

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Chairman: Dr David Greaves

Secretary: Ms D. E. Pounds

Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Tripos Management Committee
held on Monday 16 June 2014 at 14:15 in GS15

Present

Prof Ann Copestake (*Deputy Head of Department*)
Dr Richard Gibbens (*Representative on Mathematics Faculty Board*)
Dr David Greaves (*Chairman*)
Dr Sean Holden (*Part II and Supervisions co-ordinator*)

Prof Ian Leslie
Ms Dinah Pounds (*Secretary*)
Prof Peter Robinson (*Exchange Programme Organiser*)

1. Apologies for Absence

Dr Robert Harle

2. Sabbatical and other leave

None requested.

3. Notification of any other business

- i. IA Practical assessments.
- ii. Discussion on standards within the Computer Science Tripos and comparability of courses across the University. AAC

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were approved and signed.

5. Matters arising

Dr Thomas Sauerwald has requested 12 lectures for the new Part II Advanced Algorithms course. There will be 10 lectures and 2 examples classes.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- 6.** The minutes from the Staff-student Consultative Forum were tabled. There were no issues to address.

7. Correspondence

- i. Prof Peter Robinson (Item 8)
- ii. Prof Alan Mycroft (Item 9)
- iii. Prof Ann Copestake (Item 10)
- iv. Dr Simon Moore (Item 11ii)

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS

- 8. Progress on the proposed introduction of a third paper for Part IA.** The Committee confirmed that there was broad support within the Department for a more modular approach to the whole tripos. Developments as a result of the introduction of the new A level computing course should be taken into consideration, placing more

emphasis on problem-solving and include more practical work. The proposal presented by Prof Robinson (correspondence 2014-06-16b) was welcomed but with some reservations regarding possible timetabling difficulties. Reducing the NST option to physics only in IA would alleviate this. Working parties have been set up to further discuss the proposals. The Committee noted that these should take into account attractiveness to students and motivation, and that the course should cover all core material to conform to accreditation requirements. The possibility of moving exams to the start of Easter term followed by practical work will be considered. It is hoped that supervisors and colleges can be involved in assessing practical work.

The proposal will be presented for further discussion to the Director of Studies forum, Faculty Board and shared with the Education Committee during the summer break. It is anticipated that a final version will be presented to Faculty Board in October 2014.

Action DJG, PR, AAC, IML.

- 9. Proposal from Prof Alan Mycroft regarding Part II Types.** The Committee welcomed Prof Mycroft's proposal providing a teaching officer oversees the course (correspondence 2014-06-16b) and will seek agreement from all parties. **Action DP.**
Afternote: the course will now run for 2014-15.
- 10. Funding for the tripos.** (2014-06-16c). It was confirmed that funding is not in the remit of this Committee. Some research to establish more transparency in the funding budget was suggested but the Committee are happy with the current funding arrangement. The provision of virtual appliances will be pursued. **Action AAC.**
- 11. Part IB practicals and ticks.**
 - i. The Committee agreed to increase the number of ticks awarded for Part IB Group Projects to 4. An additional prize for a high quality group report was proposed.
 - ii. The arrangements for Ecad practical sessions for 2014-15 were approved.
- 12. Focus group report** (2014-06-16d). The Committee noted student concerns, particularly about Group Projects but anticipate that the new arrangements for 2014 will remedy this. Although some comments may not be representative of the students as a whole it was felt that the exercise built up a useful body of understanding and should be repeated each year.
- 13. Report by the Chair on revisions to NST Maths.** The Chair welcomed the upcoming changes to Maths for Natural Scientists which should make the course more suited to Computer Science students.
- 14. Any other business**
 - i. It was agreed to keep the schedule for IA practical assessments as it is.
 - ii. Discussion on standards within the Computer Science Tripos. Prof Copestake informed the Committee that the Department for Engineering have adjusted boundaries on the Engineering tripos in order to provide comparability across the University. The Computer Science value-added score is low and it is felt that our students are at a disadvantage in being marked against Natural Sciences rather than with courses across the University. It was agreed to consult the external Examiner regarding national standards. **Afternote:** our External Examiner has confirmed that the standard for the Computer Science tripos examinations is exceptionally high when compared nationally.

Date of next meeting: Monday 13 October 2014 at 14:00 in GC15