

Introduction To Java Programming (IJP)

Response to student feedback in 2018/19 course survey

I/We have taken note of the feedback from students in this course survey, and have the following comments in response.

- A number of people pointed out that the course name is misleading. We are changing the name this year - although it is difficult to capture the course approach in a simple name - it is important to read the very clear and public description of the course on the front of the web page: <https://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/courses/ijp>
- The above description also explains that the course is possible, but difficult and time-consuming, for those with no experience. Almost all students who engaged with the course passed and produced realistic, working applications, including several students with no previous programming experience.
- The marking scheme is intended to represent an objective evaluation of the student's ability to meet the course objectives. This cannot be adjusted in any way to reflect the student's (lack of) previous experience.
- The course is very-well scaffolded by staffed labs, and an online forum where the lecturer and tutors answer questions promptly (an average response time of 91 minutes last year!) The lecturer also holds regular office hours and responds to email. The lab "demonstrators" are knowledgeable programmers who can help with general programming difficulties, but they are not "tutors" and are not expected to spend additional time preparing, or to provide solutions to the (assessed) assignments - we should try to make this clearer.
- The web pages clearly explain why lectures are not appropriate for this type of course. A small number of targeted videos are available for those topics where we feel some clarification would be useful, and we are intending to produce some short notes for other topics where videos are not the most appropriate medium. It is important to note however, that the ability to locate and use appropriate materials is an important learning objective of the course (and a requirement for any "real-world" programmer).

Paul Anderson, 19th March 2019