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 **Monday 8 July 2024** held online

PRESENT

Nicky Danino (Chair)	*Rob Aspin	Kevin Chalmers
*Paul Sant	*Steven Bradley	*Rebecca Strachan
Damien Foster	Silvester Czanner	Dharam Shadija
Jonathan Wallace	James Davenport	Funmi Obembe

IN ATTENDANCE (Observers/secretariat)

Laura McDonnell (EPSRC)   *Daniela Tresoldi (EPSRC)   Maxine Leslie (BCS - sec)
*joined for part of meeting

APOLOGIES

Hayley Burns	Kate Hone	Haris Mouratidis
Ben Scott (EPSRC)	Fiona McNeill (BCS Academy)	

1. **WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS**

   The Chair welcomed F Obembe to the meeting following co-opting to the Committee. It is hoped that the other two newly co-opted members could be welcomed to the next meeting in October.

   There were no conflicts of interest and apologies for absence were received as above.

2. **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2024 [CPHC/2024/05]**

   The minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 15 May 2024 were accepted as a true record and approved for transfer to the website *[action complete]*. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda are below.

   2.1 **EDI values (May2024.1)** – these actions had been completed, but it was acknowledged that discussions would continue. Members discussed the various terms used for equality, diversity and inclusion and agreed to use the term Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as it was the most widely used.

   2.2 **Joint Summit: venues (May2024.7)** – the suggestion of Sheffield Hallam University for the 2025 Summit will be raised at the Summit wash up meeting on 22 July. Members discussed possible hosts for the 2026 Summit in Scotland and agreed that it would be important to choose a venue that is easily accessible and therefore would try contacts at institutions in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

   2.3 **Workshop programme (May2024.10)** – for the action to collect ideas for workshops from members, N Danino expressed concern about possible duplication with any BCS workshop programme. Ideas discussed included 'future leaders' to broaden the scope of 'A Chair in 10 Years' and professorships via a non-research route. As discussed

previously, more traction will be possible if workshops are linked into outside events such as panels. Members agreed that a couple of leadership workshops a year held online would be more helpful than running it at an annual event and would ensure more regular engagement with CPHC members. This action was retained and additionally, N Danino undertook to work with Laure Barker (BCS Head of Higher Education) on a co-ordinated workshop programme. **ACTION: N Danino**

In addition, N Danino will work with M Leslie to set up a shared document (spreadsheet) for possible workshop topics and proposed dates for them.
ACTION: N Danino/M Leslie

2.4 **EPSRC update (Oct2023.1)** – for the action on providing information to CPHC on the application changes, L McDonnell indicated that EPSRC can advise institutions on an individual basis and if there is something that EPSRC can do to support, please do ask. There is more leeway with learned societies, eg running mock panels or sessions on grant types or early careers. These could be half day workshops delivered either F2F or online. All requests would be welcomed (laura.mcdonnell@epsrc.ukri.org).

2.5 **EPSRC update (Oct2023.2)** – for the action on working on EPSRC's EDI data for gender and emerging talent, L McDonnell noted that all successful applicant data was on the website: EPSRC Funding Application Outcomes | Tableau Public. N Danino and L McDonnell undertook to catch up offline to decide on what data would be helpful.
ACTION:N Danino/L McDonnell

2.6 **Strategic Plan Document (Dec2022.1)** – members agreed to use the original version of this document as a starting point.

3. **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

3.1 **Review of CPHC constitution** – K Chalmers proposed that a shared document be set up for Committee members to provide comments and suggested amendments. He would then write to the Charity Commission to indicate that CPHC members are to be consulted on possible changes. These will then be presented to members at the AGM, outlining the rationale for the proposed changes. This will also be an opportunity to update some of the wording, the voting conditions, terms of office limits and eligibility for individual CPHC membership in the context of changes to academic management structures.

Members agreed to discuss possible changes to the Constitution at the next meeting in October. **ACTION: Members**

4. **EPSRC/UKRI UPDATE**

See also item 2 above, matters arising. L McDonnell confirmed that now that the General Election period is over, calls are back to being advertised. A Spending Review is expected and there are some changes due to the change in government, but EPSRC/UKRI is still delivering and it is business as usual (see website for further information).

N Danino sent congratulations to Ben Scott who had recently been promoted and welcomed Daniela Tresoldi who would be attending future meetings in Ben's place. D Tresoldi (in the chat) indicated that she had to leave the meeting at this point, thanking members and offering to follow up on the EDI discussion (daniela.tresoldi@epsrc.ukri.org). See also item 9.1 for discussion on the proposal for an EPSRC Network+.

