PhD Student News

Our **congratulations** go to the following students for successfully defending their thesis:

- **AL-RASHED Maha** (supervisor: Nigel Blackie)
- **KASIRAN Mohd** (supervisor: Farid Meziane)
- **McWHINNIE David** (supervisor: Elaine Ferneley)
- **MIT Edwin** (supervisor: Farid Meziane)

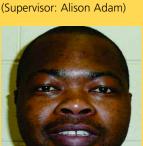We also have new IRIS students to welcome.
Registered in January 2009:

CAMPION Simon
(Supervisor: Dave Roberts)

CAULLEY Elizabeth
(Supervisor: Elaine Ferneley)

DOWD Michael
(Supervisor: Alison Adam)

DUCKWORTH Toby
(Supervisor: Dave Roberts)

MAMHENDE Vitalis
(supervisor: Alex Heinze)

MOORE Carl
(Supervisor: Dave Roberts)

RIADI Indra
(Supervisor: Samia Nefti Meziani)

Visiting Student from July to December 2008
GUJJAR Aijaz (HERC Visiting student)

Aijaz Gujjar, from The Islamia University, Bajwalpur in Pakistan visited IRIS from July to December 2008. Aijaz came to Salford to compare the Teacher Training systems in the UK and in Pakistan.

He presented a paper at the 4th IRIS PG conference in November and has attended 2 symposiums - The Internationalisation of Curriculum in June and Reflection and The Feedback of Assessment Practices in September. Aijaz wishes to thank **Professor Carole Roberts** who has given him much of her time, even when she retired in September.

Registered in October 2008:
AHMED Arshad (supervisor: David Kreps)
ANKUSH Anju (GTA) (supervisor: Grahame Cooper)
BRINDLE Joe (supervisor: Lee Griffiths)
CHAUDHRY Rafeeq (supervisor: David Kreps)
DANIA Anil (supervisor: Ben Light)
EMMANOUILIDOU Maria (GTA) (Supervisor: David Kreps)
JAZYAH Yahia Hasan (supervisor: Martin Hope)
MOONEY Jane (supervisor: Lee Griffiths)
WATTAM Eileen (supervisor: Ben Light)

New IRIS / HERC Members

Jaye McIsaac: Education Development Coordinator in ILS
My role in the Learning Development Unit is to develop, deliver and support the personal and professional development of postgraduate / early career researchers with an emphasis on teaching and learning. I coordinate and deliver an in-service teacher training programme for all new Graduate Teaching Assistants. Research Interests: I am an early career researcher, with emerging research interests. I have undertaken some small-scale research that clusters around the process of learning and teaching. I am interested in the development of academic identity for early career researchers, with an emphasis on 'learning as becoming' in the teaching development of neophyte teachers Higher Education.

Dr. Ela Beaumont in the Student Life Directorate
I am presently in the Student Life Directorate and I support students and advise academic staff on academic learning across the University. I was a Research Fellow in the School of Art and Design, Adelphi Research Institute, University of Salford.

My PhD is Family Learning and Contemporary Art and I have conducted research in Labour Market Intelligence: Unemployment in North Derbyshire, High Peak College & TEC (ESF, ESRC) and the recruitment and retention of North West Creative Arts and Design Graduates, Liverpool and Manchester.

Sophie Hill
I have been a lecturer in prosthetics and orthotics in the School of Health Care Professions for almost 11 years. Currently I'm studying for a PhD in the Department of Educational Research at Lancaster University. My thesis is on difficult concepts within a discipline using threshold concepts and theories of difficulty to explore these.

University of Salford
A Greater Manchester University

IRIS
Informatics Research Institute

Welcome to
IRIS
newsletter
March 09

This is the first newsletter following the outcome of the Research Assessment Exercise which confirmed IRIS as one of the leading multidisciplinary research institutes that brings together expertise in social, technological and computational aspects of information systems.

Research Fortnight ranked IRIS activities in the top two submissions in the country, with 75% of activities at international level and 25% at world leading level. The reviewers were particularly impressed with the Research Environment, which was highlighted as having 50% of activities at world leading level. I'd like to thank all members of IRIS whose commitment to pursuing high quality research has contributed to this success.

