

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

**Chairman: Dr David Greaves**

**Secretary: Ms D. E. Pounds**

Minutes of the meeting of the Tripos Management Committee  
held on Monday 12 October 2015 at 13:30 in GC22

**Members**

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

Dr David Greaves (*Chairman*)

Dr Robert Harle (*Part IA coordinator*)

Dr Sean Holden (*Part II and supervisions  
coordinator*)

Dr Mateja Jamnik

Prof Ian Leslie

Dinah Pounds (*Secretary*)

Prof Peter Robinson (*Exchange*)

*Programme Organiser and Deputy HoD*)

Megan Sammons (*Student Administrator*)

Dr Simone Teufel

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Prof Peter Robinson

**2. Notification of any other business**

- i. Report on the IA Pre-arrival course
- ii. Proposal to remove the option for Computer Scientists to switch to Chemical Engineering in Part IB.
- iii. Upgrade of the tripos welcome video.
- iv. Registration lecture experience forms.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes were approved and signed.

**4. Matters arising**

None

**5. Reports from other committees**

**Directors of Studies Forum. Members have requested the release of exam solution notes on the last day of lectures in Easter term.** This Committee confirmed its policy to retain solution notes for 2 years after a question has been set in an exam and only release them to directors of studies and supervisors. Steps will be taken to make the filer and website more secure. Held-back solutions will be water-marked with a clear statement that underpins this policy and directors of studies will be advised. **Action DP**

**EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS**

6. The request for sabbatical leave from Dr Andrew Rice for the academic year 2016-17 was agreed and the Committee is content that teaching will be covered.
7. The Committee welcomed the recommendations of the General Board's review of teaching and learning. In response to concerns raised, the Committee made the following response. The Committee is content that there is no need to cap numbers at present. Numbers have fallen for 2015-16 and the impact of the revisions to Part IA is as yet unknown. The Committee agreed with the Board's recommendation that the Faculty should encourage more UTOs to undertake supervisions.

**8. National Student Survey 2015.** The Chair reported on a meeting with Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education Prof Graham Virgo and Head of Department Prof Andy Hopper. The results of the survey were not unexpected and measures have been put in place to address some issues already raised in Departmental feedback. In particular, Part II was adversely affected by sabbatical leave and replacement lecturers have been found to cover courses similarly affected this year. Feedback on supervisions will be more widely encouraged. Plans are also in place to publish feedback via posters which will also encourage students to convey information to student reps. The possibility of increasing opportunity for student presentations will be further explored.

**(Action DJG/CKH/DP)**

**9. Content and examination of the new paper 3.**

- i. Report on new syllabus developments. Plans for 'Applied ML' outlined by Dr Teufel were welcomed by the Committee although some concern was expressed that students would be undertaking practical work without an understanding of the underpinning theory which would not be lectured until a later course. Python would be the preferred programming language, however this will require 3 rather than 2 programming languages to be learnt in Part IA. The Committee discussed whether the assessment of Applied ML should be by ticks, examination question or a combination of both and requested sample exam questions be prepared as a next step. The syllabus will be discussed in further detail by a tripos revision working group.
- ii. Revision of Part IB and Part II will be discussed by the tripos revision working group during Michaelmas term.

**10. Examination reports and responses. The Committee received the reports from the Chair of Examiners and the External Examiner.** It was noted that there was an improvement in the classing of both female students and MIT exchange students. The Committee agreed with the External Examiner's recommendation that full solution notes should be provided to examiners when questions are submitted for scrutiny.

**11.** The Committee recommends to Faculty Board that, to accommodate the forthcoming changes to the tripos, Paper 3 should now be considered part of the IA Examiners' remit but should continue to be also scrutinised by an external examiner. **Action DP**

**12. Proposal for revision of the marking and classing of the Tripos.** Computer Science was placed second from last on the University Baxter average scores table for 2015 and is felt to be out of step with the rest of the University. The disparity is noted in the Chair of IA Examiner's report and it was agreed that examiners needed more guidance on this. The Committee welcomed the proposal that the percentages used to set boundaries should be revised and agreed that starred firsts for up to 5% of the cohort be introduced. This proposal will be circulated to Directors of Studies for consultation and presented to Faculty Board with the intention to introduce the revisions for Easter 2016.

**13. Any other business**

- i. **The pre-arrival course.** Dr Harle reported that the mechanisms of Moodle have worked well. 94 CSTs and 97 NSTs registered for the pre-arrival course but only 59 NSTs are taking the option as of date. It is hoped the high NST drop-out rate in IA will now be reduced. One cause for concern was the high

number of CST students who treated the course too casually and did not complete it. 155 had completed the first two modules (168 as of today). 111 had completed all three modules (132 today). Whilst this is not too significant this year, this will be the case next year when the 75% option is introduced.

**Afternote: Some DoS found their students planned to take the rest of the pre-arrival course covering material on Java just before the Java practicals begin in week 4 of term, underestimating how busy they will be by then. Action RKH**

- ii. Request from Chemical Engineering that transfer into Part I of the Chemical Engineering tripos from Computer Science be removed as an option. This regulation has become an anachronism. The Committee were happy to agree to this proposal.
- iii. The tripos welcome video is now out of date. The Committee agreed a new one is desirable. A new script is needed and the cost of production researched. Action DP
- iv. IA registration lecture experience forms are being analysed and the results will be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **14. Date of next meeting**

16 November 2015