

# Graduate Students' Forum

Minutes: 25th January 2018

**Attending:** (AR) Dr. Andy Rice (Researcher Development Coordinator) [Chair]  
(LR) Ms Lise Gough (Graduate Education Manager)  
(KH) Kevin Heffernan (NLIP) [Secretary]  
(KS) Krittika D'Silva (SRG)  
(MW) Mark Wassell (PLS)  
(BD) Botty Dimanov (AI)  
(AM) Aida Miralaei (Comp Arch)  
(IS) Ilia Shumailov (Security)  
(SK) Stephan Kollman (DTG)  
(AD) Abraham Dutch (MPhil in ACS)  
(AV) Anita Vero (Women@CL)  
(GT) Dr. Graham Titmus (Computer Officer) [Invited speaker]

## 1. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting

GSF approved minutes.

## 2. Matters arising from minutes of the last meeting

**Dr Graham Titmus, Computer Officer, was invited to attend the meeting of the GSF to help answer questions on computing facilities in the department for graduate students.**

### i. GT: Cloud services

BD: Is there a possibility to get access to cloud services and GPUs? (e.g. because of deep learning etc requiring GPUs).

GT: HPC have GPUs and a free tier. Paid access to amazon web service can be organised (paid for by the dept.). Some PIs have made agreements with cloud resources, which are local to their research groups. One solution is a bookable specialist resource e.g., a box with 4 GPUs which can be booked by graduate students.

AR: PIs who are applying to cloud resources could possibly broker resources. There is also a possibility of interacting with UIS as to whether we can interact with the Wilkes cluster (from HPC) more interactively.

GT: For incoming PhD students, there is also a possibility to have a laptop costing up to X amount (minus the student's PI funding the difference).

## **ii. GT: Overleaf subscription**

GT: University did have subscription to overleaf but didn't advertise and the subscription eventually expired. There has been a consultation about whether to continue the overleaf subscription and GT will update the GSF on this matter later.

AR: Possibility of a survey to get numbers for how many students will want to use overleaf (e.g. email [teaching-research@cl.cam.ac.uk](mailto:teaching-research@cl.cam.ac.uk)).

## **iii. GSF proposal on computing resources**

LG: Heidi Howard was originally going to write proposal.

GSF has agreed to hold this until next meeting so we can discuss the specifics.

## **iv. Building services to be asked if a drying room can be provided**

LG: Drying room is out of the question. Solution is hooks or racks in room but will report back on this in the next meeting.

## **v. Locate lego**

AR: Can provide a large amount of lego (two large boxes of lego bricks).

# **3. Reports from research group representatives**

## **i. SRG**

KS: Complaints of often being very cold in rooms on the first floor. In particular, rooms SW01 and SW02 are very chilly. Perhaps the temperature in these rooms can be adjusted to be a bit warmer?

LG: Will speak to building manager to see if possible to resolve.

## **ii. NLP**

KH: Members of group eager to know schedule for board games nights this term.

AR: The first Friday of every month will be advertised for board games (starting from the 2nd of February).

## **iii. Comp Arch**

AM: Nothing to report.

## **iv. M.Phil**

AD: Issues with the printers in SW02 (out of toner and people not sure who to talk to).

AR: Check the notice on the printers in the M.Phil room to make sure it's still there and legible.

## **v. Programming Languages**

MW: Microwave in first floor kitchen has been replaced but is less powerful. Is it possible to get another microwave?

AR: Talk to building services about getting more microwaves (see if Lab policy is one per location or one per room).

## **vi. AI**

BD: Reiteration of cloud computing problem.

## **vii. Women@CL**

a) AV: Some students are having financial issues. Is there a support structure available to students?

LG: Explained that student support outside standard studentships is a College matter.

b) Possibility of childcare facilities at the Computer Lab.

## **viii. Security Group**

IS: New cues needed for pool table.

AR: Perhaps companies could purchase the Lab a new branded pool table?

LG: GSF has a small budget which could possibly be used to buy new cues.

IS: Dust gathering on floor boxes.

AR: Cleaning services will be contacted.

IS: Too many machines (e.g. old machines gathering over time from long-term academics) and if there are regulations on keeping machines in rooms.

IS: Some researchers in Security Group are concerned that maintenance provided by Lab is less than maintenance given to students in other universities ie., can we increase the student maintenance?

LG: Lab uses maintenance amount suggested by EPSRC.

IS: Security seminars overlapping with RSP seminars?

LG: Difficult to resolve given timetables.

## **ix. DTG**

SK: Nothing to report.

## **4. Matters for discussion**

### **i. Winter quiz**

LG: Tentative date suggested for quiz is the 23rd of February. BD: We will contact Errol to see if there is a database of questions he has used in the past. Food suggested was Nana Mexico. GSF: Agreed to organise a doodle poll to find a quiz committee and also organise when to hold meetings. KH will arrange this.

### **ii. Next board games night**

KH: Will likely be on the 2nd of February.

### **iii. Research skills suggestion page**

KH: Can PhD students give a research skills class and be given credits in their log books?

AR: Students would have to write a proposal to LG and the Researcher Development

Coordinator to check that it would be beneficial.

IS: Can the courses (e.g. language classes) be weighted more since they require much more time to attend than a regular RSP class.

AR: If more weight is given, then this defeats the point of research skills as the goal is to do a variety of subjects in order to broaden students.

## **5. Any other business**

i. AR: Put computing resources on agenda for next meeting.

ii. AR: Add 'Departmental Announcements' to the agenda in future meetings.

iii. LG: The date for the One-minute madness practice sessions is Friday 9 March from 4 p.m. with the actual MPhil OMM session taking place on 16 March. CPGS students will be doing their OMMs on either 20 or 23 March. It would be useful to include the mid-term PhD students research presentations as well: 20, 21 and 23 March. All are invited. And we desperately need help to rally some help from experienced PhD students to help in providing some feedback.