

**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 **Tuesday 8 October 2024** at BCS, 25 Cophall Avenue, London EC2R 7DN and online

**PRESENT**

Nicky Danino (Chair)	*Steven Bradley	Kevin Chalmers
Silvester Czanner	Damien Foster	Kate Hone
Haris Mouratidis	Funmi Obembe	Dharam Shadija
Rebecca Strachan		

**IN ATTENDANCE (Observers/secretariat)**

Ben Scott (EPSRC)	Daniela Tresoldi (EPSRC)
*Fiona McNeill (BCS Academy)	Maxine Leslie (BCS - sec)

*\*joined online*

**APOLOGIES**

Hayley Burns	Jonathan Wallace	Paul Sant
Rob Aspin	James Davenport	

**(A) CPHC-UKCRC-BCS ACADEMY BOARD COLLABORATIVE WORKING**

(UKCRC Executive Committee members and BCS Academy of Computing Board members in attendance for this item)

CPHC Committee members in attendance: Nicky Danino (Chair), Kevin Chalmers, Paul Sant, Rebecca Strachan, Haris Mouratidis, Silvester Czanner, Damien Foster, Funmi Obembe, Kate Hone, Dharam Shadija

UKCRC Executive Committee member in attendance: Amir Hussain

BCS Academy of Computing Board members in attendance: Alastair Irons (Chair, session Chair), \*Anthony Cohn, Tom Crick, Oliver Kerr, Sue Sentance, Jane Waite, Ian McChesney

Guests/observers: Daniela Tresoldi (EPSRC), Ben Scott (EPSRC), Yanguo Jing (Leeds Trinity), Adam Wyner (Swansea), Mairéad Pratschke (Manchester), Catherine Mulligan (Imperial)

BCS staff in attendance: Laure Barker, Maxine Leslie

*\*Joined online*

Apologies: Kevin Jones, Julie McCann, Julia Adamson

**Introduction & key responsibilities/activities [See slides]**

A Irons welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies for absence were received as above. A Irons outlined the aims for the meeting: to share and discuss plans for UKCRC, CPHC and BCS Academy Board and how to work together to promote computing and computer science and associated disciplines; consider how we interact and collaborate; discuss the aspiration to have a shared vision and speak with voice in policy and strategy development; give colleagues the opportunity to discuss opportunities and challenges; consider the opportunity and objectives of a computing summit in 2025.

A Irons and N Danino talked through the respective overviews, key responsibilities, 2024/25 activities for the three organisations culminating in the combined objectives and environment

(the Venn Diagram). The group was invited to consider the following topics as well as asking any other questions:

- What are our combined objectives?
- What are the subjects for the 3-way overlap on the Venn Diagram?
- What are the joint activities and how do we further them? (Eg, mentoring, staff development, environment and culture)
- How do we create a platform for this combined voice?

### **Discussion**

For the Venn Diagram, P Sant suggested moving 'Professionalism' into the intersection as it is an area for all three organisations eg, for early/established researchers.

The appointment of T Crick as Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) to DCMS and Chris Johnson as CSA to DSIT was noted. T Crick flagged that computing is different to many other subject areas, as it is fragmented and consequently has several bodies advocating on behalf of the discipline. Most subject areas have only one advocacy body and government usually will only wish to speak to a single body. However, computing advocates are pushing against an open door with government departments and should be able to drive expertise towards a one-stop-shop to assist with this. This is happening but we are not there yet; we will need a consistency of voice and an agreed vision/advocacy piece eg, what does artificial intelligence's combined environment mean for us? There are challenges around structure and entity but BCS has the advantage of being able to leverage its Royal Charter. Some of the community are apathetic but if members worked to make BCS better, there would be fewer criticisms – we are in a very different position than we were a few years ago.

A Wyner queried whether it is apathy or more that members of the community are unaware of BCS activities other than academic accreditation. Maybe it would help to have a designated representative for every CS department in the country to channel communications.

N Danino asked about the value of BCS outside of academia such as a register of experts – would this help or hinder the mission? T Crick indicated that a 'licence to practice' will not happen as it is not a priority in the next 5 years. The UK's USP for AI research is a citizen-centred solution for which we are not beholden to tech companies to implement. It was noted that F-TAG is interested in some sort of registration, but that BCS is thinking of working towards some sort of recognition but without any liability. T Crick observed that BCS had become more authoritative in the eyes of government and the media, with a number of Fellows being quoted, which improves BCS's visibility and enables more advocacy. The view of industry was raised, including its view of academic accreditation. This links to the HE staff recruitment and retention situation resulting from the discrepancy in terms & conditions and pay.

