UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Department of Computer Science and Technology

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

Monday 15 May 2023 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 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)
Vacant (*Deputy Director, IA undergraduate teaching)*

1	**Apologies for Absence**

Dr Evangelia Kalyvianaki, Prof Thomas Sauerwald.

2	**Notification of AoB**

Action on feedback from Michaelmas term (raised by DJW, to be covered by Teaching Matters, item 6).

3	**Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 27 February 2023**

3.1   Addition of a tick box to Moodle (item 4.10.1) – it was noted that this would be a description field rather than a tick box, the latter being too complicated. The minute was adjusted accordingly to reflect this.

3.2   Subject to this alteration, the minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting of 27 February 2023.

4	**Actions from the meeting of 27 February 2023**

4.1   Discussion with EAMC about Unit of Assessment choices for intermitters – DJW to discuss policy off-line, whether or not EAMC had replied, and produce a report to be considered at the next meeting of the TMC *(item 4.11.1, 23.01.23 TMC).*

4.1.1 Dr Damon Wischik confirmed that he was due to meet staff from EAMC shortly and would report back to the next meeting of TMC, as progress had been slow due to EAMC staff being very busy *(action: DJW).*

4.2 Policy for the procedure for appointing TAs – additional comments to be requested from TMC members off-line for inclusion. Caroline Stewart to check that this policy was in line with ACS in order to have a combined approach*.* The outcome of discussions at the new Strategy Group to be reported to the next meeting of TMC. *(item 4.18.3, 23.01.23 TMC).* It was noted that a response from ACS was still outstanding, but that there had been no objections to the policy from any other groups *(action: CS to chase ACS).*

4.2.1 CS reported that this had not yet been resolved. However, it was noted that in the absence of any information the policy had been implemented to set up the CCWS for Easter term. Nothing contentious had arisen from the process and the item was now considered to be closed.

4.3 Discussion about whether 25% penalty for a UoA was too harsh – all UoA lecturers to be invited to submit a short proposal for the coming academic year, which would be reviewed at the next TMC, using DJW wording as a guideline to produce their proposals, including the idea of the addition of any penalties to be applied *(item 4.19.2, 23.01.23 TMC).* An alternative approach had been agreed, for individual discussions to take place with Prof Robert Harle and Helen Averill, rather than inviting written responses *(action: RKH/HPA).*

4.3.1 It was confirmed that no progress had been made on this yet and that it would be rolled over to the next meeting of TMC. Meanwhile, it would be discussed between RKH and HPA in their weekly meetings *(action: RKH/HPA).*

4.4 It was suggested a tick box could be introduced, for the students to confirm that the submission was their own work (as in other departments) and that the tick box might be integrated on Moodle. *(item 7.2).* It was confirmed that this would happen, and would be part of the ChatGPT ongoing discussions, despite some reservations. A line would be added to the description field on Moodle, including a link to the policy, reminding students to adhere to the policy *(action: HPA).*

4.4.1 It was confirmed that this would be in place for the following academic year, as per item 3.1 above.

4.5 A Part III student had expressed concerns over the CST process of awarding final degrees based on a set percentage of students achieving each category, rather than having set boundaries (eg 70% and over for a First). After some discussion it was agreed that very little would be gained by changing it and that the student would be informed *(action: HPA).*

4.5.1 It was confirmed that the student had been emailed with the explanation and invited to discuss further with HPA or RKH, if needed.

4.6 The argument for changing the term 'Overseer' had been explained as the word had associations with parts of history that some cultures and societies might find offensive. It was agreed that the term would be changed but no conclusion was drawn as to what it would be replaced with, despite various suggestions. Members of the meeting were encouraged to send any suggestions to the Chair, to take forward as a final recommendation to the next meeting of the TMC and subsequent ratification by Faculty Board *(action: RKH).*

4.6.1 It was reported that no ideas had been suggested since the previous meeting.

4.6.2 Two members of the committee supported the proposal of 'checker' and it was agreed that this would be recommended to Faculty Board for approval *(action: CS).*

4.6.3 It was agreed that there did not seem to be an obvious perfect solution.

5 Other matters arising

There were no other matters arising.

6   **General Teaching Matters**

6.1   **Syllabus changes for 2023-24 (for modules, not courses)**

6.1.1   **Concepts in Programming Languages**
Increase of four more lectures seemed quite large; RKH to talk to Anil about it and circulate for email approval.

6.1.2   **Extended Reality (Module)**
No objections to suggestion; slight amendment to syllabus agreed.

6.1.3   **Mobile Health (Module)**
Noted that it was originally approved subject to feedback and there had already been some negative feedback on the assessment of it (not on the course itself).
Agreed to give preliminary approval to all the changes proposed, but that the final decision would be subject to a conversation between Damon and Cecilia, re the content of the course in response to the feedback received.
The changes in the weighting were all approved.

