Preliminary Proposal: Convert all standard Y3 courses to 20-point courses
Michael Rovatsos

1. Summary
The idea is to replace all 10-point courses except PI and the LPs by 20-point courses. The main implication would be that a student takes 2 "standard" courses per term instead of the current 4.

2. Overview
Shifting to 20-point courses reduces the number of assignment deadlines (assuming a limit of 2 per course is also introduced), reduces the number of exams (3+2 if we examine in December, 5 in May if we don't), and addresses overassessment and time management issues, as well as the transition from pre-Honours to Honours in terms of flexibility and workload. To recover some of the lost flexibility, possible (not mandated) combinations of courses are suggested for the different areas, so that overall no course "content" is lost.

3. Proposed Year 3 structure

Semester 1	*Semester 2*
OS+CCN 20 - systems	FNLP 20 - NLP
CA+CD 20 - hardware	CT 20 - compilers
ICTS+EPL 20 - theory	CCS 20 - cogsci
ABS+LP 20 - symbolic AI	ADS 20 - algorithms
SEOC 20 - software engineering	IVR 20 - robotics
IAML 20 - machine learning	ST 20 - software eng
CSLP/AILP/SELP 10	CS 20 - security
PI 10 - professional issues	SDP 20

Semester split is only for illustration purposes, can be further refined. I have annotated each course to illustrate "areas" these courses cover, and what this implies for student choice. For example, an AI student could do a combination of symbolic AI, machine learning, and robotics and cogsci as a combination. A computer science student could choose, say, systems, software engineering, algorithms, and security. The only course not included above is URP, this could either become a 20-pt course too, or students could be allowed to substitute it for their Large Practical.

4. Implications and further considerations
This proposals limits student choice to some extent, though some courses can still be taken in 4th year (this doesn't impact the Hons project that much, it will be usually just one exam more even if we examine in December). Courses like ABS, ST, IAML will require MSc students to take 20 points if they want to take them. If there are December exams, I would propose to shift the Large Practical deadline to early January. The proposal requires quite a lot of work on course content – though staff don't need to stick to the above combinations necessarily as the "sum" of the two previous courses obviously. For some of the S2 courses that are not, in the above list, combinations of existing courses, they could be thematically extended (e.g. ADS with complexity, ST with further software engineering content, etc). Teaching staff and ITO would have to manage 13 instead of currently 19 courses.

Preliminary Proposal: 20-pt foundations courses in Semester 1, specialised 10-point courses in Semester 2
Michael Rovatsos

1. Summary
Small number of foundational courses in Semester 1 with a 20-point Large Practical, retaining breadth of choice in Semester 2 through large number of 10-point courses.

2. Overview
This is a variation of the proposal to make all standard courses worth 20 points. It proposes a 20-point Large Practical, which may help improve programming skills, and in return for this shifts PI to Semester 2. The S1 courses should be pre-requisites for the respective S2 courses. The main motivation behind this proposal is to have a staggered transition from Y2 to Y3, and reduce the total number of exams, while retaining as much student choice as possible.

3. Proposed Year 3 structure

Semester 1	Semester 2
CA+OS 20 - systems	DBS 10
FAI+LP 20 – symbolic AI	CT 10
IVR 20 - robotics	CD 10
SEOC 20 - software eng	CCN 10
IAML 20 - machine learning	CCS 10
CSLP/AILP/SELP 20	ADS 10
	ST 10
	CS 10
	CT 10
	ITCS 10
	ABS 10
	FNLP 10
	EPL 10
	PI 10
	URP 10
	SDP 20

The precise number of S1 20-point courses and the areas they cover needs to be discussed further. The proposal does not make the 10-point weighting a requirement for S2 courses, staff can still choose to introduce 20-point courses in S2 on a case-by-case basis.

4. Implications and further considerations
This proposal only marginally reduces the total number of courses taught, but it does simplify the student experience in S1. If we examined in December, this would result in a 2/4 exam balance, if not, 6 exams in May. Unfortunately FNLP/ABS/LP/CCS cannot be foundational S1 20-point courses, otherwise AI students would have nothing to choose from in S2.