



CSAT 2016 Panel Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the CSAT Panel held at 2:00pm,
Thursday 21 April 2016 in Room SW00, William Gates Building

Present: Bogdan Roman (Chair)
Claire Chapman (Secretary)
David Chisnall
Alan Mycroft
Andy Rice
Richard Watts

The aim of this meeting is to agree on what feedback we would like to obtain from students.

1. Apologies

John Fawcett
Sean Holden

2. Matters arising from the last minutes

The panel noted that the Director of Admissions agreed with the CSAT proposal.

3. Trial content and structure

The trial is anonymous. The purpose of the trial is to assess and calibrate the suitability of the questions, as well as the structure of the test, and to obtain detailed feedback from the students regarding questions and test structure.

The trial is planned for Sunday, April 24, 2:00pm at the Computer Lab and will be run by Bogdan similar to last year's trial. The structure of the trial will include a short introduction, followed by 2-2.5h of sitting the test, followed by a discussion in two parts: first going through the solutions of each question and then discussing the questions, test structure and obtaining feedback. Food will be provided. A first questionnaire will be filled by students during the first part of the discussion with on-point feedback about questions. A second questionnaire will be filled afterwards with more general points about the test. The invitation email sent to IA, IB, II, III students is included below.

The following points were discussed at the present meeting:

1) **We have 26 questions. Should we ask students to attempt all of them?**

It was agreed that it would be of value for students to have the same structure as the actual test for the first 100 minutes and 20 questions, giving freedom of choice as in the actual test for this part, and then allow an extra 90 minutes or so to attempt any question from the ones that were not attempted in the first 100 minutes. Bogdan will propose which 20 questions are the most suitable for the first 100 minutes.

2) **What test structure to use in the trial?**

It was agreed to use two sections, with Section A being easier, and to mark everything but consider the best 5 in each section. This would give an indication to the candidate about time management and expectation, but disadvantages candidates who make silly errors. Feedback from students will be sought in regards to what structure would be best. Bogdan will propose which questions to use for Section A and Section B.

3) **What feedback should we get from students?**

The feedback questions from last year were looked at. It was agreed that the feedback from students should include:

- a. Perceived difficulty and time spent on each question.
- b. Would capping the number of questions be preferable or would you prefer to answer as many questions as you can?
- c. Nominate your preferred 5 questions for Section A and Section B, in order of preference
- d. Is there any correlation between how you thought you did and how you scored?
- e. What type of school did you attend?
- f. Do you feel this test is designed to help select people who will do well in the Tripos?
- g. What should we change?
- h. What Maths extracurricular activities did you do at school?

It was announced that 31/45 participants completed the feedback last year.

4) **Invitation email sent to current CL undergrads and DoSes:**

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: take part in the CSAT trial at the CL (free food, drinks, dessert)

Date: Tue, 19 Apr 2016 15:45:21 +0100

From: Bogdan Roman <bogdan.roman@cl.cam.ac.uk>

To: students-part1a-cst@cl.cam.ac.uk, students-part1b@cl.cam.ac.uk, students-part2@cl.cam.ac.uk, students-part3@cl.cam.ac.uk

CC: cl-undergrad-dos@lists.cam.ac.uk

Dear undergrads (CC'ed DoSes),

I hope you had a great Easter break. Welcome back to the Cambridge madness.

We'll run a trial of the CSAT - <http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/csats/> - to calibrate the level/kind/structure of questions, and your participation is absolutely essential. It's a fun event, some of you will remember last year's trial.

When: Sunday, April 24, 2:00pm
Where: LT1
What: Funky maths & compsci questions
What else: Free food + drinks + dessert

Registration required by Saturday 12pm - it's anonymous, as will be the whole trial:

<https://abr.formstack.com/forms/csats16trial>

The plan is simple:

- (a) I'll give a short intro in LT1.
- (b) You sit the test anonymously for about 2h.
- (c) We move to FW26 where free edibles await.
- (d) We go through the questions together on a projector while enjoying the edibles, and discuss your thoughts on the questions and test structure.

You can, of course, leave at any point after (b) but would be great if you could stay for the discussions ... you'd also get to take remaining food+drinks home. Incentives.

In all seriousness, besides the fun, this is a chance for you to actually contribute to shaping the admissions at Cambridge for CompSci and help Cambridge get the best people. We'll greatly value your input and put it to good use!

Hope to see many of you on Sunday,

Bogdan.

<http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~abr28>