6.1.4   **Types**
The proposal to turn into a merged Part II and Part III course would effectively turn it into a new module, which would need further discussion and thought before approval.

6.1.5   **Interaction with Machine Learning (Module)**
Approved – the proposals actually make the content clearer.

6.1.6   **Advanced Graphics and Image Processing (Module):**
Proposal would update the course, make it more graphics-oriented and generally slow down the pace of the lectures.
Dropping OpenCL was approved.
The rationale for four additional lectures was approved, but with the condition that the guest lecturer would not be paid.
It was agreed that the additional hours should be offset against the overall load across the year; this would be considered during the full Tripos review.

6.2   **Course feedback from Lent Term**
6.2.1   Feedback had generally been very positive but the drop in numbers of participating students was very significant and it was felt that the results were of not much statistical use.
6.2.2   Dr Damon Wischik agreed to follow up the feedback on DNN with the two lecturers involved, Dr Ferenc Huszar and Prof Nic Lane, suggesting that stress-testing was necessary in terms of practicals and that this could be carried out by a TA.
6.2.3   Dr Damon Wischik reported that he had reviewed one lecture in Bioinformatics and had subsequently made suggestions to the delivery of the lecture which had led to improvement.
6.2.4   It was noted that some other feedback issues would be considered as part of the impending Tripos review.

6.3   **Tripos review**
6.3.1   Prof Robert Harle reported that the limited responses to his questionnaire had been interesting and he would remind others for their input before the deadline of Friday that week. He would then create working groups to address any points of contention.
6.3.2   It was noted that the original plan to have the first draft proposal by the end of term would now be delayed due to the LLMs, but that the points raised would be circulated anonymously once the deadline had passed.

6.4   LLMs

6.4.1   Dr Damon Wischik had circulated a document which included the various advice and information already in existence, including the University statutes and information from the website, in addition to the CST Examiners' document which included the declaration about reality.

6.4.2   It was agreed that everyone needed to be extremely cautious about adding individual information and opinion and that, when discussing it, there should always be a reference back to the source, in order not to lose sight of the original thought.

6.4.3   It was agreed that any queries should be referred back to the statutes as it was such a fast-moving topic.

6.4.4   It was felt that some of the definitions in the statutes was not quite accurate, and that the text in the document from the CST Examiners had not been ideal, but it was acknowledged that something had had to be circulated quickly.

6.4.5   It was noted that the issue was still problematic and that direction and advice that was acceptable for students needed to be identified.

6.4.6   It was agreed to acknowledge the general perspectives outlined in Dr Wischik's document and that any future statements, which would change over time, should all be approved by TMC before circulation.

6.4.7   It was noted that a dissertation statement would be needed in very good time next year.

6.4.8   It was agreed to include LLMs on future agendas, in order to decide exactly what was going to be said in good time. It was noted that the CST Examiners do have a certain amount of authority, which should be reflected in future documents *(action: LLMs onto future agenda of TMC)*.

6.5   Category Theory teaching 23-24

6.5.1   Discussions about how to deal with the theory courses next year would be part of the Tripos review process, although conversations had already begun.

6.5.2   It was reported that the appointment of Tobias Grosser would assist with the theory teaching and that another appointment was also in place.

6.5.3   Discrete Mathematics had also been discussed, with a view to involving additional people and re-jigging some of the content.

6.5.4   The Chair confirmed that he would update the committee at the next meeting as the discussions were confidential at this point.

6.6   Marking and assessment boycott

6.6.1   It was reported that a statute was currently going through, which would be voted upon.

6.6.2   Nothing else was available to report at this stage as the department was not in a position to change anything.

6.6.3   It was noted that although there were many queries coming from students there was nothing additional that could be announced that was not already in the public domain.

6.6.4   It was noted that the Head of Department was intending to circulate a form for all lecturers to indicate if they were planning to take action, but that a reply would be optional.

6.6.5   Prof Rafal Mantiuk, as Chief Examiner, indicated that it would be helpful to know who would be involved in the industrial action.

6.6.6   It was clear that, at this stage, there was no sense of how great the impact would be.

6.7   **Part II Projects and UTO marking**

6.7.1   Marking was underway with dissertations having been available since the previous Friday.
It was confirmed that two students had not submitted (and were being followed up by the college/tutorial system), and ten extensions had been granted. The students concerned had been made aware that they may not have their final marks in time for the classifications to be published

6.7.2   It was noted that discussions were still taking place about the involvement, or not, of a supervisor who was not a marker as it would prove difficult to agree a mark with a supervisor who had not seen the final, corrected, version of a dissertation.

7   **Any Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

Date of next meeting: 30 June 2023