

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
Directors of Studies in Computer Science Forum  
Friday 14 October 2022 at 14:00 via Zoom**

**Members**

Prof A. F. Blackwell (DAR)	Russell Moore (CAI)
Dr Luana Bulat (ME)	Prof S. W. Moore (TH)
Ms M. J. Cobby (Teaching Admin)	Prof R. M. Mortier (CHR)
Dr S. Cummins (G)	Prof R. D. Mullins (JN, PET)
Dr R. Faragher (Q)	Prof A. Mycroft (ROB)
Dr J. K. Fawcett (CHU, H, HH, LC, M, N)	Ms H. Neal (Teaching Admin)
Dr D. J. Greaves (CC)	Prof L C Paulson (CL)
Prof T. G. Griffin (K)	Prof A.S. Prorok (PEM)
Prof R. K. Harle (DOW, F) ( <i>Chair</i> )	Prof T. M. Sauerwald (EMM)
Dr S. B. Holden (T)	Dr R. W. Sharp (ROB)
Dr A. Hutchings (K)	Prof F. M. Stajano (T)
Matthew Ireland (SID)	Mrs C. Stewart (Dept Secretary)
Prof T. M. Jones (CAI)	Dr S. Taraskin (CTH)
Prof S. Keshav (F)	Dr C. P. Town (W, JE)
Dr N. Krishnaswami (T)	Prof J. Vicary (K)
Jasmin Jahic (Q)	Dr R. R. Watts (SE)
Prof N. Lane (JN)	Dr J. Yallop (ROB)
Prof C. Mascolo (JE)	Francisco Vargas (CC)
Dr C. Mishra (Q)	

**1. Apologies for absence**

Mrs H. P. Averill (Teaching Admin Manager)  
Ms M. J. Cobby (Teaching Admin)  
Jasmin Jahic (Q)  
Prof S. Keshav (F)  
Prof R. M. Mortier (CHR)

**1.1** New Directors of Studies were introduced: Dima Szamozvancev will be working with Rob Harle at Downing and Nic Lane working with Rob Mullins at St Johns.

**2. Minutes from previous meeting**

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

### 3. Update on pending actions

- i. **3.5.6.** (Helen Averill). Results of data analysis of project marks (UTO/Non-UTO supervisors). Further analysis required. **Status:** Statistics review not yet been completed due to high workload for the Student Admin team over the summer vacation. The data will be ready for next DoS meeting.
- ii. **4.2.** (Robert Harle). Students had expressed disquiet about having to write code for Interaction Design as they felt it had interfered with their revision. It was confirmed that pre-pandemic this had always been part of the course but it had been removed for the online delivery during Covid. Prof Robert Harle agreed to look into this for future deliveries. **Status:** Considering this has not come up in the past, it was suggested that we leave it one more year to see if next 1A students feel the same.
- iii. **4.3.2.** (Robert Harle). It was suggested that there should be a default to in-person teaching and that any exceptions should seek TMC approval, prior to the start of teaching. Rob to implement and inform lecturers. **Status:** This has been implemented and requests are now considered at TMC. Most lectures are now in person, with a few exceptions.
- iv. **5.3.** (Helen Averill). Re-introduction of cover sheet for exams which would form part of the checking procedure. **Status:** This will be implemented for Easter 2023 examinations.
- v. **5.10.** (Robert Harle). It was noted that in the 1A marking/classing document it stated that Papers 1 to 3 had to be norm referenced, whereas others did not, nor did Mathematics. It was suggested that the removal of norm referencing would make things more 'normal' and was agreed to take to the TMC for discussion. **Status:** Initial review of the Marking and Classing document has been made by Helen Averill, and this was discussed at TMC on 10/10/22. Next step is review by the new Chair of Examiners (Rafal Mantiuk) before approval of the document by the Faculty Board. The DoS committee was informed this was happening.
- vi. **6.2.** (John Fawcett). Dr J Fawcett was asked to update all members of any developments re TMUA. **Status:** John Fawcett to comment later in the meeting.

### 4. Other matters arising

### 5. Tripos matters

5.1 The date of TMUA registration next year vs UCAS deadline. The TMUA has changed their entry date this year. There was concern as this will have an adverse effect for widening participation as minority groups are likely to feel that they cannot apply if they have missed the TMUA deadline.

**Action:** To monitor the impact of the TMUA deadline being before application deadline, for discussion at next DoS meeting.

