



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Department of Computer Science
& Technology

Minutes of the meeting of the Research Staff Forum held at 12noon on
Wednesday 21 November 2018, in Room FW11, William Gates Building

Present: Daniel Bates (DB)
Claire Chapman (CLC) (Secretary)
Matt Danish (MRD) (Chair)
Ekaterina Kochmar (EK)
Angeliki Koutsoukou-Argyraiki (AKA)
Marwa Mahmoud (MMAM)
Andy Rice (ACR)
James Sharkey (JPS)
Caroline Stewart (CS)

1. Apologies

Alan Blackwell (AFB)
Nathaniel Filardo (NF)
Heidi Howard (HH)
Zohreh Shams (ZS)
Zheng Yuan (ZY)

2. Minutes of last minutes

The minutes from the last meeting held on 20 June 2018 were approved.

3. Report on actions from last meeting

i. RA guidelines on applying for travel/conference funds in exceptional circumstances

The sentence 'Requests for travel funds can be made at any time to the Department Secretary and awarded at the discretion of the Department' has been added to the Induction Checklist. CLC will circulate a link to the Induction Checklist to Forum Members for comments.

Action: CLC

ii. Finance Training for RAs and guidelines on Research Grants for web

It was agreed that the Financial Guidelines was a helpful document and it was requested that this be published on the website, with a link to it included on the Induction Checklist.

Action: CLC

iii. **Cycle Parking**

MRD reported that there is still ongoing debate as to what adjustment to the cycle shelter will be agreed and who will fund the project. CS reported that the changes are needed due to the commitment to improve cycle safety for the site before the Cavendish III development is completed.

Addendum: The Cavendish III completion date is set to be 2021/22.

It was agreed CS would seek views at the Wednesday Staff Meeting and invite a small group of staff to discuss and recommend a proposed scheme to the HoD. MRD said that a report needs to be submitted to EM by the end of December.

Action: CS

iv. **How to improve the Progression of Post-docs beyond their current position in the Department**

No volunteer from the forum has come forward to set up a Wiki page. ACR suggested that as 78% of research staff said they would find this helpful in the Career Progression Survey, we should circulate an email to lab-ras asking for a volunteer to set up and edit a wiki.

Action: CLC

v. **Suggested links to add to the committee page for resources for research assistants**

If members have any suggestions on resources they would like to add to the committee page, they should send them to CLC.

Action: Forum Members

vi. **Admissions Selection help for Directors of Studies**

A list of all attendees has been sent to reception and to Directors of Studies.

vii. **Revising the naming of the Forum and its statement of purpose**

JPS said that as he is representing Research Assistants on the Forum and not the DTG, this should be amended on the website and Research Staff representative poster.

Action: CLC

viii. **Post Doc training fund**

ACR reported that he will be able to report developments for post-doc training at the School of Technology level at the next meeting. If research staff require funding to attend events, then they should get in touch with him to see if the Researcher Development Fund can provide funds, although funding is currently limited.

Action: ACR

ix. **Researcher Development Fund**

ACR reported that the Researcher Development Fund budget has been cut and this will impact both graduate students and research staff.

Language training is very expensive to fund so it can only be funded for career development. All requests should be sent to Lise Gough.

x. **Lecturing opportunities for RAs, and what the Department might do to facilitate more of them.**

Forum members said the wiki would be a useful way for research staff to indicate their interest in lecturing courses and would like the information to be circulated to lab-ras. CLC will ask Dinah Pounds to action.

Action: CLC

4. **Voting for Post Docs on governing body**

MRD reported that the university policy has changed so that Research Staff who have less than 3 years continuous service are stripped of their voting rights. Alice Hutchings had resigned from the Council as a result of the amended grace and is seeking legal advice to ascertain if this is in breach of employment law. Sam Ainsworth is standing for election on the council and CS suggested he should circulate details of this to voting members of the Department to ask for their support. MRD added that the amended grace does not take effect until next year so there were quite a few research staff who could still use their vote for the Council elections.

Action: MRD

5. **Any other business**

AKA asked about the University's plan after Brexit. CS said that she had circulated an email from the University regarding the EU Settlement Scheme pilot for EU staff working in higher education. An application will need to be made by EU citizens in order to apply for UK immigration status under the EU Settlement Scheme. As the application can only be made on an Android phone or tablet, a department device will be made available and CS will circulate details once it is in operation.

Action: CS

Researcher Development Pitch

The OPdA are organising a Researcher Development Pitch Competition and inviting all post docs to design a programme or tool which will help their fellow post docs to enhance their skills. It was agreed this information should be circulated to lab-ras and lab-sras.

Action: CLC

6. **Date of next meeting**

To be held in Lent Term