

Course Proposal Form

Please see Page 2 for instructions on which parts of this form to complete, whom to consult with to avoid unnecessary effort, and where to send the completed form.

**Proposer(s): Michael Fourman
February 2019**

Date: 12

Cover page: Basic permanent course information

Unless otherwise noted, items in this section are entered into EUCLID and **cannot** be changed without creating an entirely new course.

Course Name

The Impact of Informatics

Course Acronym *(used by the School only, e.g., for the Sortable Course List)*

II

Course Level
Undergraduate.

Undergraduate
 Postgraduate

Normal Year Taken

UG1

Also available in years *[This can be changed later if need be.]*

UG2

SCQF Credit Level

8

Level 8 should normally be used for pre-honours courses. Level 10 should normally be used for optional UG3 courses (so UG4 students may also take them) and for courses aimed mainly at UG4 students. Level 11 should be used for courses aimed mainly at MSc students, whether or not UG4 students can also take them.

SCQF Credit Points

10
 Other:

Delivery Location

Campus

Course Type

Standard (default)

Marking Scheme

By default, courses use a numerical marking scheme. If you wish to use a grade-only marking scheme, your course proposal below should justify this.

Letter grade only

Guidance for remaining sections:

For an initial course proposal, please complete the **cover page and Section 1 (Case for Support)**, which asks you to describe the need for this course and to provide an overview of the course design, including the learning outcomes. **Please discuss your plans as early as possible with the head of Curriculum Review to avoid unnecessary effort.**

Send the form with these sections completed to the BoS Academic Secretary and head of Curriculum Review (listed on the BoS page) to obtain their comments before filling out the

remainder of the form.

If a full proposal is invited, please complete the remaining sections and send to **iss-bos@inf.ed.ac.uk**.

2. Student-facing course description and additional feedback and assessment information.

This section provides most of the information students see in the DRPS entry for this course, as well as related details for BoS consideration.

3. Further information for BoS consideration: sample materials.

4. Additional Course Details required for DRPS. *[Administrative information such as delivery timing and prerequisites.]*

5. Placement in degree programme tables. *[Required for all level 9-11 courses; used to determine where the course will be added to existing degree programme tables.]*

6. Comments from colleagues. *[All course proposal should be sent to relevant colleagues in the area as well as to the appropriate year organizer and BoS Academic Secretary for comment in good time before the BoS meeting. Use this section to indicate what feedback has been solicited and received.]*

Colour coding and item-by-item guidance:

Guidance is provided in italics for each item. Please also refer to the guidance for new course proposals at <http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/student-services/committees/board-of-studies/course-proposal-guidelines>. Examples of previous course proposal submissions are available on the past meetings page <http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/admin/committees/bos/meetings-directory> but note that the proposal form was updated in Jan 2019.

Sections in gold are for student view and are required before a course can be entered into DRPS. You must complete these sections even if your course has already been approved based on other documentation.

Sections in orange are for School use but are still required for all courses (even those that have already been approved based on other documentation).

Section in gray are for consideration by the Board of Studies. They are normally required for all new course proposals but may be omitted in some circumstances (e.g., for invited course proposals) if you obtain permission in advance.

1. Case for support

This section is for consideration by the Board of Studies. The final two boxes (Learning Outcomes, Graduate Attributes) will also go into the student-facing course description.

Overall contribution to teaching portfolio and relation to existing curriculum

This course is intended as an introduction to the social, industrial, artistic, and scientific impacts of informatics.

Information confers a surprising power on those who understand and organize its exploitation. Informatics is changing the world we live in, providing new opportunities and new challenges. Every Edinburgh graduate should have the opportunity to gain some understanding of these opportunities and challenges.

The course is designed primarily for those not taking an informatics degree. There are no pre-requisites.

However, it will complement our existing curriculum, with little if any overlap, and could also be of benefit to our students.

