



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
Computer Laboratory

Faculty of Computer Science & Technology
Tripos Management Committee

Chairman: Dr Timothy Jones

Secretary: Ms Dinah Pounds

Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Tripos Management Committee
held on Friday 26 June 2020 at 14:00 via Teams

AGENDA & NOTES

Members

Prof Alastair Beresford (*Deputy HoD*)
Dr Timothy Jones (*Chairman*)
Dr Hatice Gunes
Dr Robert Harle
Dr Sean Holden

Dinah Pounds (*Secretary*)
Tara Leggett (*Student Administrator*)
Prof Frank Stajano
Dr Damon Wischik
Caroline Stewart

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Notification of any other business

Part I exam reporting.

3. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2020 were approved.

4. Update on pending actions

- Item 4.iv. Discussions with AD on revisions to the Maths syllabus are ongoing and will be completed over the summer.
- Item 4.v. CS confirmed that there is no means of issuing a binding contract for affiliated lecturers. All such courses should have a UTO with oversight who is responsible for ensuring a course is delivered. As is the case with all courses, this would not apply in the event of strike action. The Committee recommends that the UTO should ensure all course materials are prepared and available before lectures begin.
- Item 4.vi. Revision of IB group projects will be undertaken over the summer with adjustments made in the light of the restrictions needed due to the coronavirus. Client meetings and student group work are more likely to be virtual. **Action RKH**

5. Other matters arising.

None

6. Reports from other committees.

SSCoF. The final meeting of the year mostly focused on examinations. Each representative was allotted 15 minutes and established clear guidance on how each year group would be affected by lockdown. In addition, some students had noted that the new Introduction to Probability course was too easy. This was later countered by

course feedback which confirmed the course grew more difficult as it progressed. Students recommended the course as best practice for online videos.

7. Correspondence.

None

8. Easter term 2020 examinations report.

- i. Dr Neel Krishnaswami, Chair of Examiners reported that all students bar five took the first sitting. These five will sit exams in early September. The marking proceeded as normal. The percentage of students awarded a 1st class rose from 40% as laid out in the Marking and Classing document to 50% as a result of applying a safety net whereby no student received a lower class than achieved in IB. The examiners agreed it would not be appropriate to award distinctions this year. The Committee raised some concern about the procedures for marking dissertations now the number of markers has increased. A different approach to scaling examiners' mark will be proposed.

Action DJW

The Committee also considered the following:

- a brief document written by an expert in the field for the various standard dissertation topics to give examiners more background information.
 - More guidelines for overseers and a template for supervisors.
 - Guidelines for students on what their source code should contain. Can it be put on git lab?
 - Overseers allocation should be aligned with the project title.
 - The project briefing should give a set of questions students should answer as a check list and be point them to good examples.
 - The examiners found the marking guidelines very useful. The new CST website is a good opportunity to collate guidance from different sources. **Action ARB**
- ii. **Online supervisor report form.** A more detailed report from supervisors is welcome for the purpose of giving examiners more specialised information when they are not experts in the field. **Action RKH**
 - iii. **Structure of Paper 3.** The distribution of numbers answering different questions was very uneven for MLRD this year causing problems for markers. The Committee re-affirmed their wish not to change the exam structure as this encourages students not to cover and learn all the course material. The Committee suggested that markers could share questions and multiple people mark sub sections. Alternatively, to split the course into two separate courses.

9. Report on IA OOP take-home test.

The Committee requested a report on whether the lecturer felt that moving to the single piece of work at the start of Easter had met or moved towards his pedagogical aims when proposing the change in addition to the practicalities.

Afternote: ACR has sent the following response:

It's certainly moved in the right direction. I currently intend to do the same next year with a few modifications: 1) to continue to rework the supervision work for OOP to make the programming practicals more integrated; 2) to conduct a much more rigorous trial-run of the test prior to its use to try to eliminate any clarity issues. I have yet to do any analysis of how students behaved with relation to the practical work of the course without the pressure of ticks to meet deadlines. My intention was that this would be a step along the way to a graded take-home test - I've yet to have

enough time to work out whether I've learnt enough this year to try that next year. Also, I am cautious about this year because a) I expect a number of students 'switched off' once the stakes at examination were lowered; b) we won't have an NST cohort in future.

10. Recording lectures discussion document and comments by RNW

The Committee felt strongly that adding closed captions to lectures would represent an unacceptably large increase in lecturer workload. It was however, appreciated that they might be very useful for students with disabilities and would consider other means of adding them. A possibility would be to ask students if they could undertake this. The Staff/Student Committee will be approached to arrange this. **Action RKH.**
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m2A38Bm3q43bpa3l8WYiLEEUAIOn6gDM4vRd2uckwAE/edit?usp=sharing>

11. Course Surveys- ET 2020

<https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=197961>

12. Part II units 2020-21. Please see notes below. The course pages can be found here

<https://www.cst.cam.ac.uk/teaching/2021/part-ii-cst-75%25>

13. Preparation for next academic year

Strategies for undergrad practical Labs. SWM

The Committee agreed to a reduction of ticks for ECAD and Hardware for 2020-21 but wished to ensure that all work should be covered, possibly by moving it to later years. The Committee requested to be informed of the specifics of how this would work. **Action DP/SWM**

14. Any other business

Part I exam reporting. Marks will be distributed to Directors of Studies. They will not be ranked. The information about how the questions were approached eg open/closed book is on the cover sheet. Feedback to the students will be given by their Directors of Studies.

Date of next meeting: Monday 12 October 2020