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 Friday 13 January 2017 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 J.M Hayman   Dr Richard Sharp
        Prof S.W Moore   Dr C.P. Town
        Prof L.C Paulson   Dr F.M Stajano

2.   Minutes from previous meeting

3.   Matters arising
        i. Clarification, Directors of Studies may share marks with supervisors of Part II
        students' dissertations.
        ii. SSCoF reps report that female students may prefer to be in mixed gender groups
        for supervisions.
        iii. Unanimous agreement that all students must attempt the pre-arrival course before
        the start of term. DoSes with NST students need to notify their students with a date
        the test to be completed by. A note to tutorial offices to be sent to advise of this.
        Action RKH
        iv. New PhD students are to be asked to identify 5 courses they can supervise in and
         advised that they may be happy to begin by supervising Part IA and IB. **DP and
        LMG to liaise about this.**

4   Notification of any other business
        Admission requirement of Further Maths A level to study Computer Science.

5.   Winter pool and report on applications for 2017
        Computer Science had the largest growth for applications. It was agreed de-
        selection may be a worthwhile consideration due to the large numbers to interview.
        Overseas students would still require interviewing as there is little evidence of
        background work or personal statements on applications.

Just less than 130 offers have been made of which 23% are females and 77% male. Offers to mature students are made in March.

There is some evidence that some students applying to Cambridge are also receiving offers from US universities and opting to take the funded US option.

In 2016, several students switched to Computer Science from Maths, Engineering and Natural Sciences.

6. Athena SWAN.

All DoS were encouraged to send names of new PhD students for participation in the annual unconscious bias seminar to be presented in Michaelmas term.

7. Report on CSAT Trial – Dr Bogdan Roman

The test comprised of 5 questions and takes the following pattern:
Section A – slightly easier, multiple choice confidence boosting paper and
Section B – multiple choice and scripted answer.

Reports from colleges:
Several colleges struggled with the logistics of the test and one college reported that the applicants found it tough and demotivating.

Admissions tutors were concerned in case the instructions were not clear and that some changes to the marking scheme were made after students had sat the test.

Afternote: ABR has confirmed that all scripts were marked consistently and new solutions had to be taken into account to avoid disadvantaging candidates; STEP does the same.

Suggestions for next year:
Directors of Studies were encouraged to write to Bogdan with any suggestions/proposals or questions and answers for next years' CSAT test.
The following possibilities were discussed-
Engineering have a Section A, multiple choice only and a Section B which has some multiple choice and scripted text. They have found that multiple choice improves correlation with UMS scores and interviews.

The optimum would be to ask CAO for a multiple choice pre-admissions test which could be computer marked in addition to our test, (not currently University policy). It was agreed to explore both directions.

It would be helpful if all students took the test at the Computer Lab and that colleges contributed to the cost.

There are an increasing number of overseas applicants who do not take the CSAT test, but who are being interviewed. It was suggested a written test be devised and ask colleges to apply it.
Action RKH

If computer science continues to grow, it may be necessary to introduce the UK Maths Challenge, as a means of a de-selection tool or offer it as a pre-interview test. JKF agreed to consult with Dr Sam Lucy, (Admissions tutor N) about the possibility of a dual test.
Action JKF

8. Tripos Revision update

I. Again the point in contention was the shared modules for Part III and Part II students taking a Part III module.
DJG and RKH would like emailed suggestions of the best way forward for this matter.

9. Any other business

Members agreed to enforce further maths only for CS+maths since they would be sitting the same course as mathematicians who will need further maths soon. It was agreed not to change our entry requirements yet, but to wait and see what happened with Maths over the next 2 or 3 years.

10. Date of next meeting

Friday 28 April in FW11