5. **2025 JOINT SUMMIT UPDATE**

As previously noted, representatives of the three organisations were due to meet for a review meeting on 22 July until which there was nothing to report.

6. **RECRUITMENT & RETENTION (INC ACADEMIC STAFF/PHD STUDENTS)**

R Aspin reported that he and Alastair Irons had recently talked about sending a letter to the new government, either an open letter or privately from all three bodies to express concern about the crisis in recruitment and retention in the sector, including rate of churn, salary concerns and the lack of interest in vacant positions from UK-based academics. It will be important to ensure that this is worded tactfully from the point of view of CPHC members. A Irons had undertaken to raise this with the Academy Board.

P Sant indicated (in the chat) that this links into the leadership/management and the expectations of what it involves alongside activities such as research. There are frustrations that a Spine Point model means it can take 7 years to progress and many do not want to wait that long. Furthermore, many get frustrated with being overloaded with teaching in the first few years, especially for a newly establishing department taking time to get the staff numbers growing. D Foster noted that because of the degrading of student fees the amount of time for unfunded research is reduced.

K Chalmers expressed concern that such a communication may not land well with the new government given their initial focus and lack of spare funds. But addressing the pipeline from undergrad to postgrad to employment is key. Very few institutions seem able to support computing PhD students. Therefore making representations now is crucial as if the problem is not fixed now there will be nobody to ultimately support the UK's R&D ambitions. Part of this is to ensure that the culture in Departments enables PhD students to be trained for an academic career.

N Danino and R Aspin undertook to keep members informed about discussions with Alastair Irons on this.   **ACTION: N Danino/R Aspin**

7. **THE ROLE OF AI IN COMPUTER SCIENCE [CPHC/2024/15]**

J Davenport presented the paper, written following a communication from Informatics Europe about their annual ECSS meeting in Malta (28-30 October 2024). The paper asks whether CPHC should have a position on Artificial Intelligence, particularly in the context of the health of the academic subject.

D Foster noted that there are two aspects to this: firstly, how departments cope with students having access to LLM in relation to assessments and supporting them to use these properly and secondly, understanding how industry is using AI in their work in order to adjust what is being taught to match that practice (eg, in Software Engineering). The aim would be to turn both aspects into positives although this would require research. J Davenport undertook to liaise with D Foster and S Bradley on this area.
ACTION: J Davenport/D Foster/S Bradley

S Czanner reported that there were good discussions at ECSS last year and that he will be attending this year to deliver a 10 minute presentation. Members were asked to let S Czanner know if there are any messages that they would wish to be conveyed.   **ACTION: Members**

8. **CPHC DATA COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS & SUBSCRIPTION UPDATE CPHC/2024/16**

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the report and discussed information that would be required during the data collection prior to invoicing for CPHC subscriptions for 2024/25. Members discussed this in the context of ensuring that data collected is in line with UK GDPR principles ie, to be used for specified, explicit purposes and in a way that is adequate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary. It was AGREED that the name and email address of three contacts should be requested: (1) the Head of Department/School; (2) a second contact in case (1) changes for any reason; (3) an Exec Assistant to the HOD/HOS or the Head of

Admin. M Leslie undertook to arrange for this to be built into the data collection process.

ACTION: Secretariat

[main items of business]

9.   PROGRAMME of WORK

9.1   Learning and Development Group (LDG) and Special Projects including EPSRC bid – this item was taken early as S Bradley could not stay to the end of the meeting. **SPG criteria & disseminating outputs at a Conference:** S Bradley reported that some SPG awardees had asked to use leftover funds to attend conferences to present the project output (NB: the current SPG rules align with the ACM special project rules.) Members discussed allowing this to be built into the publication plan that forms part of the bid, provided it is UK-based (if elsewhere, the HEI would need to be topped up). Members agreed to conference attendance being included in the SPG criteria, either to form part of the application or for any underspend, but only if requested and also limited to no more than 15% of the total budget. S Bradley undertook to write this into the criteria.   **ACTION: S Bradley**

EPSRC bid: S Bradley introduced the tabled paper 'Proposal for an EPSRC Network+ – Case for support from CPHC', thanking L McDonnell for the support in putting it together. The core group comprised S Bradley, Sue Sentance (Cambridge) and Sally Smith (Napier) who worked up the project proposal around inclusivity in teaching practice. The focus is on schools, vocational educational, HE and computing pedagogy and is a 3-year project. The plan is to host six events over three years to bring people and ideas together, and then to support development and evaluation of these ideas through a substantial flexible fund (~£1M) associated with the network. Attendance and travel for the events will be funded by the network for all participants. The bulk of the funding is around staff time: a project manager (0.5FTE) to administer the project and for branding and website development and support.