This newsletter highlights some activities immediately following the RAE, showing that we are not content with the excellent RAE results but building further on our successful research. It includes examples of important research events that we are organising, publications in major outlets, funded projects and students who have successfully completed their PhDs.

Prof Sunil Vadera

RAE puts IRIS in the top two in the UK

The UK Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) outcomes, announced today, show that 75% of the research activities of the Informatics Research Institute are at international level, with 25% at the world leading level.

Based on a research measure that takes account of the number of staff submitted, Research Fortnight ranks IRIS activities in the top two submissions made to the Library and Information Management panel.

Over 29 staff were included in the submission compared with 20 in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise, showing significant growth in research activity. This confirms the Informatics Institute as one of the leading multidisciplinary research institutes that brings together expertise in social, technological and computational aspects of information systems.

Recent Events

The Education in a Changing Environment Conference 2007 book of best papers was published in November 2008. Forty five papers were submitted for peer review by December 2007 and twenty of these were included in the book in four themes. The reviews were carried out by a panel that included Dr. Ann-Marie Houghton, Lancaster University, Dr. Liz Marr Manchester Metropolitan University, Dr. Mike Doyle UCLAN, Frances Bell UoS, Dr. Carol Haigh, UoS and Dr. Viv Caruana, EDU and Dr. Eamon O'Doherty, EDU. The publisher was Informing Science Press and the book can be read online at http://books.google.com/books/p/8282589572543298?id=g5xOVqOixS4C

Upcoming Events

The 5th BCS UK Symposium on Knowledge Discovery & Data Mining 2009 conference, 22 April 2009, University of Salford. Chair: Prof Sunil Vadera.

This event brings together leading researchers in the field of data mining and includes a presentation from Microsoft on the use of mining and social network analysis to enhance the automatic classification of newsgroup messages and to characterize the nature of social interactions. Other presentations include a talk from Deloite on their experiences of using data mining on real examples from the world of financial crime and fraud which is estimated to cost the insurance companies over 1.5bn per year. Full details of the programme are available at www.cse.salford.ac.uk/kdd.

2nd Digital Cultures Workshop: Social Media Publics, 4-5 June 2009, University of Salford. Chair: Prof Ben Light.

The 5th Education in a Changing Environment Conference will be held on Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 16th September 2009. The theme of this year's conference will be critical approaches to researching educational change. Information on this can be found at www.ece.salford.ac.uk.

The 4th European Conference on Intelligent Management Systems in Operations will be held at Salford on the 7th and 8th July. Co-chairs: Prof Khairy Kobbacy and Prof Sunil Vadera.

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Esteem

Apostolos Antonacopoulos has been elected Vice-President of the International Associate of Pattern Recognition (IAPR).

Further details about IAPR can be found at: www.iapr.org

Huw Jarvis has been invited by the conference organisers and the British Council to deliver the a featured speaker talk - details as follows: April, 2009. Oman International ELT Conference Responding to Challenges in the Curriculum, Assessment and Independent Learning. Featured Speaker 'The Changing Role of Computers in Independent Learning.'

Ben Light - Appointed as Senior Associate Editor – European Journal of Information Systems 2008-2010.

Ben Light (with Steve Sawyer) – Edited a special issue of the Journal: Information, Communication, Ethics and Society "Digital Culture: Blurred Boundaries and Ethical Considerations", to appear in 2009 Vol 16, Issue 1.

Ben Light – Appointed Associate Editor for the 2009 International Conference on Information Systems.

Chris Procter was invited to take part in the think tank concerning e-support for work-related learning held at Winchester Business School in January 2009 organised jointly by the HEA and JISC – contact Chris if you would like to know more

Aleksej Heinze and Elaine Ferneley - Research 2.0: Virtual Surveys Limited: Elaine and Aleksej have taken on an academic placement in a Manchester based market research company – Virtual Surveys Limited (http://www.virtualsurveys.com). This is an exciting opportunity to help the company in understanding their operations of Closed Online Research Communities and for the academics to study the way in which the latest Web 2.0 technologies change the processes of market research – Research 2.0. The particular Closed Online Research Communities they are studying are easy Jet, O2 and United Biscuits"

Invited Seminars

David Kreps was invited at a Seminar at Bath University 'Code in Action: Closing the Black Box of WCAG 2.0" Dec 3rd 2008.

