

BCS: Northern Ireland Computing Education Committee

Minutes of meeting of the BCS: Northern Ireland Computing Education Committee held on **2nd March 2022** at 3.30pm via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT

Irene Bell, Donna Bennett, Michaela Black (MB), Eammon Brankin, Bill Connor, Pamela Cowan, Andrew Douglas (AD), Michael Gould (MG), Philip Hanna (Vice-Chair), Jonathan Heggarty, Alastair Irons, Ian McChesney (IM, Chair), Michael McEnery (MM), Grainne McGowan, Averil Morrow, Rachel Steenson (RS), Jonathan Wallace, Graeme Wilkinson. In attendance: Richard Willis (for presentation).

1. APOLOGIES

Ruth Foster, Tom Gray (TG), Siobhan Lyons, Andrena Murray, Anthony McCourt, Paul Moorhead, Roisin Rice, Gerry Trainor, Colin Turner, Nicola Ward.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (15th December 2021)

The minutes of the previous meeting (previously circulated) were approved.

PRESENTATION FROM RICHARD WILLIS

WG1 has progressed its work on a social media video for promoting computing to the Year 9 age group. Richard Willis from About Blank Creative Ltd presented an initial video proposal based on WG1 requirements, suitable for deployment via e.g. Tic Toc, Twitter.

During discussion it was noted:

- that the WG2 Young Persons' Advisory Group (YPAG) currently being assembled would be well placed to provide feedback on the video.
- the importance of targeting underrepresented groups via the video, especially females.
- the need to include in the video the role of computing and its positive impact in a range of employment sectors such as healthcare, elite sports and not just the core software industry.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Action: To follow up outstanding invitations to committee (IM). New members were welcomed to the committee: Donna Bennett (Department of Infrastructure), Pamela Cowan (The Queen's University Belfast), Averil Morrow (Education Authority) and Andrena Murray (Department of Education).

It was AGREED that Gareth O'Hare (Head of Computing, Wellington College) and Tim Gamble (Head of Computer Science, Dalriada School) be invited to join the committee.

It was further AGREED that the current membership provides a good representation of the various sectors relevant to the work of the committee.

- 3.2 Action: To provide a copy of the NCCE–Scottish curriculum mapping document (Julia Adamson). Ongoing.
- 3.3 Action: WG1 to develop short-term proposals for taking forward a marketing campaign (RS, TG). As reported in above presentation and 5.1 below.
- 3.4 Action: WG1 to progress the funding of a mapping activity of NCCE resources to NI curriculum. (RS, MM). As reported in 5.1 below.
- 3.5 Action: WG2 to progress and constitute the YPAG (MB). As reported in 5.2 below.
- 3.6 Action: To provide a copy of the CCEA Curriculum Monitoring Report (MM). A copy of the report has been placed on Basecamp.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

- 4.1 It was noted that the Barefoot programme is expanding in NI and a launch event was held in Belfast on Monday 7th February 2022. Opportunities for becoming a Barefoot Volunteer and Barefoot Advocate were also noted.
- 4.2 The Computing at Schools (CAS) website has been refreshed. The committee noted the Computing Quality Framework currently being offered by CAS.

5. UPDATES FROM WORKING GROUPS

5.1WG1

RS presented a verbal update on the current WG1 actions:

- a teacher survey has been completed with 23 responses received. Full responses are available on Basecamp. In summary, teacher wishes focused on enhancing areas of curriculum (e.g. opportunities for making it more practical), funding (e.g. for upskilling), additional resources (e.g. to procure engaging kit for pupils to use) and enhancing Key Stage 3 (e.g. provision of a statutory curriculum in computing). At its next meeting the WG will review how to move forward with the findings from the survey.
- NCCE mapping. AD gave an update on progress. NCCE resources had been

reviewed with a small group teachers. The absence of a statutory curriculum in computing in NI means mapping is quite straightforward. Availability of relevant resources can be promoted through awareness raising and signposting. It is planned NCCE mapping will be taken forward as an item in next year's CCEA programme of work. Teacher guidance documentation can be updated as part of curriculum development funding within CCEA.

- Social Media Campaign. RS further updated the committee as per the earlier presentation. It was AGREED that WG1 should progress the Year 9 social media campaign in conjunction with About Blank Creative Ltd, with a particular focus on consistent messaging of opportunities across all potential employment sectors.

It was further AGREED that the Year 9 campaign should avail of input from the YPAG.

5.2WG2

MB presented a verbal update on the current WG2 actions:

- 17 nominations were received for the YPAG. Criteria as agreed at previous meeting were applied to reduce this number to 12 members – six females and six males.

The YPAG membership following application of the criteria was outlined and it was AGREED that WG2 formally write to successful nominees confirming membership for a two year period.

6. SOFTWARE SKILLS FOR A 10X ECONOMY – UPDATE

6.1 SOFTWARE ALLIANCE.

MG reported that work is underway by local companies to setup a formal software alliance / trade association. While starting small, it will aim to include all interested small, medium and large companies whose core business is the engineering of software solutions.

6.2 SECTOR ATTRACTIVENESS PROGRAMMES.

MG reported DfE had secured resource to review the current range of sector attractiveness programmes, especially government funded initiatives, with a view to rationalizing the number of initiatives and enabling consistent messaging.

7. SOFTWARE SKILLS FOR A 10X ECONOMY - CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

IM introduced the paper outlining those recommendations from the SS10X report which were most relevant to the work of this committee.

Previous discussion in the meeting had been helpful in addressing how to address these recommendations.

MM indicated CCEA has formally responded to the SS10X report. Where appropriate, endorsement from groups such as NICEC can help in strengthening CCEA proposals.

There was discussion on publicity activity arising from the work of this committee. It was AGREED that the Chair and Working Groups consider how some of the achievements to date (e.g. establishment of the YPAG and the social media campaign) should be publicized.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED next meeting will be held on Wednesday 15th June at 3.30pm via MS Teams.

Actions:

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| 3.1 | Invite new members to committee. | IM |
| 5.1 | WG1 to progress the Year 9 social media campaign in conjunction with About Blank Creative Ltd | RS |
| 5.1 | Year 9 social media campaign to receive feedback from YPAG | RS, MB |
| 5.2 | WG2 to formally write to YPAG confirming membership. | MB |
| 7 | To consider publicity opportunities highlighting work of committee. | IM, RS, MB |