

ACTION: M Leslie

A Waraich left the meeting at this point.

[main items of business]

9. PROGRAMME of WORK

9.1 Planning for the year – see 9.2 below.

9.2 2021 Conference event(s) (*this item was taken after item 9.3*) – R Aspin reported that it would be useful to discuss whether a face-to-face conference event should be planned for September 2021. J Davenport confirmed that the University of Bath would be willing to take a refundable booking for September. K Miller reminded Members that the AGM will need to be held in April 2021 and it will be important to add value and maximise attendance by running this alongside a virtual event, perhaps following on from any HoD/DoT/DoR events held in January, February or March.

R Aspin undertook to liaise with E Robinson, m.c. schraefel and the Secretary A Waraich on this.

ACTION: R Aspin/m.c. schraefel/A Waraich/Chair

9.3 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 item 5.1 [Chair's report](#) above.
- **Outreach Network [S Fincher]** (*this item was taken before item 9.2*) – S Fincher reported that work on this had been halted by the pandemic, with the Swansea workshop having to be cancelled and the survey on hold. S Fincher had been working with Jane Waite, Irene Bell, Faron Moller and Peter Donaldson to revitalise the survey and undertook to circulate a reminder to CPHC. It would be good to invest some money in this activity which will be relaunched in 2021.

The Chair was keen to put together another round of coffee table discussions including topics such as lessons learned from Covid and how to fund research going forward.

10. MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS – December 2020/January 2021

December – the Chair to write a communication to members about the ‘state of union’, to be checked with the Committee first.

January – R Aspin to write to Members about the conference plan and process.

February – E Robinson to contact Anne Nortcliffe about communications on interesting data about whether secondary school students are able to learn CS in particular areas (Shadbolt data and IoC analysis of Go.Data).

ACTION: Chair/R Aspin

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Roles on External Committees (CPHC/2020/25) *This item was taken following item 5.10*

S Fincher indicated that this is an important area but CPHC is not good at continuity and handover of external roles. Up until recently most roles have been the responsibility of the Chair, so it would be good to explore how responsibilities can be more evenly distributed. The following suggestions were made:

Informatics Europe: remain with the Chair

EPC: Vice Chair or Secretary

UKCRC: as there is an aim of CPHC and UKCRC to pull closer together, we will need strong representation on the UKCRC Executive Committee. Certainly links between CPHC research network and the Exec would help.

BCS Academy Board: Chair of LDG, but maybe not the CPHC Chair (post-Covid)

Outreach: Chair or Vice Chair

Members discussed links with UKCRC and agreed that it would be good to foster more formal links, specifically to liaise with EPSRC/UKRI, learned societies (RS/RAEng) and engage with government consultations. It was noted that UKCRC is not financially secure as it does not have membership fee income. K Miller indicated that there was strong interest through the coffee table session for a research network.

The Chair and S Fincher undertook to liaise on developing this and the other role suggestions into concrete proposals for the next meeting. **ACTION: Chair/S Fincher**

11.2 CaSE subscription 2021 – Members AGREED to the renewal of this subscription for another year *[post meeting note: action complete]*.

Outstanding Actions from Committee Meetings – 9 December 2020, 8 October 2020, 30 June 2020, 11 May 2020 & 3 February 2020

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETING – 9 DECEMBER 2020				
MATTERS ARISING 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 (Carried over from 8/10)
REGULAR REPORTS Chair's communications	5.1	Discuss possible research into role modelling initiatives to complement activities in Scotland, involving employers	Chair/C Shankland	On-going
LDG report	5.3	Meet to brainstorm possible LDG work for investing subscription funds	S Devlin/ R Farmer/ Members	On-going (Carried over from 30/6)
BCS Academy report	5.10	Circulate notes of interest to CPHC from the last Academy Board meeting	R Farmer	On-going
SUBSCRIPTION UPDATE & 21/22 FEE REVIEW	6	Raise issue of 2021/22 CPHC fees with Committee Members	R Farmer/ M Leslie	On-going
PROGRAMME OF WORK 2021 Conference event(s)	9.2	Liaise on setting up AGM alongside a virtual event, in April 2021	R Aspin/ m.c. schraefel/ A Waraich/ Chair	On-going
MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS	10	Contact Anne Nortcliffe (Canterbury Christchurch) about interesting data about whether secondary school students are able to learn CS in particular areas	Chair/ R Aspin	On-going
AOB Roles on External Committees	11.1	Develop concrete proposals on external committee roles for consideration at the next meeting	Chair/ S Fincher	On-going
OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETING – 8 OCTOBER 2020				
PROGRAMME OF WORK Planning for the year	8.1	Liaise on further HoD/DoT/DoR round table sessions	Members	On-going
		Add J Dracott to the DoR distribution list	Chair	On-going
Future conference strategy	8.2	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

