

Information Committee  
Minutes of Meeting held on 12 December 2012

Present: J Lord, I Jennings (chair), S Dwyer (sec), C O'Dea, D Cartwright, P Waites

**Action**

**12/10 Apologies for absence**

J Chong

**12/11 Minutes of meeting held 02 July 2012**

The minutes were accepted by the Committee

**12/12 Matters Arising**

12/03 (i) (a) VLE

(PRW)

Lecture recording: PW noted there had been some initial problems but student feedback has been excellent and that Richard Waites is expanding the project to cover every 1st and 2nd year lecture in B/B002, B/B006 and V045 from next year. PW also noted that the University has purchased some licences for personal video capture (one of which has been installed in K157); this will allow lecturers to produce short videos for their students and then automatically publish them to the VLE.

12/03 (iii) Data retention policy

(IJ)

IJ noted that he, John Pillmoor and Neil Bruce had recently met with the Information Directorate and they are currently collecting information on differing departmental practices across the University; they will use this to produce a University research data management policy. In the meantime IJ will liaise with Neil and John about retention of research data. IJ believes there are some major issues to be discussed and that this needs to be dealt with sooner rather than later.

12/03 (iv) Queues for printing

(IJ)

IJ reported that he and Tom Borgia from YPP had recently met with some student representatives to discuss the printing problems. YPP believe they may have found a solution to the software issues but noted that the "fix" may not work across all MFD printers. The issue surrounding printing queues at peak times is less simple; IJ and Tom have agreed to re-visit this problem once the software issues have been resolved

**Action: IJ**

The Committee discussed long printing queues and it was noted that adherence to Disability legislation requires lecture notes to be available at least 48 hours before a lecture; it was felt that printer queues may diminish if this legislation were followed as there would not be a rush to print lecture notes minutes before a lecture takes place.

IJ also noted that the 1<sup>st</sup> year student representatives had requested an increase in the printing allowance as the cost of printing had increased from last year (4p to 5p mono, A4, single sided. 4p to 9p mono, A4, double sided). However, the cost of single sided, colour printing had come down (18p to 15p).

12/04 Committee pages

(PW)

PW noted that this was a bigger task than he originally thought and is complicated since the web CMS cannot be automatically updated from Alfresco. The Committee discussed long term storage and the use of various software i.e. Google docs, Drop Box, Alfresco etc. IJ noted that he is still pursuing the use of Alfresco for the long term storage of all Biology department Committee minutes

12/05 (i) Emailing sensitive information

(IJ)

IJ noted that this was still to be completed

12/05 (i) (a) Exam folder

(JL)

JL noted that the last round of exam questions were created using Google Docs which is recommended by

the University. JL noted that she and a colleague control the read/write access given to contributors and that once the questions have been created they are removed from Google Docs and securely stored elsewhere.

**12/06 (a) Strategy for departmental systems**

(IJ/JL)

IJ/JL have agreed to explore the existing practice from Computer Science (CS) and develop further for Biology systems

**12/06 (b) Computer Science meeting**

(JL)

IJ/JL noted that they had met with CS and were positive about how staff workloads, submitting of module synopses and the publishing of modules are managed. Currently in Biology when these tasks are performed there are too many versions and disseminating documents to other systems (VLE, web CMS) is inefficient. IJ noted that he will ask for a copy of the code which CS use, try to get it running on the Biology network and then develop it from there

**Action: IJ**

**12/06 (c) MTP meeting**

(DC)

This has not been completed

**12/13 The future of the biology@york.ac.uk email account and the FOIA coordinator**

PW noted that Belinda Wade is currently looking after this email account and acting as FOIA coordinator (which she will remain). After discussion it was agreed that the biology@york email address should be removed from as many web pages as possible. The web Contacts page would be improved listing more contacts and include the Infrastructure email address. An auto-response would be placed on biology@york with a link to the Contacts Page. CO will update the Contact Us page whilst PW will make the changes to the email address.

**Action: PW/CO**

**12/14 Upgrade of Windows XP PCs to IT Services Windows 7**

IJ noted that Microsoft are withdrawing support for Windows XP in April 2014, this will effectively force an upgrade of software in the Department; Windows 7 is currently installed on Student PCs. IJ has estimated the hardware costs for Admin PCs at around £3,000 and for Research PCs at around £25,000, this does not include the time cost for the upgrades to be made and will probably involve the recruitment of temporary resources. DC suggested that the Department should fund the cost of the Research PC upgrades as well as Admin ones. IJ is currently putting together a plan and will raise it at Resources Board

**Action: IJ**

**12/15 Reports from University committees (IPF/UCC/UIF)**

**UCC**

IJ noted that the UCC has not met since the summer and he is currently trying to find out why.

**12/16 Any other business**

(i) CO reported that Blackboard will be upgraded soon

(ii) CO noted that the University is keen to find out how staff members are using mobile apps for Blackboard, the staff feedback CO has had so far has not been positive

(iii) Use of bulletin and global emails – DC raised the subject of how the Bulletin / Departmental information can be better presented. It was agreed that PW will investigate some newsletter software and the Committee will all investigate ways of improving the presentation, CO will speak with the Press Office for some advice

**Action: All**

(iv) Mobile Biology site – CO reported that she has been asked to create a separate Biology site for use on mobile phones, initially she is trialling 1 or 2 areas which are aimed at prospective students before committing to a full replica of the existing Biology web site.

**12/17 Date of next meeting**

TBC