For the Venn Diagram, K Chalmers suggested using physics as an example as they have 5-6 trade bodies, we could determine who we are talking to and whether there is something missing. There are a different set of questions for different stakeholders such as the NHS and civil service, both of which are big computing employers.

Members discussed holding the joint meeting more than once a year in order to keep this conversation going. It was noted that the three chairs meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues and challenges and each body also has representation on each others' boards/committees, it may be that reps need to challenge more in these forums and side step any 'group think'.

In terms of public engagement, the original Grand Challenges archived on the [UKCRC website](#), were very old, but a lot of what was being said is still true today. Y Jing liked the idea of a unified identity, there are already differently focussed groups across the sector having regular meetings and speaking to government which is very positive. It is important to listen to voices from primary level upwards. The devolved nations have looked at this (e.g.

the Scottish Informatics and Computer Science Alliance – SICSA) from school up to HE/industry.

It is crucial to ensure we are public/citizen facing, the Nobel Prizes just announced were an example of this, machine learning/AI playing a part in both the physics and chemistry prizes.

A Irons thanked participants for a very useful discussion. It was agreed that the group should aim to meet again before the next joint meeting in October 2025, either online or F2F and BCS staff undertook to set this up.

#### **Actions from Joint UKCRC/CPHC/ACB meeting 8 October 2024**

<b>Min</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>
(A)	CPHC-UKCRC-BCS Academy collaborative working	Set up a joint meeting, either online or F2F in between October 2024 and the next F2F meeting on 14 October 2025	BCS staff	On-going

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

The Chair welcomed F Obembe and K Hone to their first F2F meeting following co-opting to the Committee. There were no conflicts of interest and apologies for absence were received as above. It was noted that the day of the meeting was Ada Lovelace Day and it would be good to celebrate this in future.

### **2. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JULY 2024 [CPHC/2024/20]**

The minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 8 July 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 Review of CPHC constitution (Jul2024.4)** – it was reported that the newly re-convened summit planning group had expressed misgivings about holding the CPHC AGM as a slot at the 2025 summit. Members expressed concern that holding an AGM separately might badly affect its attendance. In addition, it was noted that the CPHC constitution states that ‘There shall be (i) An Annual Assembly which shall include an Annual General Meeting’ [clause 3]. N Danino and D Shadija undertook to raise this at the next Computing Summit planning group meeting. **ACTION: N Danino/D Shadija**

**2.2 The role of AI in CS (Jul2024.7)** – for the action to let S Czanner know of any messages to be conveyed at ECSS on this area, it was noted that members still had to the end of October to flag any messages to S Czanner. Apart from promoting CPHC, it would be good to push Special Project Grants for UK-based institutions.

### **3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**3.1 Review of CPHC constitution** – K Chalmers reminded members that they had suggested at a previous meeting that the [CPHC constitution](#) needed to be updated/modernised, in particular the quorum for conducting business at the AGM. The Constitution states that this is one-fifth of paid-up members (approximately 100), so quorum is 21 universities (rounded up) [see clause 3]. After some discussion, members agreed that a change to this clause would not be necessary, in the instance of an in-person meeting not being quorate for a vote, an extraordinary online AGM could be held.

Further discussion points were clause 6 the terms of office of the Chair, Vice Chair and Immediate Past Chair and clause 2(i) eligibility for membership being Professors and Heads of Computing in UK Universities, as it was noted that these job roles often have

alternative titles such as Deputy Dean. Lastly, it was proposed that the maximum number of co-opted members be increased from three to five to ensure that the devolved nations are fully represented and to give more flexibility in the appointment of Committee members.

It was noted that amendment of these clauses would need to be approved at an AGM but did not need written approval of the Charity Commissioners.

These proposed amendments were straightforward with the exception of the terms of office of the Chair, Vice Chair and Immediate Past Chair. K Chalmers agreed to put together a proposal with possible options for the membership to consider at the next Committee meeting in December 2024 and for members to approve at the next AGM in April 2025. If changes are approved, it was noted that a separate vote would be needed for applying it to the current incumbents.

**ACTION: K Chalmers**

#### **4. EPSRC/UKRI UPDATE**

B Scott explained that he was attending for Laura McDonnell, who was on annual leave and introduced colleague Daniela Tresoldi who will be representing EPSRC alongside L McDonnell at future meetings.

B Scott reported that EPSRC is currently in the throes of the Spending Review and therefore there is little to report. There should be more information for relaying at the end of October. It currently looks like a 1 and 3 deal, but this could change. The standard mode has quietened down, and B Scott thanked members for the support on this. There are active open and closed calls, with the telecoms for India just having closed. There is a neuromorphic call for which a webinar will be open on the website soon.

The Chair thanked B Scott for the update and welcomed D Tresoldi to the Committee.