CPHC-UKCRC COLLABORATIVE WORKING – 30 JUNE 2020				
Collaborative activities	A	Consider role of BCS Academy Board in supporting UK research in liaison with UKCRC	(A Irons)	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
ANY OTHER BUSINESS	11.2	<p>Check whether the award of an annual commemorative prize is permissible under the CC and OSCR rules</p> <p>Explore how the proposed prize would be administered and liaise with the DisDis Committee Chair, Iain Phillips</p>	R Farmer Chair	On-going On-going
OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETING – 3 FEBRUARY 2020				
REGULAR REPORTS: Chair's Communications	5.1	Liaise with BCS Academy Board Chair and UKCRC Chair about ways of working together	E Robinson	On-going

FUTURE MEETINGS

All online and commencing at 11.00am, unless otherwise stated

COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021	CONFERENCE DATES
Monday 1 February 2021 (Online) Thursday 13 May 2021 *Tuesday 29 June 2021 Tuesday 5 October 2021 Wednesday 8 December 2021	To be confirmed

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*

EPSRC/UKRI Update for CPHC December 2020

Coronavirus updates

- The agile rolling call for COVID-19 projects and the opportunity to switch existing funding to tackle the pandemic both come to an end on 15 December 2020. After this date, all proposals for COVID-19 related projects will be embraced back into UKRI normal funding streams. As well as standard funding schemes, seed funding will be made available for urgent applications. For more information on how applicants with ideas to tackle the impact of the virus can apply in the new year, please see [here](#).
- UKRI has [published its response](#) to an open letter published by the University and College Union, addressing support for UKRI-funded doctoral students.

New Turing AI fellows announced

Fifteen researchers have been awarded Turing AI Acceleration fellowships. The fellowships are supported by a £20 million government investment, being delivered by UKRI, to lead innovative and creative AI research with transformative impact. For more information see [here](#).

New Trustworthy Autonomous Systems projects launched

[Six nodes](#) have been launched as part of the UKRI Trustworthy Autonomous Systems (TAS) programme, and will undertake fundamental, creative and multidisciplinary research in various areas key to ensure autonomous systems can be built in a way society can trust and use.

ORCID reviewer recognition for UKRI reviewers

The implementation of [ORCID reviewer recognition](#) went live in November. It will enable UKRI review contributions to be publicly displayed without compromising the anonymity and confidentiality of the assessment process. This will be done by issuing a 'review credit' that will be displayed in individual reviewers ORCID profiles. UKRI was one of the first funders to sign the ORCID open letter, a commitment to follow best practice in the use of ORCID. Enhanced integration of ORCID in our systems (Joint Electronic Submission system) is also a key part of our ambition to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and promote open research across our communities.

New forum for tackling bullying and harassment

The [Forum for Tackling Bullying and Harassment](#) in Research and Innovation brings together funding, policy and regulatory organisations, both in the UK and internationally, which will work together at a system level by:

- campaigning at a sector-level to raise awareness and bring about culture change, focusing on prevention and a healthy research culture
- sharing and disseminating learning and practice across organisations
- promoting collaboration to maximise the impact of policies and resources and reduce bureaucracy wherever possible.

The initial membership will be reviewed annually and organisations wishing to work with the forum are invited to contact the chair via equality@ukri.org.

Live Calls:

- [Future Leaders Fellowships: Round 6](#) - This fellowship is open to researchers and/or innovators with outstanding potential, who are transitioning to or establishing independence. Funding is available to support ambitious research/innovation programmes across UKRI's remit, and fellows benefit from outstanding support to develop their careers. Deadline for outline proposals is 10 December 2020. Deadline for full applications is 19 January 2021.
- [Digital economy telling tales of engagement competition](#) - Three prizes of £10,000 (18 months, 100% full economic cost) are available to support researchers or users from any career stage and in any sector to fund an engagement activity that will further tell the story of their previously funded DE research grant impact in a creative way. Closing date is 16 December 2020.
- For more opportunities please see the UKRI Funding finder: <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/>

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