Honorary Professorships 2024/2025

College of Science and Engineering

Professor Colin Cunningham, School of Engineering

Colin Cunningham's early career was spent designing and building instrumentation for botanical sciences, freshwater ecology, and geophysics. He then moved to astronomical instrumentation at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh (ROE), where he was project manager for the Submillimetre Common User Bolometer Array (SCUBA) - the first instrument to produce detailed images of the submillimetre universe, including discovery of a new class of early galaxies. With the formation of the UK Astronomy Technology Centre (UK ATC) at the ROE, he was the first Chief Engineer and Deputy Director. During this time, he was Systems Engineer for the SPIRE instrument on the Herschel Space Observatory, and chair of the UK Space Agency projects review panel.

Subsequently, he became UK Project Director for the European Southern Observatory's Extremely Large Telescope. Towards the end of his career at the UK ATC, he was awarded a Royal Academy of Engineering Visiting Professorship at the University of Edinburgh, and spent seven years working part-time to develop material to boost the exposure of students to techniques of Systems Engineering, and Systems Thinking that are vital to solving many of the complex problems that the world faces.

He has a BSc (Eng) from Imperial College in Electrical Engineering and an MSc from Chelsea College London in Biophysics and Bioengineering. He is a Chartered Engineer, and is a Fellow of the IET and the Institute of Physics and a member of INCOSE.

Professor Adam Barker, School of Informatics

Adam Barker is the Director of Systems Infrastructure Research (SIR) at Huawei, where he leads a team bridging cutting-edge systems research with production engineering. His research interests focus on large-scale distributed systems, operating systems and cloud computing. Previously, he was a Senior Research Scientist at Google and a Full Professor of Computer Science at the University of St Andrews (2010–2024). Prior to obtaining a faculty appointment, Adam worked as a Research Fellow at the University of Oxford, the University of Melbourne and the University of Edinburgh.

Adam has published over 90 research papers in top-tier conferences and secured over £3.5 million in funding from major scientific bodies. He holds a PhD in Informatics from the University of Edinburgh, an MSc in Distributed Systems and a BSc in Software Engineering from Newcastle University.

Dr Ben Bennett, Senior Director, HPC & AI Marketing, Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Ben is a Senior Director of HPC & AI Marketing working in the global Product & Solutions Marketing team, based out of the UK.

In this role Ben focusses on the Supercomputing and AI Industry understanding customer's headaches and ensuring that solutions and features are cleary defined as well as the appropriate messaging and event coverage is available to both global sales and HPE's customers..

Ben also works with HPE's corporate affairs team to drive HPC content, and knowledge, into their work with the education, science, research, and industrial components of public bodies, both at a UK and European level.

Ben has over 35 years supercomputing experience in academia and industry as a user, as a supplier, and as a purchaser of High Performance Computers.

Ben holds a Bachelor's degree in Electrical & Electronic Engineering and a PhD in Control Engineering looking at data structures in real-time parallel control systems used in flight control systems.

In November 2024 Ben was awarded an Honorary Professorship from the University of Edinburgh's Parallel Computing Centre.

Dr Andrew Kitchener, School of Geosciences

Dr Andrew Kitchener is Principal Curator of Vertebrates at National Museums Scotland and is responsible for the curation and development of the vertebrate collections, which number around 500,000 specimens, including Dolly the Sheep.

His main research interests are the geographical variation in and biogeography of mammals, hybridisation, Scottish zooarchaeology, the effects of captivity on endangered vertebrates, animal welfare and functional morphology.

Andrew has developed several permanent and temporary exhibitions at the museum, including Monkey Business (2016), The Wolfson Galleries of the Natural World (2011), Cats … the ultimate predators (2004), Beginnings (1998), Bird Biology (1994) and World in Our Hands (1992). He has several advisory roles, including as a member of IUCN Cat Specialist Groups, for which he leads the Cat Classification Task Force, the IUCN Equid Specialist Group and the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme Steering Group, and the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria Biobanking Working Group.

He was recently reappointed for a second term to the Scottish Animal Welfare Commission, which advises Scottish Government on animal welfare issues. He is an Honorary Lecturer at the University of Glasgow, Chair of Trustees of the People's Trust for Endangered Species and Chair of Conservation Advisory Group of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.

He has a BSc (Hons) in Zoology with Physiology and Biochemistry from the University of Reading and completed his PhD there.

Professor Prakash Panangaden, School of Informatics

Professor Prakash Panangaden received an MSc in Physics from IIT Kanpur in 1975 and MS in Physics from the University of Chicago in 1978 and a PhD in Physics from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1980. He received an MS in Computer Science from the University of Utah in 1985.

From 1985 to 1990 he was an Assistant Professor of Computer Science at Cornell University and from 1990 to 1996 was an Associate Professor of Computer Science at McGill University.

Since then he has an Emeritus Professor at McGill University and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2013, a Fellow of the Association of Computing Machinery in 2020 and a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2025.

His research interests are probabilistic systems, approximation of Markov processes, behavioural metrics, reinforcement learning, logics for reasoning about programs and quantum information theory and he occasionally work in physics and category theory.