

**Faculty of Computer Science and Technology  
Minutes of the Tripos Management Committee**

**Monday 21 November at 14:00 via Zoom**

**Members**

Mrs Helen Averill (*Undergraduate Teaching Administration Manager*) (HPA)  
Ms Marion Cobby (*Undergraduate Teaching Administration; Minutes*) (MJC)  
Prof Robert Harle (*Chair; Director, undergraduate teaching*) (RKH)  
Dr Evangelia Kalyvianaki (*Advisor*) (EK)  
Dr Neel Krishnaswami (*Deputy Director, IA undergraduate teaching*) (NK)  
Dr Rafal Mantiuk (*Chair of Examiners*) (RKM)  
Ms Helen Neal (*Undergraduate Teaching Administration*) (HN)  
Prof Thomas Sauerwald (*Deputy HoD*) (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**

Dr Evangelia Kalyvianaki and Dr Jeremy Yallop.

**2 Notification of AoB**

All additional items had already been included on the agenda.

**3 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 10 October 2022**

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

**4 Action from the meeting of 10 October 2022**

- 4.1 It was confirmed that the issue of clarifying on the website that ‘making code available either intentionally or otherwise, should not happen before the completion of exams’ (*item 3.1.1*) was still ongoing and would be added as a supplementary item on the agenda of the next meeting of the Faculty Board (*action: Caroline Stewart*).
- 4.2 It was confirmed that issues raised in the Tripos Examiners’ Report had now been addressed (*item 7.1.2*) with one being considered later at this meeting of the TMC in item 6.1.
- 4.3 It was confirmed that input from Prof Rafal Mantiuk regarding a lightweight review of Discrete Mathematics (*item 7.1.3*) would be considered later at this meeting of the TMC in item 6.3.

- 4.4 It was confirmed that the Chair of Examiners had now reviewed the Marking & Classing and Deadlines & Extensions Guidelines (*items 8.4.2 and 8.4.5*) and that final drafts had been added to the Faculty Board Agenda for 22 October 2022, for approval.
- 4.4.1 It was noted that further discussion on some of the changes would be considered later at this meeting of the TMC in item 6.2.
- 4.5 It was confirmed that the Chair of Examiners would consider the issue of the dropping of norm-referencing (*item 8.4.3*), including undertaking conversations with concerned individuals, particularly re Part II, and report back to the next meeting of the TMC (*action: RKM*).
- 4.6 It was noted that the issue of the review of the Marking & Classing and Deadlines & Extensions guidelines (*item 8.4.5*) had been covered in item 4.4 above.
- 4.7 It was noted that the requested wider response to Prof Stajano's paper on Ticks and Plagiarism (*item 8.6.5*) was still underway and that outcomes would be presented to the next meeting of the TMC.
- 4.7.1 It was confirmed that this subject was an agenda item for the SSCoF meeting on 23 November 2022 and that Prof Stajano would attend the meeting for this.
- 4.7.2 It was confirmed that this paper had been discussed at the recent DOS Forum meeting but that further thought was still needed – the greater concern of the DoSs was to have quicker access to the tick process throughout the term.
- 4.8 It was confirmed that discussions had taken place to see if the timetable could accommodate the proposal of IA and IB lectures to be in the mornings only (*item 8.7.5*).
- 4.8.1 It was noted that this was almost entirely due to the fact that Dr David Greaves had a much larger teaching load this term than in previous years.
- 4.8.2 It was noted that there could be potential movement in the Lent term timetable but none in Easter due to teaching only taking place in the first half of the term.
- 4.9 It was noted that the issue would be discussed at SSCoF, as some IA and IB students already felt that they had too much morning teaching in any case (*item 8.7.6*), before considering any changes (*action: report back from SSCoF meeting of 23 November to the next TMC meeting*).
- 4.10 It was noted that the concerns of Dr Damon Wischik about the lack of discussions re the question of blind marking for Part II Units of Assessment (*item 8.8.1.4*) would be addressed later at this meeting of the TMC in item 6.6.1.
- 4.11 It was confirmed that Dr Damon Wischik would arrange a discussion with EAMC about Unit of Assessment choices for intermitters (*item 8.8.3.4*) and report back to the TMC meeting on 23 January 2023 (*action: DJW*).
- 4.12 It was confirmed that the Chair would inform Prof Neil Lawrence that there had been no support for the change of the term 'Overseer' to 'Checker' (*item 8.10.3*) but that he would be welcome to make a written case for his proposed change if he felt strongly about it (*action: RKH*).
- 4.13 There was concern that the policy regarding automatic lecture-capture differed from other departments and it had never been discussed by the TMC (*item 9.1.3*). This concern had been fed back to the HoD Team by Prof Thomas Sauerwald, Deputy Head of Department.
- 4.13.1 Prof Sauerwald reported that the HoD Team had acknowledged that it would have been good to have consulted the TMC but that there had been insufficient time to do so.
- 4.13.2 This was not deemed to be an adequate-enough response, as decisions had been made at the HoD level which affected everyone, and it would have been preferable to have received something off-line to review.
- 4.13.3 It was felt strongly that process had not been followed properly and was agreed that Prof Sauerwald would report this back to the HoD Team, suggesting that the correct policy for making such decisions should be discussed.

