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.