



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
Computer Laboratory

Faculty of Computer Science & Technology
Tripos Management Committee

Chairman: Dr Timothy Jones

Secretary: Ms Dinah Pounds

Minutes of the Tripos Management Committee
held on Monday 13 May 2019 at 14:00 in GC22

AGENDA & NOTES

Members

Prof Alan Blackwell (*Deputy HoD*)
Dr Timothy Jones (*Chairman*)
Dr Hatice Gunes
Dr Robert Harle (*IA Coordinator*)
Dr Sean Holden

Dinah Pounds (*Secretary*)
Dr Amanda Prorok
Megan Sammons (*Student Administrator*)
Prof Frank Stajano
Dr Damon Wischik

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Notification of any other business

None

3. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were confirmed.

4. Matters arising.

- i. Revision of computer design and architecture is ongoing.
- ii. Guidelines will be produced for tickers. **Action TMJ**
- iii. The Committee expressed concern about the timing of the take-home test for OOP. Reasons for delaying the test until Easter term are to create a more level playing so that students who arrive without programming skills are not disadvantaged. TMC will ask the lecturer to reconsider the timings to avoid confusion between programming languages. **Action DP**

5. Correspondence.

None

6. Reports from other committees

- i. SSCoF (2019-05-13a). Feedback forms. The Committee discussed student proposals. In particular, students proposed a mid-course feedback form to flag up any immediate concerns. Some lecturers already organise this themselves. The Committee agreed to review the procedures to try and increase student participation. **Action DP**
- ii. NST Management Committee (AFB reported).
The NST Committee welcomed Prof Blackwell's visit. He explained the motivation ending NST borrowing of CST Paper 1 which is that the number of

CST students now exceeds our capacity. NST have set up a sub-committee and are preparing their own computer science course using Python and Jupyter notebooks. This will benefit NST students by being more tailored to their needs. The Computer Lab will continue to offer support if required.

7. Student feedback

- i. Lent term course feedback. There were no issues to address.
- iii. Focus group feedback.
 - 1. Students particularly enjoyed 'hands on' courses such as ECAD and the Group Project. They appreciated how Bioinformatics draws together other modules, builds on them and has application.
 - 2. Students have requested changes to the timings of activities encompassed in the Group project schedule. In particular, the first client meeting should be earlier before students have started to develop their own ideas. It was confirmed that the timings are intentional to encourage independent thought by the groups rather than just fulfilling a client brief.

8. Forward planning. The Committee agreed to ask Prof Dawar to head a review committee to consider both revision of current mathematics courses and to structure a new IA mathematics course to replace NST Maths. **After note: Prof Dawar has agreed to lead a review.**

- i. Introduction of Computer Science IA Mathematics course to replace Maths for Natural Scientists. From 2021, IA CS students will offer a CS mathematics paper instead of the Maths for Natural Scientists Paper.
- ii. Numerical Analysis content in other Tripos courses. The Committee confirmed that Numerical Analysis will not run next year and the material will be transferred to other courses.
- iii. Probability course proposal (2019-05-13b). The Committee welcomed this proposal and considered the possibility of a short 4 lecture course to replace numerical analysis for 2019-20. This will be discussed further as part of the review of mathematics teaching in the Department.

9. Tripos 2019-20.

- i. Modification to Concurrent and Distributive Systems. (2019-05-13c). The Committee were content with this proposal.
- ii. Additional modification to IA Digital Electronics (2019-05-13d) The Committee were content with this proposal.
- iii. Report on the introduction of OCaml FMS. Progress on setting up OCaml is in hand. The Committee would like a set of detailed instructions on how to set up OCaml. There was some concern about stability and the Committee would like more detail on debugging and technical support. They suggest using the pre-arrival course as a way of testing. The Committee request a login ready for the Directors of Studies meeting on 1st July to enable DoS to try out. AVSM has agreed to translate the course notes.

10. Part II Units.

- i. Guidance for lecturers on workload, assessment and deadlines. Students and Directors of Studies have expressed concern at excessive workload and deadlines being too close together. Guidance will be issued to unit lecturers.
Action TMJ
- ii. TMC expectations on offering courses. The expectation should be that once TMC has approved a unit, then it will run every year until TMC gets a request for it to be dropped (or suspended for a year if the lecturer is on sabbatical). The Committee confirmed this approach but also agree that courses with a very low take up will not run. Students to be informed.

- iii. Payment rates for non- UTO staff for seminars, setting and marking exams etc. payment will be set and the course administrator will manage a budget for Part II units' expenses.

11. Student access to exam scripts. The Committee supported the view expressed by Directors of Studies that it was not viable for them to discuss exam scripts with the students, neither would it be of any benefit to the students' learning as the scripts are not annotated. The Committee agreed that the request to access exam scripts does not warrant the excessive administrative burden this would require. It was noted that students already have the opportunity for a mark check.

12. Student representation review. The Committee was content with the response sent by Faculty Board.

13. Any other business

Date of next meeting – Friday 28 June 2019, GS15