#### 5.2 Extensions for ticks – formal process via EAMC.

Rob Harle informed the Committee that extensions for ticks will now be a formal application procedure requiring the Tutor to complete a short form to be considered by the EAMC. It is no-longer the case that the Department can consider extensions requests.

#### 5.3 Ticks and Plagiarism – should ticks be removed altogether?

Frank Stajano made a suggestion to TMC to remove the incentive for cheating, by making the ticks optional to try to avoid plagiarism. There were wide views. One suggestion was that students should be given guidance early in the Tripos to help them recognise what plagiarism is. It was agreed that a talk on ethics and understanding plagiarism at registrations would be helpful. Another suggestion was for 1A to be the same as 1B with only 4 or 5 ticks, and have the ticks within the work, assessed at the end of the term. There was a feeling that abandoning ticks would not be sensible as they are a valued way to monitor weaker students. They also support the lecturers by having soft deadlines in the term and hard deadlines at the end of the term. Rob Harle agreed that this matter needs to be given more thought.

It was agreed it would be useful for DoS's to be able to have updates of the progress of the students' ticks, and to have an automated system to keep track. It was noted that in previous years we had the automated grader which DoS's had access to which collected the tick marks from moodle, but tickers had to get the grade onto moodle for this to work. There is currently no live system in place to track/monitor student tick progress/not progress. **Action:** Rob Harle agreed to raise the need for an automated tick tracking system to TMC.

#### 5.4 Form and Conduct notice.

The Exam Form and conduct notices have been updated for 2022-23. The regulations require us to publish any changes to the examination structure (via the formal conduct notice).

#### 5.5 Part II Project marking.

The change to Part II marking proposals was discussed. One of the main reasons for the proposal was due to Subject Access Requests from the students who wanted feedback on their projects. The marking process will involve two marks, one from the supervisor and one for the exam marker, and therefore requires all projects to have UTO assigned to them. If the markers don't agree on a mark a third marker may be required. The proposal has been 'approved in principle' by Faculty Board and they require more detail on how many UTO's will need to be found before the proposal is taken back to Faculty Board for final approval. The finer detail is detailed in the proposal.

There was concern about the last-minute communication of the changes to the students. Some students find last-minute changes difficult to cope with. Additionally, the fact that some Overseers have suggested in their feedback the need for students to find a UTO has added to the students' anxiety. Rob Harle confirmed that the Department would find

UTOs as necessary. Another issue raised was that some supervisors are also UTOs, would that mean one person marks the student's dissertation, which is not a position committee members felt comfortable with. Additionally, a person who is supervisor, UTO and DoS would be in a very difficult position.

If we had a larger pool of UTO's which included Senior Research Fellows and Affiliated Lecturers this would help the above. It was noted that there was no ideal situation.

**Action:** Data to be collected for Faculty Board to consider this marking option and look at the viability.

## **6 Chair of Examiner's report**

Rob Harle asked DoS's to read the report and to note the struggles the students had and the number of extensions that needed to be granted. Regulations updates are being reviewed by Helen Averill and TMC.

## **7 Admissions**

### 7.1 Admission figures for 2022-23.

John Fawcett reported there were 141 first year students. 60% UK, 7% from the EU, 18% women. It was recognised that there is a difficulty in finding Supervisors and the increase in numbers will make this even harder.

### 7.2 Number of applications.

The UCAS applications closes tomorrow will find out next week or so.

### 7.3 Numbers management and course transfers.

It was noted that we are going to need numbers management this year. Re the subject moderator Interface, access is only granted by College Admissions Office. There will not be interviews taking place overseas. Most home student interviews will be online, with the exception of Trinity College, who will be interviewing in person.

The numbers management spreadsheet will be the same but if there are any requests for changes, DoS were asked to contact Rob Harle.

Due to our large numbers this year the Summer pool was not utilised. This is unfortunate as many very good students were missed. Is there a way to keep a number of places back for the summer pool students? **Action:** Cecilia and Rob Harle to discuss this in order to find a mechanism to do this.

### 7.4 Subject Moderation and the Winter Pool dates.

The Winter Pool is 10 - 13 January. It will be online again. The New DoS's training is on the 4 November - this explains the subject interface and the process.

## **8 Any other business**

### 8.1 Meeting dates for 2022-23

There were questions whether the meetings would be on a Friday or Thursday. Rob Harle agreed to do a vote via the DoS list email. **Action** Rob to circulate poll/vote to decide the day for future DoS meetings.

**9 Date of next meeting:** Thursday 19 January 2023