Please explain (a) what motivates the course proposal (e.g. a previous course having become outdated/inappropriate, an emergent or maturing research area or new research activity in the School, offerings of our competitors) and (b) how it relates to existing courses and degree programmes (including any prerequisite courses). Every new course should make an important contribution to the delivery of our [Degree Programmes](#).

Target audience and expected demand

It will be delivered at a non-technical level intended to be suitable for all Edinburgh undergraduates, and is intended to be taken as an optional course taken in first or second year.

I would hope to limit enrolment in the first year.

If the course is successful it could be expanded in future years to make a significant contribution across the University.

Describe the type of student the course would appeal to in terms of background, level of ability, and interests, and the expected class size for the course based on anticipated demand. A good justification would include some evidence, e.g. by referring to projects in an area, class sizes in similar courses, employer demand for the skills taught in the course, etc

Anticipated Resource Requirements

I am currently translating (to English) Gérard Berry's *L'Hyperpuissance de l'informatique*, developed from his lectures at the Collège de France over the past ten years. This proposal is largely modelled on this text the translation would form the course text. Prof Berry's teaching materials are also available. I would expect the content to evolve to take advantage of Edinburgh's expertise in areas (e.g. robotics, speech and language, ...) not addressed in Berry's book.

The material is suitable for continuous assessment, based on five written reports.

These would include an opportunity for students to relate the course to the subject of their primary degree.

If the course is successful, support would be required for marking.

Estimate how much lecturing, tutoring, exam preparation and marking effort will be needed in steady state, and any additional resources needed to set the course up initially. Provide estimates relative to class size where applicable and discuss how support staff will be recruited and supervised, if the class is likely to be very large. Please mention any scaling limits due to equipment or space. If equipment is required, say how it will be procured and maintained.]

Quotas, special arrangements or unusual characteristics

Please specify if this course requires any special arrangements such as quotas or other registration arrangements; is a collaboration with another school or institution, or has other atypical characteristics that may affect finances or student registration. Further justification/information may be requested for such courses.

The proposal is to limit enrolment in the first year.

The proposed format is to have one two-hour, lecture + activity, session each week, timetabled to avoid clashes with required pre-honours courses.

I would hope to entice colleagues from informatics, other schools, and industry to contribute guest lectures.

Narrative description of the course aims and structure

Please describe the main goals of the course and how the course design will allow students to achieve those goals. This section should be consistent with the student-facing information provided below, but should provide additional information to help colleagues at BoS understand the vision and structure of the course. This description may refer to the learning outcomes and graduate attributes (next two boxes) and should explain how activities such as tutorials, labs, or in-lecture activities will support them, and how the proposed assessments will assess them.

What every thinking person should know about the impact of informatics informatics, its foundations, its applications, the revolutions it enables, and some pitfalls.

We have only recently begun to appreciate the extent to which informatics is transforming our society.

This course aims to describe and analyze the foundations of the impacts of informatics on science and society.

It will use case studies to examine in a non-technical way how informatics has made information---data---a critical asset, at the heart of the action, in industry and society.

Understanding how algorithms, data, machines and networks interact with society requires a new understanding of information, computational thinking, very different from that of previous centuries. Information confers a surprising power on those who understand and organize its exploitation.

To develop a concrete understanding of the impact of computational thinking the course will begin with an overview of four areas of massive transformation: telecommunications and the Internet, photography and cartography, the computerization of medicine, and data-driven science.

The course will analyze two computer hazards in some detail---bugs and security holes, which can turn computerized systems into public hazards---and show how modern science can better control these hazards.

Summary of Intended Learning Outcomes (MAXIMUM OF 5)

List the learning outcomes of the course. These must be assessable (i.e., observable), so must specify what the student should be able to do concretely, not simply what they should "understand". Use concrete verbs that indicate (a) what type of

assessment would be appropriate, and (b) what level of knowledge/thinking is expected (from recall to analysis to novel creation). **Example verbs:** define, explain, implement, compare, justify. Assessments (described later) should be tied to the learning outcomes.

