

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

Chairman: Prof A Mycroft

Secretary: Ms D E Pounds

Minutes of the meeting of the Tripos Management Committee
held on Tuesday 19 June 2012 at 14:15 in GS15

Present

Dr Robert Harle (*Parts IA and IB Course Director*)

Dr Sean Holden (*Part II Course and Supervision Co-ordinator*)

Prof Alan Mycroft (*Tripos Co-ordinator, Representative for NatSci Management Cttee*)

Ms Dinah Pounds (*Secretary*)

Prof Peter Robinson (*Exchange Programme Organiser*)

Dr Ian Wassell (*Representative for MPhil in ACS*)

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. Apologies for Absence

Dr Andrew Moore (*Chair of SSSoF*)

Dr R Gibbens (*Representative on Mathematics Faculty Board*)

2. Sabbatical and other leave

3. Notification of any other business

- I. The Department Website
- II. Proposal from Dr Thomas Forster
- III. RLFA course
- IV. Part II Supervision and teaching

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

5. Matters Arising

Prof A Mycroft reported that Prof I Leslie will adjust the Part IB Group Project briefing document for 2012-13 to clarify the scope of the client's permitted requests.

6. Reports from other committees

The committee received the notes of the Staff and Student Consultative Forum meeting held on Wednesday 14 March 2012 and discussed the following:

Staff and Student Consultative Forum

- I. The TMC supported the request for initial course surveys taken after one or two lectures to offer helpful feedback to a lecturer early in the course. Members of the Committee will consider the best approach as more than one online Camtools survey per course was not considered likely to achieve a good student response. Further discussion is deferred to the next meeting.
- II. The concentration of lectures in Easter Term for the topics for Paper 4 has been resolved by the 2012-13 timetable which aims to better balance lectures on each paper over terms.
- III. One student had found the concentration of 'arts' type subject which required

extensive reading difficult to cope with in Easter term. The Committee did not consider this a widespread problem requiring action. [Afternote: the 2012/13 timetable movement of Complexity into Easter Term instead of Security I should assist such students.]

- IV. Students had raised three issues with regard to questions appearing on 2012 examination papers. It was confirmed that these were errors made by individual assessors and did not reflect a change in Departmental policy. The issues have been noted by the Examiners (see Item 11 below). The Chair expressed concern that the TMC has no formal powers to advise to the Examiners, unlike the ATCMC.
- V. Dr R Harle reported the student response to the release of examination question solution notes for revision which they found very useful. However, they felt that best practice was also to have details of "most relevant questions and solutions on individual course pages".
- VI. Students also expressed a preference for practical sessions for the teaching of C/C++. We plan to explore this for 2013/14 if the new 2012/13 Prolog lecture/practical combination proves successful.

7. Correspondence

Admissions Data from Schools for the UAC Annual Report: Technology 2012. The Chair reported that Prof A Copestake (Deputy HofD for teaching) will update the admission figure in due course. This will reflect a future admissions target of 100 Part IA students.

8. The Committee approved the draft timetable for 2012-13.

9. **Lecture listing request from Department of Education and Policy.** The Committee agreed to set up an email link on the CL website for public enquires regarding lectures. **Action DP**

10. The Chair reported that the new timetable moved RLFA earlier which addressed the issues raised by Prof A Pitts. The only significant syllabus changes were for Computer Graphics and Interaction (IB) and Software and Interface Design (IA). Summary details of changes have been circulated to Directors of Studies.

11. Recommendations to the Tripos Examiners

We propose that the guidance to exam questions setters should explicitly say: "it should be possible for a person well-read on the topic of a course (e.g. one of our colleagues from another university) to be able to answer exam questions without having attended the lectures or seen the notes". This should apply for all Part IA and IB courses, and normally to Part II courses, but courses such as "Topical Issues" may seek exemption from this guidance.

The Committee approved the wording and requests that JTSC/FB make a formal recommendation to the examiners. **Action AM.** Afternote: Chair has discussed this with the current examiners.

12. **Timetable for Part II dissertations.** The Committee did not support the student request to bring forward the submission deadline by two weeks but recommended the duties of the overseers be enhanced with increased student briefings and firmer guidance as to best practice given. Overseers will be appointed in July instead of October to allow students to consult during the long vacation if they wish. These recommendations will be submitted to the Dr D Greaves, lecturer in charge of Part II dissertations. **Action AM/DP.**

- 13. Form and Conduct Notices.** The proposed changes were agreed. These will be presented to Faculty Board on 2 October 2012. **Afternote:** the Chair secured approval by correspondence for changes to the Head of Department Notice concerning the names and timing of Part IA and IB practicals.
- 14. Student Admin**
- I. **Wording of Student Surveys for 2012-13.** Prof P. Robinson agreed to send suggestions to Student Admin.
 - II. **Venues for Part IA lectures 2012-13.** The Committee welcomed the change from Hopkinson Theatre to Art Schools A for all Part IA lectures.
- 15. Preliminary reading lists.** The committee approved the reading list suggestion of PR and RJG which is now installed on the CL web site.
- 16. Any other Business**
- I. The Committee recommended the Department website should adopt a more responsive design to adapt to use by a mobile device. **Action: AM to contact pagemaster.** [Afternote: awaiting response.]
 - II. Proposal from Dr Thomas Forster for a non-examinable courses on linear logic. The chair reported that he had encouraged Dr Forster and his colleagues to make a firm proposal for 2013/14 but noted that any such lectures would be unpaid.
 - III. RLFA course. Dealt with above.
 - IV. Part II Supervision and Teaching. There was some discussion on ways to improve this, and in particular how to ensure that students were supervised (rather than last-minute examples classes being arranged because supervisors could not be found). The chair has since arranged that each course syllabus, in addition to listing the number of lectures, also lists the suggested number of supervisor hours (taken from the Senior Tutors' supervision norms document) and where lecturers can note any planned examples classes. The Chair expressed his appreciation of the work of Megan Sammons in increasing the number of courses for which supervisions are given. The plan is for all Part II courses except one to have supervisions in 2012/13.
- 17. Date of next meeting.** To be arranged with the new Chair (IML).

The Chair wishes to thank the committee for many helpful discussions as his tenure comes to an end.