- 4.13.4 It was agreed that the specific text to be taken to the HoD Team should be produced by Dr Damon Wischik, Prof Frank Stajano and Prof Thomas Sauerwald, with a formal request for a response to be provided to the next meeting of the TMC (*action: DJW, FMS and TMS*).
- 4.14 It was confirmed that Faculty Board had not yet discussed the concerns of the TMC over the introduction of the lecture-recording policy before any consultation (*item 9.1.4*) although the policy itself had been discussed widely.
- 4.14.1 It was confirmed that this would be raised as an agenda item for the next meeting of the Faculty Board, with specific reference to the need for the HoD Team to have drawn up a draft policy for discussion before implementation (*action: CS to add as an agenda item for the next meeting of Faculty Board*).
- 5 Other matters arising**  
There were no further matters arising.
- 6 General Teaching Matters**
- 6.1 Statutes and Ordinances - Regulation Changes
- 6.1.1 It was confirmed that the Regulations had been reviewed by the Teaching Managers (Undergraduate and Postgraduate) and the Deputy Head of Department, in order to publish updates in time for the next academic year. The suggestions had been generally accepted.
- 6.1.2 There was a suggestion that Units of Assessment should become Modules, in order to match other departments. However, there was also an opinion that a unique word should be chosen to avoid it being misconstrued as 'Module' was seen as too generic.
- 6.1.3 It was also suggested that the use of the word 'mark' was ambiguous, as was sometimes used as a final outcome score and at other times something as a mark out of a total of numbers.
- 6.1.4 It was proposed by the Chair that these should be taken off-line and considered further (*action: RKH*).
- 6.2 Marking & Classing and Deadlines & Extensions Guidelines (to include discussion/approval of new ticking extension process and extension processes in general)
- 6.2.1 It was confirmed that the Marking & Classing and Deadlines & Extensions Guidelines had been reviewed, with the final drafts being discussed at the Faculty Board on 22 November 2022.
- 6.2.2 Updates to the guidelines included the removal of the reference to norm-referencing, updating marking schemes in line with the new marking process and ensure wording regarding 1A/1B ticks is consistent.
- 6.2.3 Helen Averill confirmed that Part II extension and mitigation requests should now come from individual students (via College Tutor) to EAMC.
- 6.2.4 Helen Averill outlined a scaled-down process suggestion for accommodating tick extension requests from Part 1A and 1B students; this would be checked out with EAMC for their approval.
- 6.2.5 There was concern that this would be a substantial change from the existing procedure, which in itself had adhered to EAMC regulations, in that late submissions were chased up by Student Administration via the DoSs and that vivas were undertaken in some cases.
- 6.2.6 It was suggested that a lightweight process was needed, with an absolute final deadline which could not be extended. It was also identified that there was a need for consistency across penalties for ticks, whether being given for plagiarism or for non-attendance or any other reason.
- 6.2.7 It was also suggested that there could be two distinctive deadlines – a lecturer deadline followed by a formal HoD deadline, to allow some flexibility before the formal process had to be instigated.
- 6.2.8 It was agreed that there was a need to find a process that was fair and also consistent and that a larger review of the entire ticking process was needed, especially as the number of ticks seemed to be increasing.
- 6.2.9 It was also felt that there was too great a difference between penalties for ticks versus Part II coursework, and that the Part II penalties could be seen to be too harsh.
- 6.3 Review of Discrete Mathematics
- 6.3.1 It was confirmed that Prof Rafal Mantiuk, Chair of Examiners, would undertake a lightweight review of Discrete Mathematics (*item 7.1.3 of the previous meeting of the TMC*). This was in

response to comments in the Examiners' Report of June 2022 that the marks awarded had been noticeably lower this past year, although this was the first time it had occurred. The review would identify whether or not anything, in fact, needed to be done (*action: RKM*).

