

**MINUTES OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMPUTING COMMITTEE MEETING**

HELD ON Wednesday 14th December 2011

Present: DJC - David Colling

RBe - Raymond Beuselinck

JC – John Conway

SF - Simon Fayer

RB - Richard Bantges

SR (ICT) – Steve Rochford

MW (ICT) – Matthew Williams

CR (ICT) – Chris Roberts

JS – James Spencer

HV - Harry Vine

VF - Vivienne Frater

KW - Kenny Weir

CP – Carl Paterson

SB – Simon Bland

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| **Actions arising from last meeting**  Huxley Machine room status and plans  KW advised that funding has been secured. The next stage is for him to meet with the groups reps to discuss their requirements. Nothing is happening to the room until March 2012. | Actions  KW |
| 1. Investigate the possibility of using NetBeans for teaching. – Action carried over.  2. Get SharePoint configuration finished - End of week. – To be confirmed this week  3. Investigate who manages lab PCs. 1st yr lab – Harish Dawda; 2nd yr lab - Graham Axtell; 3rd yr lab – Lee Parker.  4. Check lecture theatre projectors & AV and check renewal date. - Action ongoing. AM aware of AV problems in LT1 - ICT to setup a group to solve this properly AM suggested a specific meeting to try and solve this properly. DJC to set up the group and suggested July would be best time for this meeting.  5. Arrange Blackboard so tutors can access tutee's marks. Action ongoing.  6. Send an e-mail about IDL licenses. Action ongoing. RB confirmed 256 licences will be available from the College Software shop – which should be adequate as Astro (who are be the biggest users) get theirs free through Starlink.  Disaster Recovery - HV advised that he has some returns back and for the time being will not be chasing for those that are missing. HV was nominated to be the Departments’ designated Empirical (the College Risk and Disaster Recovery Management Tool) user – compiling all the information onto the database and will get back to the missing returns. HV noted that if risks put in to Empirical are associated with other departments a message goes directly to ICT.  7. HV asked AM to whom in ICT it goes to. AM to find out and advise.  8. (Teaching materials can be backed up to Sharepoint once this is configured.)  DJC received a request to get this configured this week. - Action carried over.  News and round up from teaching - 1st Year teaching – have issues with the Visual studio software being too powerful for the lab computers.  Some 1st Yr & 3rd Yr lab project PCs need power where they are located  AM said that we asked should we be looking at virtual machines / commercial software flexibility to teaching rooms.  9. DJC suggested action to keep Teaching review group informed about UG Computing issues?  AM said that Maths bought 5 rack mounted Teaching servers that people cued their jobs to – that it works very well.  10. DJC said that a proper discussion is needed with all people involved in Teaching computing. DJC to action.  News round up from Groups - Issues with throttling of networks. ICT relaxed it on occasion, but there is a temporary requirement for it to be re-configured again. AM said it needs proper demarcation on the room. That Fibre optic cable should be installed into whatever replaces the Huxley machine room 147.  **11.** DJC to discuss this with KW when the time comes.  DJC to find out if LESC still exists in Department of Computing and can it be used by the groups. | Actions  Completed  Completed  Completed  Completed  ICT & DJC  Completed  RB  Ongoing  AM  AM  Completed  Ongoing DJC  Ongoing DJC  ICT advised nothing runs at 300MHz, everything now runs at 800MHz since October ’11.  Completed |
| Security  CR advised that there are 2 big changes in merging threats: Capability of hackers – several thefts of secure tokens, intent to steal data. There is increasing regulation around personal data. ICT reviewing data protection, the College will need at some point report breaches in data security. New EU legislation to come in – that requires organisations to disclose breaches.  There is a page setup for protecting sensitive data - link on ICT web page. They are putting together a policy for sensitive data.  It will be College policy that encryption tools will be put on all new HP laptops that use Windows software. Others such as MAC’s with different operating programmes will need to be looked at separately.  All Heads of Departments have been invited to hear this talk on Data security. – Suggestion made that perhaps this talk can be given at Dept. Staff meeting. Action DJC to put it to HoD. | Action  DJC |
| Data preservation and access  DJC advised that STFC scientific data policy requires data to be published within a short period of time – a result of this not being done would be STFC withdrawing its funding. Solutions need to be found as there are various issues relating to different projects / collaborations where this may not be easy / possible.  One of the points raised was some data is not in user friendly format. CR said in cases like these they would work to try and find a solution – transferring data into a format that people can read.  CR advised that EPSRC time scale (for ICT) is 1 year to find the solution and 3 years to set it up. |  |
| Computing – Teaching review  DJC to set up a small group looking at Teaching to UG – using computing as a tool for UG Physics- taking it out of labs. Using Python, SciPy (series of packages), Matlab (no decision made as to which one) in a problem solving environment, all through their UG career. Will also have Origin for quick data manipulation.  2nd yr – real programming course (maybe C++ over 8 weeks).  3rd yr – Computational Physics.  Will try to bring this into a 3/4 page report for the group and be online with this by Oct 2012. | Action  DJC |
| Lecture theatre AV facilities  SR advised that there is some new AV equipment in other Departments, that Adrian Mannell would organise the viewing of these. | Action  SR/AM |
| AOB.  CP advised he has been in contact with a lot of people in ICT, Solaris is impossible to integrate into the College system – no one knows how to do it.  JS asked if anyone who could assist with issues on the CMTH Linux computers; when he is not there and something goes wrong it creates problems. CR said that ICT should be able to help with any issues.  DJC advised of a recent networking grant to strengthen their (HEP) link to the outside world.  CP advised of provision for Computing for MSci - cannot properly teach any numerical work for MSci projects – Computational Physics as there is not enough room. There is a need for more computers and allocated space for MSci only use.  SR advised that B/319 is badly laid out and could easily hold a more computers, that the room should be restructured to increase density. . HV agreed and that the idea should be pursued with Angus & Kenny. | Action.  DJC/HV |