



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
Computer Laboratory

Faculty of Computer Science & Technology
Tripos Management Committee

Chairman: Dr David Greaves

Secretary: Ms Dinah Pounds

Minutes of the Tripos Management Committee
held on Monday 27 February 2017 at 13:30 in GC22

Members

Prof Andy Pitts (*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

Dinah Pounds (*Secretary*)

Prof Peter Robinson (*Exchange*)

Programme Organiser and Deputy HoD)

Megan Sammons (*Student Administrator*)

Dr Damon Wischik

The Committee thanked Prof Ian Leslie for his past contributions and wished him well in his new role within the University. Dr Damon Wischik was warmly welcomed to the Committee.

1. Apologies for Absence

Prof Andy Pitts

Prof Peter Robinson

2. Notification of any other business

Online submission of Part II dissertations

3. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

- 4. Matters arising.** Prof Pitts' report on IA mathematics options concludes that neither replacing the IA 50%CS+Maths option with 75%CS and either of MT Paper 1 or 2, or replacing NST Maths for natural scientists with either of MT Paper 1 or 2, are viable options. The Committee confirmed that NST maths which is currently used does offer most of the material needed, although it is a disadvantage not to be in control of the syllabus or timetable.

5. Correspondence.

Jane Clare, NST administrator (Item 8) **Action DP**

6. Reports from other committees

SSCoF. Students have requested to not have to come to the Lab for a 5 minute ticking slot. However, the Committee is confident that ticking 50% of all ticks is effective in tackling plagiarism and do not recommend changing the current practice.

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS

7. Requests for sabbatical leave.

The Committee considered the offers of cover to deliver Part II Bioinformatics and a lecturer from the Veterinary School will be approached. **Action DP**

8. **Admissions.** The Committee agreed that action was needed to mitigate increased student numbers and that students from other departments who borrow CST Paper 1 may need to be capped. Faculty Board approval for this will be sought. It will not be possible to make the pre-arrival course compulsory but NST students and Directors of Studies need to be aware that they should take it. Directors of Studies will also be consulted on whether to end the CS+PBS option which only a small minority of CS students take with a view to also removing all CST 50% options in time as numbers diminish. The increase in overall numbers will impact considerably on MLRD and Interaction Design where potentially approximately 115 IA and IB students could be attending practicals next year. The management of MLRD is of particular concern as staff will shortly be on sabbatical leave and the practical course is heavily dependent on non-UTOs. However, it was noted that around 50% of our students are not home students and the impact of Brexit may be to reduce applications from overseas.
Action DP/RKH

9. **Report on the progress of the new Paper 3.** No major problems were reported. All students successfully completed their Databases ticks and all but five students completed all Graphics ticks. Some students found the ticks easy and more starred ticks will be introduced in future. Graphics found running 3 ticks quite pressured for both staff and students and will consider reducing to two ticks.

10. **Revision of Part II and III.** The Chairman confirmed the intention that Paper 10 units of assessment will be assessed by tests and coursework. The importance of giving students prior warning and clear guidance on what courses they can choose and the assessment methods was noted.

- i. Report on Systems, Security and Architecture group meeting of 21/02/2017 and NLP, AI, HCI group meeting of 23/02/2017. Each group has been asked to offer at least two 8-week equivalent units of assessment and co-ordinators have been identified. Both groups produced useful proposals and will continue to develop ideas.
- ii. Paper 7. (To be introduced in MT 2017).
 - I. A new proposed course from Dr Buttery entitled 'Formal models of language' was warmly welcomed and the Committee agreed it will fill a gap in the curriculum. Most of the students will take this in their second year and if possible, some practical work should be included. The Committee noted that there was some overlap of content with other courses but felt this was good reinforcement of core curriculum material. However, notation should be consistent and other courses acknowledged.
 - II. The Security course proposed for Paper 7 will need to be rethought as it required moving Complexity Theory to Michaelmas term as a pre-requisite and Complexity must follow Computation Theory.
Action MGK/DP
- iii. Progress on Paper 10. Proposals for a new Data Science and Big Data course containing the theory of data material and which explores working with algorithms practically, and a Human and Robot Interaction course have been

put forward from the AI/NLP group. Further details will be received at the next meeting in May.

- 11. Supervision data.** The Committee noted that Computer Science is still ranked above the University average for supervision norms. Increasing the number of practicals in our new Paper 3 courses has, as planned, reduced our supervisions rate by 3.6% and we expect this trend to continue as practical work is extended into the new Paper 7. A higher than average number of our supervisions are given by graduate students but the Committee agreed that the nature of the subject lends itself to this, particularly in Part IA.
- 12. Review of the 50% computer option.** Numbers are now low and the proposal to remove this option in the longer term will be discussed at the next Directors of Studies meeting.
- 13. Part II dissertation marking guidance.** Concern was expressed that the overseeing process is working very effectively and should not be changed. New regulations this year asking for overseers to name a domain expert and write reports have not been successful and the Committee ask the examiners to look again at the process for next year. It was agreed that a request by a student to attend other overseer presentation sessions was not advisable and that many students would not welcome this. Instead, it is proposed to hold a presentation session at the end of Lent term where all students can have the opportunity to present their projects to an audience.
Action DP/MS
- 14. Any other business.** Examiners have been advised that submitting Part II presentations online to our website may not be advisable and request we use Moodle instead. The Committee supported the request and confirmed that Moodle was the best vehicle for this. **Action DP**
- 15. Date of next meeting – 8 May 2017**