David Kreps has been invited to make a presentation on Web Accessibility in the Arts for AmbITion event in London, March 09 (http://www.getambition.com/)

Ben Light was joint plenary speaker (with Dr Peter Wheeler of Edge Hill University), at the Disability and the Internet Workshop held December 2008 by the Department of Critical Media Studies, Liverpool John Moores University. Their presentation was entitled: "VIP 2.0? Disability, Technology and Disadvantage in Digital Culture".

Ben Light has been invited to speak at the University of St Andrews' LGBT Society, 16 March 2009. His talk is entitled: gaygamer.net: For Boys Who Like Joy Sticks and Girls Who Like Rumble Packs?

Sunil Vadera gave a seminar to the Chinese Academy of Science in Beijing on his research on cost-sensitive machine learning and the use of the family resemblance principle and Bayesian networks for learning exemplars.

Funded Projects

Dr Marie Griffith, Dr Alex Heinze and Professor Ben Light have succeeded with a KTP awarded with CETUS, an IT network solutions provider. The project will run for 30 months and is worth £137K. The project will develop an Enterprise 2.0 enabled relationship-management web portal. Working with Cetus Solutions, one of the growing IT infrastructure companies that have amongst their clients Media City:UK, are academics from ISOS research group Dr Marie Griffiths, Dr Aleksje Heinze and Professor Ben Light.

Marie Griffiths (ISOS), Ben Light (ISOS), Paul Kiveal (Cetus), Mike English MD Cetus), Vicky Russell (Enterprise and Development Salford), Aleksej Heinze (ISOS) and Fiona Nightingale (KTP Advisor).

Dr Gordon Fletcher, Professor Elaine Ferneley and Professor Ben Light have also won a KTP awarded on the 'The Foundry'. This project is over 24 months and is for £107k.

The company: The Foundry are a modern and very effective design consultancy with the emphasis on design innovation for which they have various awards. They are involved in all areas of branding and marketing for their clients, from designing and building creative and effective websites through advertising campaigns to point of sale (POS) material.

Their impressive client base is made up of world leading blue chip organisations including Mars, Proctor & Gamble, Scottish & Newcastle, Bulmers, Marigold and Scholl.

The project: The project is in the area of POS material. The Foundry have designed and prototyped a web based system that allows independent retailers to access, design and tailor POS material to fit their needs. Currently independent retailers are relying on generic material designed and distributed by the large suppliers and manufacturers (i.e. Mars, Scottish Courage, Proctor & Gamble) this is cumbersome and expensive as well as limited and 'un-targeted'. This system overcomes this and allows the retailers access to the branding and the campaigns devised by the suppliers and manufacturers but with the ability to tailor the material to their individual needs.

The KTP will take this prototype to completion as a product that can be used by and sold to any of their major blue chip clients for use by independent retailers

Professor Nigel Linge, Professor David Parsons, Dr Kate Booth EPSRC Partnerships for Public Engagement Funding
An important part of the work of a University is to motivate and encourage the next generation of undergraduates and to reach out into the community. The Family Telecommunications Days are one such vehicle and provide public engagement for a family audience. These events are intended to demonstrate, enthuse, educate and entertain the public by illustrating the importance of telecommunications to everyday life, how modern day technology actually works and putting its evolution into historical context. The development of telecomm-unications is intimately linked to the development of modern day society but equally importantly, is a story of scientific breakthrough, engineering endeavour and research achievement.

Telecommunications technology is a familiar part of our lives and the younger you are, an ever increasing necessity. However, despite this importance and widespread adoption - there are more mobile phones in the UK than people - the general public do not fully appreciate the engineering that makes the technology work and the youngsters don't event appreciate that there is any engineering within devices such as mobile phones. Our Family Telecommunications Days are designed to address this issue. Comprising an exhibition of telecommunications artefacts acquired by the University and a set of interactive demonstrations designed by academic staff, the public can learn how hard it was to send messages by semaphore flag or Morse Code, find out how the telephone works, learn about fibre optics and see how the Internet is able to support high quality video communications. Supported by a comprehensive range of posters, information sheets and educational activities the Family Telecommunications Days have grown in popularity since their inception in September 2006. Each event is hosted at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester and facilitated by academic staff and postgraduate students. To date a total of 10,130 people have had the pleasure of participating in a Family Telecommunications Days and judging by the feedback received, have had a most rewarding, enjoyable, motivating and educational experience.

