

Information Committee
Minutes of Meeting held on 14 May 2009

Present: Dawn Cartwright, James Chong, Lorna Evans, Stephanie Hazel-Gant;
Ian Jennings (Chair), Julie Lord, Paul Waites

Action

09/01 Apologies for absence and committee membership

There were no apologies. Lorna Evans has left the Committee and was thanked for her service. Stephanie Hazel-Gant was welcomed as a new member.

09/02 Minutes of meeting held 20 October 2008

The minutes were accepted.

09/03 Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 20 October 2008

i 08/14i *IDM (account and password synchronisation)*

The introduction of the Identity Management system has been postponed until June while further testing takes place. It will be very beneficial, for example resolving the problem of dead accounts.

ii 08/14ii *Information / document management*

This post will soon be advertised with interviews in July. Hopefully somebody will be in post by September.

iii 08/14v *New PCs for A004 classroom*

There are 60 PCs in A004 and a further 20 in A032. Linux will be installed on at least 30 of those in A004 so that Masters courses can use them if B102A is occupied.

iii 08/15i *EC3*

This is not proceeding due to legal reasons.

iii 08/15ii *Content Management System (CMS)*

Biology is still listed as an early adopter although the actual date for this is yet to be announced. It was agreed that the outward facing pages will be transferred first, and Research pages will be given top priority. Undergraduate pages will ideally be done over Summer 2010. £1000 is available to Biology for support.

Outdated, incorrect and incomplete classifications exist in the central HR records (e.g. Biology-IFAB) which causes problems when assigning access rights to groups. IJ will follow up on this in relation to Identity Management.

IJ

iii 08/16 *Risk Register*

The Risk register will soon be updated. DC will talk to HMOL about research information.

DC

iii 08/17 *Visiting Associates Email list*

This issue is not yet resolved and it is still a complicated process to send emails round the entire Department including VAs. It should be possible to set up a separate list for VAs in the same area as all the other groups. IJ and PRW will take this forward.

IJ/PRW

09/04 Shared Photocopying and Printing

DC has asked Andrew Collingwood to investigate costs of what has been spent on printers, toner, ink etc and also whether these have been paid from out of grants or by the Department. There is a large and diverse range of printers in operation.

Action

The Department will explore gradually reducing the number of printers in some areas. If shared printers are all of the same make, there is the added benefit of them all using the same consumables. Some sort of accounting system will, however, be required.

It was reported that there is no simple way for students to photocopy within the Department as they must ask a member of Teaching staff to enter a code for them.

09/05 Email Subject Line Prefixes

JAL reported she has attended a course which explained how to use prefixes in email headers such as "FYI" or "EOM" (End of Message) to help staff target how they read email. This will only work well if the institution adopts it as a whole so it was agreed to take no action on this for the time being.

09/06 Data Security / DPA / Bulletin

The question was raised about how we deal with the security of anything covered by the Data Protection Act, such as references for students. We do have security procedures in place but it is not clear how many staff adhere to them. An anonymous survey was suggested asking staff if they store references on PC/laptops and whether they transport them between home and work. This might help to identify the issues that exist. One possibility would be to issue locked USB sticks for academics, and the University is investigating this along with encryption software.

It was agreed that Biology has a good procedure in place but it would be useful to improve the education of it, and one way to do so would be via BoS members. PRW is working on the Thunderbird email start up screen as a way of promoting important messages.

Cressida has written a list of guidelines for Bulletin entries and this will be publicised in the next edition. It was agreed that sensitive matters should be kept out of the Bulletin. It is the responsibility of the submitter in the first instance, but Cressida can make a secondary check with each entry.

09/07 Reports from University Committees

i SIPIG

JPJC reported that a microphone has been installed in B006 which can digitally records lectures on the University PC for a full audio feed which can then be edited and published straight to the VLE. It is being trialled with a number of University staff and it appears to be working well. However, it captures everything that's on the PC screen at the time but animations do not filter to the podcast and it does not capture anything from the black/white boards.

Mike Jinks has retired as Director of Computing Services and has not yet been replaced. There are several changes happening within CS staff and it will take a while to settle.

ii MS Office 2007 upgrade

All teaching classrooms will move to Office 2007 over the Summer. 2007 is very different to 2003 and there may be issues with the switchover. The University will put on a series of training courses but they will need to run them on a variety of occasions to allow everyone to attend. They will also publish an online summary of changes. 2007 will not run on Windows 2000 machines, only XP. There is no intention to carry out a mass upgrade of Win 2000 PCs.

09/08 Suggestion for new information screen in the concourse

It had been discussed at Strategy Group that a plasma screen would be useful for publicising seminars to students etc but it was felt that there is no good ground-level site for a screen. To have it at a higher level would mean a very big expensive screen. The wall at the old Porters' Lodge would have power points and network cables but, although this could catch the Masters students going up the stairs, most other people would not see it there. Most of our concourse visitors are students and half of those are not likely to be Biology students so it was generally not felt to be a good use of resources.

09/09 Date of next meeting:

IJ will circulate suggestions for dates in September.

IJ