

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Chairman: Dr R. K. Harle

Secretary: Mrs M.A. Sammons

Minutes for the Directors of Studies Forum held on 14 Friday October 2016
at 14:00 in FW11 in the William Gates Building

Members:

Prof J. Bacon (JE)	Dr R. M. Mortier (CHR)
Dr A. R. Beresford (ROB)	Dr R. D. Mullins (JN, PET)
Prof A. F. Blackwell (DAR)	Prof L. C. Paulson (CL)
Dr D. Chisnall (ME)	Ms D. Pounds (Manager Teaching Admin)
Dr A. Donnelly (PEM)	Prof P. Robinson (CAI)
Dr J. K. Fawcett (CHU,N,M,SID)	Dr A. B. Roman (Q)
Dr D. J. Greaves (CC)	Mrs M. Sammons (Teaching Admin Asst)
Dr T. G. Griffin (K)	Dr R. Sharp (ROB)
Mr C. K. Hadley (G)	Dr F. M. Stajano (T)
Dr R. K. Harle (DOW,ED,F)	Mrs C. Stewart (Dept Sec)
Dr J. M. Hayman (E)	Dr S. Taraskin (CTH)
Dr S. B. Holden (T)	Dr G. Titmus (CAI)
Prof I. M. Leslie (CHR)	Dr C. P. Town (W)
Prof C. Mascolo (JE)	Dr R. R. Watts (SE)
Prof S. W. Moore (TH)	

1. Apologies for absence

Dr D. Chisnall	Dr Richard Sharp
Prof A. Dawar	Dr C.P. Town

Richard Mortier was welcomed as Co-Director of Studies for Christs College.

1. Minutes of the previous meetings.

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

2. Matters arising.

- i. The Forum discussed grade inflation and expressed concern that this will devalue classes. This will be taken to Faculty Board for further discussion.
Action PR
- ii. It was confirmed that, for 2017, Part II students may submit *either* 2 paper copies *or* an electronic version of their dissertation. This must be done by the 12 noon deadline or the mark penalty will apply. If they submit both, they will have no control over which version is marked by examiners. It is anticipated that most students will submit electronically.

3. Notification of any other business

Finding supervisors.

4. Start of term

- i. Feedback on the Pre-arrival course. Large numbers of students signed up for the pre-arrival course including some who were not taking CST or NST. There was a lot of evidence of students helping each of other in a very positive way through the Moodle Forum and this has continued into the early ML tick work.

The pre-arrival course also proved a very useful filter although a large number of NST students taking CST as an option did not complete the course and now appear to be struggling. The Forum supported the view that the pre-arrival course should be a pre-requisite for NST students wishing to take CST Paper 1.

Action RKH

- ii. **Stats and course options.** Numbers are large. IA CST has settled at 101, 8 more than originally offered. DoS confirmed that transferring in from NST, Maths and Engineering and some students taking up deferred places account for the increase. To date, there are 61 NST and 1 PBS students taking Paper 1. 74 students have taken the 75% option (roughly 75% of the cohort). Hardware practicals have moved to Thursday and Friday afternoons for MT to accommodate the larger than expected number. RKH was pleased to report that 156 out of 163 students had completed the first ML tick ahead of schedule.
- iii. Female students account for 14% of those admitted. Although disappointingly low, this is line with applications and DoS did not consider there to be a case for admitting more. Our aim should be to encourage more female applicants. In particular, the Lab's Outreach Committee would welcome more female speakers at OxBridge conferences and for school visits.
- iv. **Admissions test.** Dr Roman reported that 29 colleges now use CSAT. It is preferable if all colleges interview for CS during the first interview week and the Admission Forum would prefer just one marking session taking place centrally in the Lab. Currently, the Department is paying the markers but will not be able to do so indefinitely. DoS are interested to see a comparison between a student's CSAT result and their tripos result. **Action ABR**
- v.

5. Presentation on the new Paper 3 Interface Design course (Prof Alan Blackwell).

The course has been developed by Dr Hatice Gunes and replaces Software and Interface Design. It is much more practically based and will provide a better preparation for Part IB Group Projects. There will be 2 lectures and 2 practicals per week. Practical work will be undertaken in groups assigned by the Lab and taught in 'studio style' in the Intel Lab using demonstrators. Initially these will be professionals but in subsequent years Part IB and Part II students can demonstrate. There are 3 ticks planned and full attendance is expected. The course will run in Easter term and will be carefully arranged so as to not run into student's exam revision time. The final tick will be due 17 days before exams and the last practical will be a 'catch-up' session. The exam questions will be similar to Software and Interface Design questions but will exclude UML. The practical work will focus on designing a small app and it is hoped there will be time for students to make a presentation of their work. 2 supervisions will be needed for exam preparation. A Moodle site will be set up supervisors and we suggest DoS employ local software developers. The tick ratio for Paper 3 is 20%, the same as Paper 1 and 2.

6. It was confirmed that the Department is following the University data protection policy correctly and DoS are happy for the current arrangements for the release of examination results to continue. It is not deemed practicable to send individual students their marks for every question manually and the function is not available on CamSis. Individual marks will continue to be provided to DoS who will disseminate these to their students. The CL website will be updated to give students a clear explanation of the policy. **Action DP**

- 7. AOB.** DoS reported considerable difficulty finding supervisors this year, particularly for Databases and Graphics courses and for Part II. The Lab has fewer PhD students in proportion to UTOs than many departments and we are experiencing an increase in undergraduate students which has compounded the problem. DoS agreed that increasing group size was not desirable but that the number of supervisions in IA could be reduced. This will be further discussed by the Teaching Committee and the Department would need to change the recommended supervision norms.

The Lab has set up a 'matchmaking site' on Moodle for DoS and supervisors. Supervisors need reminding to keep signing up and advertising their availability.

Action CLC

Afternote: Dr Mullins passed on the very positive feedback students had given to the informal activity at registration organised by Part IB students. He believed the positive interaction had contributed to the increase in peer learning on the pre-arrival course and on the early ML ticks.

- 8. Date of next meeting**
Friday 13 January 2017 at 14:00 in FW11