#### **5. 2025 JOINT SUMMIT UPDATE**

The Chair reported that the planning for the 2025 Summit is at the very early planning stage and members will be updated as plans progress. The venue and date are confirmed as Sheffield Hallam University on Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 April 2025. Possible venues for the 2026 event in Scotland are also being explored. B Scott indicated that EPSRC would welcome involvement in the 2025 event as the 2024 Summit was so successful.

#### **6. CPHC STRATEGY DOCUMENT [CPHC/2024/22]**

This item was deferred until R Aspin was in attendance.

#### **7. SUBSCRIPTION UPDATE [CPHC/2024/23]**

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the report.

[main items of business]

#### **8. PROGRAMME of WORK**

- 8.1 Learning and Development Group (LDG) and Special Projects** – S Bradley reported that the EPSRC bid had been submitted the week before. Following the deadline for the September 2022 round of SPG applications, there were fewer applications, and it will be interesting to see if the smaller number were of a high quality. The changes to the criteria are still pending. The Chair asked if BCS could help with a call out for the next round as this was discussed at the BCS Academy Board meeting in the morning. F McNeill agreed and suggested circulating information on forthcoming

calls for applications to the regional committees for the devolved nations. F McNeill undertook to liaise with Alastair Irons on this.

**ACTION: F McNeill**

- 8.2 Industry Development Group (IDG) & Career Development Group (CDG) –** H Mouratidis had been unable to attend the July meeting where the bringing of these two groups together had been discussed. H Mouratidis undertook to liaise with P Sant, J Wallace and F Obembe to take this work forward.

**ACTION: H Mouratidis**

- 8.3 Workshop Programme (Pipeline; Coffee table meetings; Chair in 10 Years; Outreach Network) –** the Chair had met with Laure Barker (BCS Head of Higher Education) to discuss how to avoid duplicating effort in putting on workshops. An agreement in principle was reached to dual badge workshops in areas of common interest. K Chalmers noted a challenge in that there a different departments in BCS holding events and quite a low awareness of the range of events going on. It might be useful to involve Julia Adamson in future discussions or invite Laure Barker to future meeting(s). The BCS Branches are very active in this area and it might be helpful to discuss areas of common interest with them via the BCS Community Board. It could also be helpful to liaise with J Adamson to gather this information prior to future meetings. Members were invited to send any ideas for workshops to N Danino.

**ACTION: Members**

- 8.4 Special activities (if relevant) –** it would be helpful to think of ways to support HODs, maybe a new heads workshop or broader support for more of a continuous journey. A scaffold could be created to support groups to network in specific regions and help with certain issues. K Chalmers suggested starting with London and M Leslie undertook to send K Chalmers a list of HEI HOD contacts within the M25. *[Action complete]*

## **9. UPDATES**

- 9.1 Chair's Update –** N Danino reported back from the BCS Academy Board meeting held earlier. In terms of awards and prizes, D Foster had kindly agreed to lead the re-introduced joint CPHC/BCS Distinguished Dissertations award. It had been proposed that an EDI statement be produced for CPHC, UKCRC and the BCS Academy and R Strachan undertook to talk to Alastair Irons about the particular angle for this.

**ACTION: R Strachan**

Strategies for approaching government had also been discussed earlier and the need to be more focussed on specifics before any approach is made (see also (A) Joint meeting notes above).

- 9.2 Treasurer's Update –** P Sant had sent apologies for the meeting but members NOTED the accounts information circulated prior to the meeting.
- 9.3 Secretary's Update –** there were no other items to report other than those discussed in item 3.1 above on the CPHC constitution.
- 9.4 EDI Lead update inc EDI Values including discussion on how to bring these to life –** R Strachan had met with N Danino and EPSRC to discuss data collection. It was noted that there was a great deal of information online and B Scott indicated that EPSRC was hoping to improve the quality of this data, however the current headcount was limiting the work in this area. R Strachan explained that this source relies on people to self-report which gives a richer picture.
- 9.5 UKCRC Update –** the UKCRC Executive Committee had met earlier in the day and a report will be sought from R Aspin at the next CPHC meeting in December.
- 9.6 NI HoS –** J Wallace had sent apologies but had circulated a report prior to the meeting which members NOTED.

**9.7 Welsh HoS** – no report as H Burns had sent apologies.

**9.8 Scottish HoS** – F McNeill reported that the BCS Scottish Computing Education Committee (SCEC) is currently on hiatus, having not met for several months. Work continues though at school level with the Education Bill, through other learned society groups such as the Royal Society of Edinburgh Learning Societies' Group (RSE LSG) and to provide feedback for reports, lobby government/SMPs. There is a plan to meet Mark Logan about changing the computing ecosystem in Scotland with a focus on education.