Outcomes should typically focus more on the types of thinking/skills developed than on the detailed course content, and the level of thinking should be appropriate to the level of the course: outcomes for a Level 11 course should include more higher-level thinking skills than for a Level 8 course. Further guidance on writing learning outcomes can be found at <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/res-writinglearningoutcomes.pdf>

On completion of this course, the student will be able to

- 1) Describe the actual and potential impacts of informatics on their primary subject of study.
- 2) Analyze a case study of the impact of informatics in terms of data, algorithms, machines and networks.
- 3) Identify and describe potential dangers in terms of the social and technical design of some informatic system.
- 4) Describe the economics, and social impacts of a company such as Google, Uber, AirBnB,
- 5)

Graduate Attributes, Personal & Professional Skills

List the personal attributes and generic transferrable skills this course will help develop.

- Cognitive skills:** critical/analytical thinking
- Responsibility, autonomy,** decision-making, ethical/social/professional awareness and responsibility, entrepreneurship
- Communication:** verbal and/or written communication, cross-cultural or cross-disciplinary communication

1. Student-facing course description and additional feedback and assessment information

Except where noted, all fields are required and will go into the DRPS entry for the course (for use by students). **Important:** any text in DRPS is effectively a contract with students, so should not include details that are likely to change from year to year.

Summary Description

Provide a brief official description of the course, around 100 words. This should be worded in a student-friendly way, it is the part of the descriptor a student is most likely to read. If this course replaces another course, please say so in this summary.

Information confers a surprising power on those who understand and organize its exploitation. Informatics is changing the world we live in, providing new opportunities and new challenges. This course will help you to understand how algorithms, data, machines and networks will have impacts on your future.

Keywords

Give a list of searchable keywords.

data, internet, algorithm, computer, communication, privacy, digital, society

Course Description

A more detailed student-facing description of the course, which should normally include (a) a more in-depth academic description of the learning aims, nature and context of the course, (b) a rough outline of the content or syllabus, often as bullet points, and (c) a description of how the course will be taught, how students are expected to engage with their learning and how they will be expected to evidence and demonstrate their achievement of the intended learning outcomes.]

Assessment Weightings:

These should correspond approximately to the proportion of learning outcomes that each component assesses. More than 30% coursework requires specific justification. The expectation for a 10pt course is 20% coursework with the equivalent of one 15-20hr assessed assignment (but possibly split into smaller pieces). See 'components of assessment' below.

Further Assessment Information

Provide any further information that should go on DRPS for students. E.g., if the assessment includes required group work or if students must pass some individual component of assessment as well as the course overall.

Components of assessment and time spent on assignments (for BoS only)

*If not already included in the course narrative description, please describe the type of assessments (oral presentation, report, programming, etc) and **how each component of assessment will assess the intended learning outcomes.** Where coursework involves group work, it is important to remember that every student has to be assessed individually for their contribution to any jointly produced piece of work.*

*Also estimate **how many hours** students will spend on assignments. Please see the [School policy on Workload and Assessment](#), which states that students should not be expected to spend more than 6-7 hrs/wk per 10 credits, including contact hours.*

Note that it is often desirable to include formative assignments which are not formally assessed but submitted for feedback, often in combination with peer assessment.

Feedback Information *Provide a high-level description of how and what type of feedback will be provided to students, for inclusion in DRPS.*

Additional Feedback Information

The class meets once a week for a two-hour session (with a break) including a lecture, group activities and group discussion.

These will provide opportunities for small group discussions, in-class assessment of lessons learned from the lecture, and brief rapportage from members of the class.

Written Exam _____%
Practical Exam _____% (*for courses with programming exams*)
Coursework 100%

Assessment will be on the basis of five written submissions (increasing progressively from 1,000 – 2,000 words)

We expect you to spend around 4h per week, on coursework (8h per essay, including background reading).

Marking schema will be developed along the lines of the informatics project marking schema. A single letter grade is better-suited to such assessment.

Assessment will be on the basis of five written submissions (increasing progressively from 1,000 – 2,000 words; 4h per week, 8h per essay, including background reading.)