Publications

Journal Papers
Jarvis, H. and Pastuszka, L. (2008). 'Electronic literacy, reading skills and non-native speakers: issues for EAP.' CALL-EJ Online. Vol. 10. No. 1.

Jarvis, H. (2008). 'Computers and independent study: practices and perceptions of students.' In P. Torres and R. Marriot, (eds), Handbook of Research on E-Learning Methodologies for Language Acquisition. PA: Information Science Reference. pp. 367-386.

Jarvis, H. (2008). 'Resource centres and self-study: issues in computer assisted language learning.' In E. O'Doherty, (ed.) The Fourth Education in a Changing Environment Conference Book 2007. Informing Science Press. pp. 137-154.

Figura, K., and Jarvis, H. (2007). 'Computer-based materials: a study of learner autonomy and strategies.' System. Vol. 35. No. 4. pp. 448-468.

Heinze, A., & Heinze, B. (2009). Blended E-Learning Skeleton of Conversation: improving formative assessment in undergraduate dissertation supervision. British Journal of Educational Technology, Special Issue: e-Assessment: developing new dialogues for the digital age, 40(2).

Avila-Porro, D., Light, B. and McLean, R. (2008) Web Mediated Market Interactions and Enterprise Software, Cutter IT Journal, 21(6), 29-33.

Book Chapters
Keegan, H. & Wheeler, S. (2008) Imagined Worlds, Emerging Cultures. In Wheeler, S. Connected Minds, Emerging Cultures: Cybercultures in Online Learning (Perspectives in Instructional Technology & Distance Education), with foreword by Howard Rheingold. Information Age Publishing ISBN: 978-1-60752-016-0

Keegan, H. and Lisewski, B. (2008) Living, Working, Teaching and Learning by Social Software. In Hatzipanagos, S. and Warburton, S. (Eds) Handbook of Research on Social Software and Developing Community Ontologies. IGI Global. ISBN: 978-1-60566-208-4

Kreps, D & Pearson, E (2009) Community as Commodity: Social Networking and Transnational Capitalism in forthcoming edited book, Virtual Social Networks: Mediated, Massive and Multiplayer sites Eds: Niki Panteli and Mike Chiasson (Palgrave) due out March 2009?

Rezgui, Y & Barresi, S (2008), Interoperable Knowledge: Achievements and Future Challenges. In P. Brandon and T. Kocatürk (Eds.), Virtual Futures for Design, Construction and Procurement, Wiley Blackwell Publishing, USA.

Conferences:
Huw, J (July 2008) "Languages in Higher Education Conference: Transitions and Connections" Speaker on 'Computers and independent study in language resource centres: practices and perceptions of MFL and EFL students.'

Kreps, D, & Wheeler, P, (Dec 07) "Language, Technology & the Body: Critical Research into Disability, Impairment & Web Accessibility for UK JobSeekers" paper at ICIS, Montreal, Canada

Kreps, D (June 08) "My Facebook Profile: Copy, Resemblance or Simulacrum" paper at European Conference on Information Systems Galway, Ireland

Kreps, D & Pearson, E (July 08) "Community as Commodity" paper at IFIP 9.5 WG conference in Leuphana University, Luneberg, Germany Kreps, D (Sept 08) "How the Web Continues to Fail People with Disabilities" ALT-C, Leeds, UK

Light, B. and Fletcher, G. (2009) Playing to Sing? Ethnographies of Music as Gaming, The British Sociological Association Annual Conference 2009, Cardiff City Hall, 16-18 April.

Light, B., McGrath, K. and Griffiths, M. (2008) More Than Just Friends? Facebook, Disclosive Ethics and the Morality of Technology, Proceedings of the International Conference on Information Systems, Paris.

Light, B. (2008) From Gaydar to Facebook: An Ethnography of the Evolution and Convergence of Social Media, Creating Second Lives Conference, National Institute for Excellence in the Creative Industries, Bangor University.

Light, B., McGrath, K. and Griffiths, M. (2008) Facebook's Ethics, Symposium: Facebook: a network, a research tool, a world? School of Media, Critical and Creative Arts, Liverpool John Moores University, UK.