The project team is seeking a letter of support from CPHC as a project partner, with cash input from CPHC to top up the flexible funding pot from EPSRC - no CPHC money would go towards core academic time, travel or overheads. This would be in addition to the existing Special Project Grant scheme and somewhere in the region £30-£45K might be considered as a one-off contribution to cover the three years of the network. If this contribution is successful in securing funding for the network, EPSRC will be supporting the aims of CPHC with >£1.5M towards development and evaluation of materials for inclusive teaching of computing. If the network is not funded then there is no cost to CPHC except the time involved in discussing and writing the letter of support. It may be possible to link some of the smaller funding rounds with the Special Project Grant application process, in which case the CPHC would also be providing in-kind support to the network.

Members provided feedback on the proposal including the importance of having a forward-looking coherent plan. There was some concern over the size of the grant proposal and the need for CPHC funding towards it, perhaps support in-kind aligned with the Special Project Grants would be more appropriate. Alternatively, a smaller contribution such as £5-10k might be just as effective and any sort of cash support will give the project more chance of success. L McDonnell indicated that EPSRC cannot fund research in this area, although other parts of UKRI can. Another option was talking to BCS about a possible collaboration and K Chalmers offer to set up a call with Holly Porter in the Institute part of BCS. P Sant (in the chat) supported any project tying into the Special Project Group, in particular if it strengthens the work on EDI. It would be helpful to work up a clear plan so that there is confidence that there will be a benefit to CPHC.

L McDonnell was asked about the timeline for applying: the application can be submitted, stating that discussions are continuing and amendments can be made as it progressed through. The CPHC Officers undertook to discuss this further at their next meeting. **ACTION: CPHC Officers**

9.2 **Industry Development Group (IDG)** – H Mouratidis had sent his apologies but had shared the draft Terms of Reference with R Aspin and P Sant. It is anticipated that the IDG and CDG will be brought together, using the careers angle to bring in industry. J Wallace is working with a number of industry representatives at Ulster and offered to contribute, as did F Obembe. M Leslie undertook to update the Committee Roles list *[action complete]*.

9.3 **Career Development Group (CDG)** – see Item 9.2 above.

9.4 **Workshop Programme (Pipeline; Coffee table meetings; Chair in 10 Years; Outreach Network)** – see Item 2.1 Matters arising.

9.5 **Special activities (if relevant)** – N Danino urged members wishing to include specific CPHC workshop activities as part of wider events to add this to the shared Events spreadsheet.

10. **UPDATES**

10.1 **Chair's Update** – as previously reported, there had been no recent PICTFOR activity or events due to the General Election. In addition to the Joint Summit wash up meeting on 22 July, the BCS Academy of Computing Board is due to be held on 9 July.

10.2 **Treasurer's Update** – the audit sheet (as at 30 June) had been shared with Committee members and P Sant indicated that CPHC is in a reasonable position and that those with outstanding fees from 2023/24 (between 10 and 20 members) would soon be sent a final reminder. It had been agreed that a hard line be adopted for repeat offenders. N Danino emphasised the need to work on promoting the benefits of CPHC. Members were encouraged to try if possible to have a physical presence at the F2F Committee meetings.

10.3 **Secretary's Update** – K Chalmers noted that the appointment of co-opted members was now complete. See also constitution discussion above at item 3.1.

10.4 **EDI Lead update [CPHC/2024/18]** – R Strachan had been disappointed that the PICTFOR EDI event had been cancelled due to the election, it was hoped that this would be re-scheduled, possibly in October. Members had provided useful comments on the EDI values document which are ready to be uploaded to the website *[action complete]*. A short discussion on how the values can be brought to life would be welcomed, eg a video on the website. It was agreed that this should be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

10.5 **UKCRC Update** – R Aspin reported that there had been conversations about nominations for Honours and increasing the UKCRC membership.

10.6 **NI HoS** – members RECEIVED and NOTED the report.

10.7 **Welsh HoS** – nothing to report.