#### 6.4 Ticks and Plagiarism update

6.4.1 It was noted that it would not be possible to discuss this in detail at this meeting as it had not yet been discussed at the SSCoF. The next meeting of the SSCoF was in two days' time, and Prof Frank Stajano would attend to introduce this item.

6.4.2 The issue of Ticks and Plagiarism had been discussed at the DoS Forum of 14 October 2022, with some support for the idea of introducing an automated ticking system. This would need to be discussed in fuller detail at the next TMC, once the opinions of the SSCoF were known (*action: for TMC agenda 23.01.23*).

6.4.3 It was felt that a greater concern of the DoSs was having quicker access to the ticking process in general.

#### 6.5 Improving Course web pages (Prof Thomas Sauerwald, Deputy Head of Department)

6.5.1 Prof Thomas Sauerwald, Deputy Head of Department, expressed concern that, prior to the beginning of the academic year, people appeared to find it difficult to identify which courses were in which term, and that there seemed to be a general lack of information and details which could be easily found on the course web pages. He requested that details of timings and details could be put in the same place on web pages, including syllabus updates.

6.5.2 It was thought that it would be easier to find supervisors if all of the relevant information could be found in one place. Helen Averill to speak to Stewart Carswell regarding an update of the website syllabus pages according (*action: HPA*).

#### 6.6 Teaching Assistants

6.6.1 It was confirmed that any request for a Teaching Assistant (TA) would need TMC approval, as each request would need to be considered individually. Members were invited to submit requests in writing, including details of hours and payment level when considering the engagement of a TA.

6.6.2 Prof Stajano had identified an individual whom he was requesting – he was invited to submit the details in writing but was given agreement for it at the meeting, exceptionally, by the Chair.

6.6.3 It was agreed that a document outlining the procedure should be produced, in order to form a departmental policy on the issue. (*action: RKH and CS*).

#### 6.7 Part II

##### 6.7.1 Blind Marking of Units of Assessment (UoA)

6.7.1.1 Dr Damon Wischik presented an outline of comparisons of blind-marked UoAs and non-blind-marked, which identified that certain types of assessment were not suited to being blind-marked.

6.7.1.2 Dr Wischik proposed that the current practice should be continued and that blind-marking should only be encouraged where appropriate.

6.7.1.3 The Chair considered the suggestion from Dr Wischik - that any in-person examination should be blind-marked, but that any other form of assessment could reduce the effect of the quality of the teaching if blind-marked - as being reasonable.

##### 6.7.2 Part II Project supervisors

6.7.2.1 Helen Averill presented a spreadsheet of supervisors and the numbers of projects for each, which identified a number of UTOs who had a larger number than others.

6.7.2.2 Prof Frank Stajano raised the issue of a potential conflict of interest if the DoS were also the supervisor, which he considered should be discussed at HoD level.

6.7.2.3 The Chair noted that the data did not appear to be unmanageable or problematic, even though some doubts were raised as to its accuracy.

6.7.2.4 Prof Stajano identified one supervisor whose name did not appear, Petar Velickovic, which he would follow up.

##### 6.7.3 Part II Unit of Assessment (UoA) penalty

- 6.7.3.1 Dr Damon Wischik expressed his belief that a 25% penalty for a UoA was too harsh, as it was the same as the penalty for a Part II dissertation, and that the only redress available was via the EAMC process.
- 6.7.3.2 This did not receive universal agreement, as it was felt that the UoAs contributed more to the overall mark and were in lieu of examinations, so the penalty was deemed to be fair.
- 6.7.3.3 Dr Wischik was invited to put together a proposed policy to address his concerns, for discussion at the next meeting of the TMC (*action: DJW*).
  
- 6.7.4 Information Theory  
Some students had reported to their DoS that they had been unhappy with the lack of supervisions for this unit, which had been replaced with example classes. However, it was confirmed that all the materials were on Moodle and that students had already been made aware of it.

## **7 Any Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

## **8 Date of next meeting: 23 January 2023**