



Faculty of Computer Science and Technology  
Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Tripos Management Committee

Friday 1 July 2022 at 14:00 via Zoom

**Members**

Mrs Helen Averill (*Undergraduate Teaching Administration Manager*) (HPA)  
Prof Alastair Beresford (*Deputy HoD*) (ARB)  
Ms Marion Cobby (*Undergraduate Teaching Administration; Minutes*) (MJC)  
Dr David Greaves (*Chair of Examiners*) (DJG)  
Prof Robert Harle (*Chair; Director, undergraduate teaching*) (RKH)  
Dr Evangelia Kalyvianaki (*Advisor*) (EK)  
Ms Helen Neal (*Undergraduate Teaching Administration*) (HN)  
Prof Thomas Sauerwald (*Deputy Director, IA undergraduate teaching*) (TMS)  
Prof Frank Stajano (*Advisor*) (FMS)  
Caroline Stewart (*Departmental Secretary*) (CS)  
Dr Damon Wischik (*Deputy Director, Part II undergraduate teaching*) (DJW)  
Dr Jeremy Yallop (*Deputy Director, IB undergraduate teaching*) (JDY)

**1 Apologies for Absence**

Mrs Helen Averill

**2 Minutes of the meeting of 16 May 2022**

2.1 With no corrections to be made these were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3 Action from the meeting of 16 May 2022**

3.1 Department notification to all students about the tick plagiarism investigation (*item 3.11.3*)

3.1.1 This had been drafted but not circulated before the exams, as planned, due to insufficient responses of approval from academics. It would be circulated as required next academic year.

3.1.2 It was agreed that students needed to be made aware that cutting and pasting without attribution would be deemed to be plagiarism, even if the answer were correct.

3.1.3 Following the vivas for the tick plagiarism investigation, some penalty points had been awarded for 'donor plagiarism', to both the donor and recipient.

3.1.4 It was proposed that the following should be made clear on the website: that 'making code available either intentionally or otherwise, should not happen before the completion of exams' and that this should also go to Faculty Board for consideration (*action: Prof Robert Harle*).

3.1.5 It was confirmed that any amendments to the HoD notices would need to be in place by the division of Michaelmas Term for 1A and 1B.

- 3.2 Result of data analysis of project marks - UTOs versus postgraduates (*item 4.1.1.2*)
    - 3.2.1 This data had been circulated to TMC on 19 May. It had been suggested that it should be communicated to the students, once it had been discussed at the DoS meeting on 6 July.
    - 3.2.2 It was noted that there did not appear to be a great difference between the marks of UTOs/non-UTOs, but that this differed from the feedback from a number of DoSs.
  - 3.3 Prospectus updates for approval by TMC (*item 8.2.3*)
    - 3.3.1 The updates were attached and approved after discussion.
  - 3.4 Possible teaching in West Hub lecture theatres from Michaelmas Term 2022 (*item 8.3.2*)
    - 3.4.1 The plan was to use the Hub for some Part II lectures if feasible – this would also work well for the Part III students. The deadline for central room booking requests was 4 July so the process was still ongoing.
    - 3.4.2 It was agreed that we should definitely apply for this space even if it were likely not to be successful, to set a precedent for future years.
  - 3.5 1A Scientific Computing: identification of an alternative lecturer to shadow/take over the teaching of this course.
    - 3.5.1 Prof Robert Harle intended to compile a list of potential teaching needs over the coming years, to put to the Wednesday AwayDay the following week, which would include potential shadowing of the teaching of 1A Scientific Computing, in addition to cover for others including Further Java, Databases and OOP (*action: Prof Robert Harle*).
  - 3.6 Alternative student computing resources once UIS withdraw MCS Linux – Prof Harle to talk to Dr Markettos (*item 9.2*).
    - 3.6.1 It was reported that this was still under discussion but that nothing would be changing this year, so there had been a little reprieve. However, it was noted that it would take all the time that was available to come to a manageable solution.
- 4 Reports from committees**
- 4.1 DoS Forum**
    - 4.1.1 This group had not met since the previous TMC.
  - 4.2 SSCoF 11 May 2022**
    - 4.2.1 Regarding the additional dissertation feedback and breakdown, it was reported that students had not found this particularly useful (the top/middle/bottom ranking information) and that they would have preferred information and advice on working and writing standards, etc, in order to improve the quality of their dissertations.
    - 4.2.2 Dr David Greaves, Chair of Examiners, was invited to draft a response to the students which would be considered by the committee by circulation, prior to sending to the students (*action: Dr David Greaves*).

**5 Part IA (Prof Thomas Sauerwald)**

- 5.1 Feedback from the OOP take-home tests had been positive.
- 5.2 It was noted that the division between Algorithms 1 and Algorithms 2 on the examination structure had not yet been published, and that a detailed distinction of it needed to be taken to Faculty Board for formal endorsement (*action: Prof Robert Harle*).
- 5.3 It was noted that this change would also need to be reflected on the website once approved by Faculty Board (*action: Helen Averill*).

