



Research Staff Forum Meeting

Monday, 17 May 2021, 2 p.m.
(via videoconference)

Minutes

Present:

Matt Danish (MRD) (Chair)
Daniel Bates (DB)
Celia Burns (CB) (Secretary)
Andrew Caines (AC)
Yi Ting Chua (YTC)
Helen Francis (HJF)

Heidi Howard (HH)
Eva Kalyvianaki (EK)
Angeliki Koutsoukou-Argyraiki (AKA)
James Sharkey (JPS)
Sergei Skorobogatov (SS)
Caroline Stewart (CS)

1. Apologies

None.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2021 were approved.

3. RSF Discussion Topic

There was no discussion topic.

4. Report on Actions from the Last Meeting

i. Forum Membership

The Forum is still seeking a representative from the Rainbow Graphics & Interaction Group.

Heidi Howard, Networks and Operating Systems Group, reported that she is stepping down from the Forum and will email her group to try and find a new representative.

Action: HH

CS reminded Forum members to look for new reps to fill the vacancies (see also item 4 ii. below). It was suggested that Group reps could address Forum membership at any group inductions.

Action: Forum members

ii. Representative for Research Assistants

The Forum is still seeking a Research Assistant who is not doing a PhD.

iii. **Lecturing Opportunities for Research Staff**

EK reported that she had not heard anything more about guest-lecturing opportunities for research staff. She agreed to ask the Head of Department Team about this.

Action: EK

iv. **Research Strategy Team Presentation**

HJF reported that she has scheduled an information session on 11 June for Postdoctoral Researchers where she will present the Research Strategy Team and how the team can help postdoctoral researchers in the Department. The presentation will also cover the process of applying for research funding.

v. **Support for Writing Fellowship Applications**

HJF reported that she has scheduled an information session on 25 June where she will cover the main fellowship funding schemes available to postdoctoral researchers.

vi. **Town Hall meetings**

CS reported that she had passed on the suggestion of holding the meetings in a different slot occasionally to allow people who are not available for the regular slot an opportunity to attend. The Head of Department recognizes the problem but, due to a very busy calendar, it was difficult to find an alternative time.

vii. **Communications**

Following a discussion about improved communication within the research staff group (for both funding and social purposes), Forum members had agreed to look into adding a Slack group for research staff to an existing CST Slack group. During the meeting, HH found the old Slack group and invited MRD to be a member of it so that he can now progress this action.

Action: MRD

5. Pulse Survey Discussion Points

The Wellbeing Committee had prepared a discussion document soliciting feedback for new initiatives leading from the pulse survey.

Regarding the low turnout from PhD students and Research Staff mentioned in Professor Rice's email about the March results, one Forum member commented that, if it could be shown that the existing pulse survey is having results, people might be more interested in participating in future as it would show that the Department is taking action. Another Forum member drew attention to Prof Rice's intention to display results over time, which related to the above point of seeing results from tangible actions and might persuade more people to participate.

Forum members did not have any response to the Wellbeing Committee's questions relating to the discussion document.

6. Wellbeing – Departmental Announcements

Nothing reported.

7. Wellbeing – Report for the Wellbeing Committee

Nothing reported (see item 5 above).

8. Buildings and Environment Committee (B&EC) – Update

MRD, Postdoc Representative on the B&EC, reported that the B&EC had met on 13 May 2021. Procedures to enter the building remained the same so if people have not made separate arrangements with their supervisor for going into the building, they should email cl-shutdown ahead of their visit. Procedures may change in June, at which time the Department would follow University advice.

Comments on the changes to the cycle parking had been fed back to Estates Division, and works might start during the summer.

CS reported on plans for the Library. It is now almost empty and is likely to be repurposed into teaching rooms.

9. Equality and Diversity Committee (E&DC) – Update

HH, Postdoc Representative on the E&DC, reported that the E&DC had met on 11 March 2021. She had not attended the meeting but noted an item from the minutes about online Unconscious Bias training, and asked Forum members to remind their groups at the beginning of the next academic year about this training.

Action: Forum members

10. Any Other Business

(i) *Migration of the Hermes email system to the Microsoft Exchange Online system*
Forum members were concerned about the migration to the Microsoft Exchange Online system and what action, if any, individuals need to take. MD agreed to send an email to sys-admin to share the group's concerns and to get some further information.

Action: MRD

(ii) *Social event*

Forum members discussed the possibility of having a social event for research staff now that groups of up to 30 people are permitted to meet outside. CS noted the possibility of the University putting a distancing in place within their buildings, which may extend to outside areas such as the courtyards and the balcony. Even if it were only 1m, it would change the perspective of a get-together. CS said she would make enquiries about the possibility of having an event in the courtyard or on the Intel Lab balcony.

Action: CS

11. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that CB would circulate a Doodle poll for the next meeting in the Michaelmas term.

Action: CB