N Danino asked for venue ideas for the 2026 summit in Scotland and F McNeill undertook to ask this question through SCEC. Accessibility would be important, so HEIs based in Glasgow or Edinburgh would be ideal. **ACTION: F McNeill**

**9.9 Updates from Other Organisations & Activities** (IE/PICTFOR; Distinguished dissertations; IoC) – members are attending events on CPHC's behalf: S Czanner is attending the Informatics Europe ECSS in Malta at the end of the month, K Chalmers and the Chair are attending the PICTFOR annual dinner in November and R Strachan is attending the postponed PICTFOR EDI Rally, also in November.

## 10. MEETING DATES

Members NOTED the 2025 meeting dates (see below) and M Leslie undertook to circulate Outlook invitations for the meetings.

## 11. AOB

There were no items of AOB. The Chair thanked members for their input and closed the meeting.

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

STORE MEETINGS All commencing at 7.00am, unless otherwise stated	
COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024	
Tuesday 3 December 2024 – Online	
COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2025	
Monday 3 February 2025 – Online	CONFERENCE/AGM DATES 2025
Wednesday 21 May 2025 – BCS London 12:30-16:30 inc lunch	
Monday 14 July 2025 – Online	
*Tuesday 14 October 2025 (13:30-16:30) – BCS London	
Wednesday 3 December 2025 – Online	
Tuesday 29/Wednesday 30 April – Sheffield Hallam University	

*\*to be co-located with UKCRC Executive Committee & BCS Academy of Computing meetings*

## Actions – responsible people & previous action updates in red

#	Item	Min	Action	Who
<b>Oct2024.1</b>	Matters arising: CPHC constitution	2.1	Raise the issue of holding the CPHC AGM during the 2025 Summit at the next planning group meeting	<b>N Danino/D Shadija</b>
<b>Oct2024.2</b>	Review of CPHC constitution	3	Prepare proposal for Dec Committee and April AGM on number of co-opted places and terms of office of Ch, VCh & IPCh	<b>K Chalmers</b>
<b>Oct2024.3</b>	Programme of work: LDG inc SPG	8.1	Liaise with Alastair Irons on promoting future SPG rounds via BCS networks including the devolved nations groups	<b>F McNeill</b>

<b>Oct2024.4</b>	Industry DG & Career DG	8.2	Liaise with P Sant, J Wallace and F Obembe to take the IDG/CDG work forward	<b>H Mouratidis</b>
<b>Oct2024.5</b>	Workshop programme	8.3	Send any ideas for workshops to <b>N Danino</b>	<b>Members</b>
<b>Oct2024.6</b>	Chair's update	9.1	Talk to Alastair Irons about the particular angle for a joint EDI statement	<b>R Strachan</b>
<b>Oct2024.7</b>	Scottish HoS update	9.8	Ask SCEC for ideas on venues for the 2026 Summit (prefer Edinburgh or Glasgow)	<b>F McNeill</b>
<b>Jul2024.1</b>	Matters arising: Workshop programme	2.3	Work with Laure Barker (BCS) on a co-ordinated workshop programme	<b>N Danino</b>
<b>Jul2024.2</b>			Set up a shared doc for possible workshop topics/proposed dates	<b>N Danino/M Leslie</b>
<b>Jul2024.6</b>	The role of AI in CS	7	Liaise on possible research into this area	<b>J Davenport/D Foster/S Bradley</b>
<b>Jul2024.7</b>			Let S Czanner know of any messages to be conveyed at ECSS on this area	<b>Members</b>
<b>Jul2024.9</b>	Programme of work: LDG/SPG	9.1	Include conference attendance in SPG criteria	<b>S Bradley</b>
<b>Jul2024.13</b>	AOB	12	Check with Chair on catering arrangements for next F2F CPHC-only meeting in <b>May 2025</b>	<b>M Leslie</b>
<b>May2024.7</b>	Joint Summit – venues	4.2	Liaise S Bradley/P Sant re contacts in Scotland for potential hosting in 2026	<b>N Danino</b>
<b>May2024.9</b>	Programme of work: Learning DG	7.1	Develop a proforma for reporting on SPG outputs	<b>N Danino</b>
<b>May2024.10</b> (links <b>Jul2024.2</b> above)	Workshop programme	7.4	Collect ideas for workshops from members via LinkedIn and put together a workshop plan for the next 12 months	<b>N Danino</b>
<b>Feb2024.1</b>	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	<b>P Sant (from J Davenport)</b>
<b>Dec2023.1</b>	Programme of Work LDG/Special Projects	5.1	Follow up with awardees of previous SPG rounds for outputs/reports	<b>S Bradley</b>
<b>May2023.1</b>	New CPHC member	4	Work on providing further guidance for applying institutions such as an application form template	<b>N Danino</b>