## **6 Part IB (Dr Jeremy Yallop)**

- 6.1 A request had been made to change the name of Security to Cyber Security and to move it to Lent Term, to reduce the workload in Easter Term. It was suggested that this could swap with Logic and Proof which was generally supported, unless it would raise any issues. Alternatively it could just move to Lent Term without any swap taking place, but again only if it raised no problematic issues (*action: Helen Averill*).

## **7 Part II (Dr Damon Wischik)**

- 7.1 There had been some variance of marks between different units, which had already been communicated to the Chair of Examiners.
- 7.2 Dr Damon Wischik sought approval to talk to Prof Srinivasan Keshav whose marks were out of line with the majority, but it was confirmed that his subject contained more mathematics than most which may have been a contributing factor.
- 7.3 Dr Wischik confirmed that lecturers had been asked to respond if their median was not 13, so that the examinations board could consider scaling if necessary.

## **8 General Teaching Matters**

### **8.1 Proposal from Prof Simon Moore: To set up a Discord service for students to use and for us to communicate with them**

- 8.1.1 This had been a direct response to the fact that students didn't appear to use email much at all and the University policy of using Microsoft Exchange rather than a standards-based IMAP email server did not make it easy to pick up email for those who used Linux, which was very common for students and research staff in our department.
- 8.1.2 After much discussion it was agreed that this request could be the impetus for surveying students to identify their preferred route of communication, although it was acknowledged that they would probably have a different opinion in a year's time.
- 8.1.3 No decision was made at the meeting about a final platform, but it was felt that students needed to be reminded that email was still the formal process for communication regardless of what they may prefer.
- 8.1.4 It was agreed that seeking student opinion could be useful and would also identify whether or not this was a major issue for them.
- 8.1.5 It was agreed that Prof Harle would talk to Prof Moore about this further and to report back to the next meeting of TMC, to decide whether or not this warranted a student survey or whether there was just a need to emphasize the departmental policy that emails should be checked and read regularly (*action: Prof Robert Harle*).

### **8.2 Concurrent and Distributed Systems**

- 8.2.1 It was noted that a lecturer should be identified to co-teach this with Dr David Greaves following the departure of Dr Martin Kleppmann.

### **8.3 Databases**

8.3.1 It was noted that a lecturer should be identified to possibly co-teach this with Dr David Greaves.

#### **8.4 Blockchain in Part I (Dr David Greaves)**

8.4.1 There was discussion as to whether this was adequately covered, as it was seen as being important core curriculum, and whether it should be part of either Cyber Security or Distributed Systems.

8.4.2 Prof Frank Stajano thought it could be covered in one additional lecture in Cyber Security and that he would report after the summer as to whether he would be able to fit this in to his curriculum.

8.4.3 It was agreed that it would be preferable, in principle, to have it covered but only if it was practical.

#### **8.5 Operating Systems: for notification only**

8.5.1 Evangelia Kalyvianaki and Richard Mortier were proposing a re-vamp of the course. The high-level syllabus items were unlikely to change but there would be changes in some of the detail. The proposed changes would be circulated shortly for consideration by correspondence by the TMC (*action: Prof Robert Harle*).

#### **8.6 Sabbatical leave consideration: Dr Eva Kalyvianaki**

8.6.1 Supporting paperwork had been circulated, that had been approved by Faculty Board, subject to approval by TMC, for a sabbatical period of one year from January 2023.

8.6.2 It was reported that Prof Richard Mortier was happy to cover her teaching from January and that Cloud Computing, in Michaelmas Term, would not take place in Michaelmas Term 2023 in her absence, due to the high level of input into the coursework element.

8.6.3 The sabbatical application was approved by the committee.

### **9 Any Other Business**

#### **9.1 Release of full solution notes**

9.1.1 There was a proposal from Prof Frank Stajano to change the target from 2 to 3 years of releasing full solution notes. However, this was met with some opposition due to it having been widely discussed in the past, with 2 years being the final compromise as there had been little justification for three years in the past.

9.1.2 It was noted as a genuine concern but that very little had changed since the last detailed discussions which had resulted in the 2-year decision.

9.1.3 It was accepted that the situation had been compounded by the recent mishap of 2020 and 2021 having been released a year earlier.

#### **9.2 Issue with poor student feedback process – Prof Frank Stajano**

9.2.1 It was reported that neither lecturers nor TMC had received Lent and Easter student feedback yet which was a cause for concern.

9.2.2 It was confirmed that Part II feedback had been circulated and uploaded to the website, but that 1A and 1B Easter feedback had not yet been circulated due to the administrator's workload at the time, for which she apologised. The 1A and 1B Lent feedback had already been distributed and Easter would be distributed as soon as possible.

**Date of next meeting: 10 October 2022**