10.8 **Scottish HoS** – nothing to report.

10.9 **Updates from Other Organisations & Activities** (IE/PICTFOR; Distinguished dissertations; IoC) – there had been no news on the CPHC/BCS DisDis review and N

Danino undertook to talk to Alastair Irons about its revival. J Davenport flagged that there may be some tricky areas that need addressing before any re-launch.

ACTION: N Danino

11. MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

July 2024 – N Danino undertook to draft this message for approval by the Committee. Possible topic areas are the new website, CPHC's new LinkedIn presence, the 2024 Summit and planning for the next event with an approximate date.
August 2024 – to be confirmed by J Davenport
September 2024 – to be confirmed by K Chalmers

12. AOB

Members discussed the possibility of using an alternative caterer or eating at a local restaurant for the next CPHC only F2F meeting.

ACTION: Secretariat

The Chair thanked members and closed the meeting at 13:10.

FUTURE MEETINGS *All commencing at 11.00am, unless otherwise stated*

COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024	CONFERENCE/AGM DATES 2025
*Tuesday 8 October 2024 (13:30-16:30) – BCS London Tuesday 3 December 2024 – Online	TBA

to be co-located with UKCRC Executive Committee meeting

Actions – responsible people & previous action updates in red

#	Item	Min	Action	Who
Jul2024.1	Matters arising: Workshop programme	2.3	Work with Laure Barker (BCS) on a co-ordinated workshop programme	N Danino
Jul2024.2			Set up a shared doc for possible workshop topics/proposed dates	N Danino/M Leslie
Jul2024.3	Matters arising: EPSRC update	2.5	Liaise on what EPSRC EDI data would be useful for CPHC	N Danino/L McDonnell
Jul2024.4	Review of CPHC constitution	3.1	Discuss possible changes to CPHC Constitution at October meeting	Members
Jul2024.5	Recruitment & retention	6	Liaise with A Irons on making representation to govt on staff recruitment/retention and keep Committee members informed	N Danino/R Aspin
Jul2024.6	The role of AI in CS	7	Liaise on possible research into this area	J Davenport/D Foster/ S Bradley
Jul2024.7			Let S Czanner know of any messages to be conveyed at ECSS on this area	Members
Jul2024.8	CPHC data collection requirements	8	Arrange for agreed data to be collected during pre-invoicing stage [COMPLETE]	Secretariat
Jul2024.9	Programme of work: LDG/SPG	9.1	Include conference attendance in SPG criteria	S Bradley
Jul2024.10	EPSRC bid		Continue discussions on CPHC support for the bid	CPHC Officers
Jul2024.11	Updates on DisDis	10.9	Liaise with Alastair Irons for an update	N Danino
Jul2024.12	Member communications	11	**July 2024** – new website, CPHC's new LinkedIn presence, 2024/2025 Summits	N Danino

			August 2024 – TBA September 2024 – TBA	**J Davenport** **K Chalmers**
Jul2024.13	AOB	12	Check with Chair on catering arrangements for next F2F CPHC-only meeting	**M Leslie**
May2024.7	Joint Summit – venues	4.2	Liaise S Bradley/P Sant re contacts in Scotland for potential hosting in 2026	**N Danino**
May2024.8			Liaise with BCS Academy and UKCRC on the 2025 event	**N Danino/** **M Leslie**
May2024.9	Programme of work: Learning DG	7.1	Develop a proforma for reporting on SPG outputs	**N Danino**
May2024.10 (links **Jul2024.2** above)	Workshop programme	7.4	Collect ideas for workshops from members via LinkedIn and put together a workshop plan for the next 12 months	**N Danino**
Feb2024.1	Subscription update	4	Write to HEIs for which historical debt has been written off to advise them that will remove membership if it happens again	**P Sant (from J Davenport)**
Feb2024.2	CPHC value piece & benefits of development groups	5	Draw up proposal for looking into the value of computing, the cost of CS course delivery and obtaining quality data on SEND in different departments	**R Aspin**
Feb2024.3	Programme of work: Industry DG	7.2	Meet to discuss draft Terms of Reference for the IDG for sharing with Committee members **by end of June 2024**	**H Mouratidis/** **R Aspin**
Dec2023.1	Programme of Work LDG/Special Projects	5.1	Follow up with awardees of previous SPG rounds for outputs/reports	**S Bradley**
May2023.1	New CPHC member	4	Work on providing further guidance for applying institutions such as an application form template	**N Danino**