

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	20th April 2020
Location	Teleconference
Title of Paper	Forensic Services and Academic Collaboration Report
Item number	8
Presented By	Tom Nelson
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To provide members with:

- An update of the range and scale of the engagement that Forensic Services staff have with Universities.

1. BACKGROUND

The purpose for this paper is to provide the Forensic Services Committee with the current engagement Forensic Services staff have with various Universities.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

Forensic Services engage with a range of universities mainly from Scotland, at various levels, from supervision of students within our laboratories to remote collaboration on academic projects.

Types of engagement

1. Master of Science (MSc) placements

Forensic Services have worked collaboratively, for many years, with the University of Strathclyde by offering placement projects to students undertaking the MSc Forensic Science course. Placements typically last from May to August on projects identified by Forensic Services directly relating to service improvements. On average there are three placements per annum.

2. Postdoctoral (PhD) collaboration

Lead Forensic Scientists from across the disciplines are supporting PhD projects by providing advice and some instances laboratory services. In addition, in some cases assistance is provided in establishing proof of concept. PhD Projects are not normally initiated by Forensic Services; Forensic Services are normally approached by an institution seeking collaboration.

Ongoing Projects:

Academic Institution	Project scope
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Gunshot residue recovery
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Comparison of DNA software
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Identification of dermal fingerprints
Staffordshire University	Fingerprint analysis and documentation

3. Bachelor of Science (BSc) projects

BSc projects are typically shorter than MSc projects, undertaken at the university and require minimal engagement from Forensic Services. In the past these have included Napier and Robert Gordon Universities

4. Collaboration with academia

Lead Forensic Scientists from across the Biology, Physical Sciences and Scene Examination disciplines are engaged on a number of research projects and initiatives:

- Projects ongoing:

Academic Institution	Project scope
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Fire Investigation training
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Collaboration in workshops
SIPR / Edinburgh University	Professional Judgement and Decision Making
DSTL-led	Recovery Technology Review Group
Sheffield University	Review of research proposals
Liverpool John Moore's University	Preparation of judicial primer for GSR
Antwerp University	Detection of Drugs

- Projects pending/initial scoping:

Academic Institution	Project scope
Strathclyde University	Development of human DNA sampling kit
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	DNA transfer
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Transfer and persistence of fibres
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Risk, Bias & Decision Making fingerprints
Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science	Enhancement of fingerprints
Napier University	Facial Imaging

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

Mandatory guidance issued by the Scottish and UK Government's came into effect on 23 March 2020 regarding social distancing and for people to stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives. Engagement has commenced with the University of Strathclyde to identify and consider MSc project which could be managed remotely or alternative arrangements. Students were due to attend Forensic Services in May. Prioritisation of business operations in the coming months would however be a priority and any student support would be required to have minimal / no impact on service delivery.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. There are no financial implications associated with this paper.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. There are no direct personnel implications associated with this paper.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no direct reputational implications associated with this paper.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are no direct social implications associated with this paper.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1. There are no direct community impact implications associated with this paper.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to note the content of this paper.