Cover note for MSc projects for DSTI distance students

The Data Science, Technology and Innovation MSc programme is the distance programme run through the College, and which we contribute 7 of our courses (raising 40K income this year).

The programme has 2 students who are just about ready and eligible for part-time MSc projects. There are currently 50+ part-time DSTI MSc students working through the system, but there are also about 6 Schools supporting the programme. These students could take up to 6 years to complete the MSc. So, at the moment, this implies only a few new MSc students per year. As contributors to the DSTI programme, some of these students could potentially do their project in Informatics (or in EPCC). For 2019, this is possibly 4 students and for 2020 possibly 8 students (and some of these projects will be in EPCC).

We propose that these students become part of the normal process for part-time MSc students: select projects from the January pool, start project after May exams, submit dissertation in August the following year, be examined in the standard manner. They would count towards the normal MSc project supervision load.

Project supervision would be the same as with current part-time MSc students (e.g. every 2-3 weeks). Students could only choose projects where remote supervision and project execution is feasible (e.g. not a physical robotics project unless the student had the robot where they were).

There is also a short-term issue with the 2 students who are nearly ready to start their projects. Both may choose to do projects here or both in EPCC, or 1 in each. Since the MSc project allocation phase has already passed, I propose that we give the 2 students access to the UG4 project pool, with the assumption that they have to discuss with the supervisor if the project can be upscaled to 60 MSc credits instead of 40 UG4 credits, and also if it can be done remotely and over 14 months instead of the usual 6. The DPMT allocation system would be used to allocate the projects, and potential supervisors would have a veto over the student for the normal reasons.