Feedback in class using Top Hat, and online using Piazza.
Limited personalised feedback on coursework, with summary feedback in class.

(for BoS use only)

If not already included in the course narrative, provide further details on planned feedback arrangements. This includes how course feedback is solicited from the class and responded to, as well as what feedback students will get (either on work that contributes to their final mark, or not).

The University is committed to a [baseline of principles](#) regarding feedback that we have to implement at every level, and the School encourages submission of at least one piece of written work for formative feedback.

In general, formative feedback:

- *Should say how students can improve.*
- *Need not be on individual work (e.g., consider a lecture or document summarizing common issues.)*
- *Can include oral feedback during labs/tutorials*
- *Can include feedback from peers*
- *Clickers/TopHat/equivalents can provide in-class feedback for both students and lecturer.*
- *Is returned in time for other forms of assessment to which it relates, to allow feedforward.*

Breakdown of Learning and Teaching Activities

State how many hours students spend on each part of the course. The total should be 10 x course credits, but please also see the [School policy on Workload and Assessment](#), which states that students should not be expected to spend more than 6-7 hrs/wk per 10 credits, including contact hours.

Assume 10 weeks of lectures slots and 10 weeks of tutorials, but these need not all be used. As a guideline, a 10-pt course typically has 18-20 lecture hours, but should have only around 15 lectures of examinable material; the rest should be used for guest lectures, revision sessions, introductions to assignments, etc.

**Contact hours
Hours**

**Non-contact hours
Hours**

**Total hours:
22**

Reading List/Learning Resources

You are encouraged to create resource lists using [LEGANTO](#)

Gérard Berry's *L'Hyperpuissance de l'informatique*, (translation in progress)

1. Further information for BoS consideration: sample materials

A full proposal for a new course must include examples of exercises and assessment. Please provide these below, along with publicity information if the course is to be advertised outwith the

School.

Course information and publicity TBA

The course web page (typically the Learn landing page) will be linked from the Sortable Course List, and information such as timetables and assignment deadlines must be made available prior to the start of the academic year. Please specify here if any additional info/publicity is needed for your course: typically only if it is aimed largely at non-SoI students.

Sample tutorial/lab sheet questions TBA

Provide a list of tutorial questions and answers and/or samples of lab sheets. These need not be fully fleshed out but should indicate what sort of exercises will be provided to help students learn the material.

Sample assessment materials TBA

*If the course is primarily assessed by **exam**, provide a sample exam question with model answers. Any non-standard exam format must be justified. The online list of past exam papers gives an idea of typical and alternative exam formats:*

http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/exam_papers/.

*If the course is largely or primarily assessed by **coursework**, provide a sketch of a possible assignment with an estimate of effort against each sub-task and a description of marking criteria.*

Any other relevant materials TBA

Include anything else that is relevant, possibly in the form of links. If you do not want to specify a set of concrete readings for the official course descriptor, please list examples here.

1. **Additional Course Details for DRPS**

Except where otherwise noted, these fields are required for entry into EUCLID and will be visible to students in the DRPS entry.

Planned Academic Year of Delivery

(The first year you anticipate the course running, e.g. AY 2019-20)

Course Organiser

(By default, the course proposer)

Intended Delivery Period

Semester 1 or Semester 2 (TBD)

Other (please specify):

Timetable considerations/conflicts

For School use. Please specify any constraints to be considered (e.g. overlap of popular combinations, other specialism courses, external courses etc). Include whether the semester delivery is constrained or could be flexible.

Is this course available to visiting students?

Yes (default)

If no, please provide a justification here:

Required pre-requisite courses

___No

Use sparingly: these are enforced in PATH and can only be waived by approval from the School's Curriculum Approval Officer. Note that cross-year required pre-requisites may prevent MSc students from registering; consider using recommended pre-requisites or "other requirements" instead.

Recommended pre-requisite courses

___No

Required co-requisite courses

___No

Specify any courses that must be taken in parallel with the existing course. Note that this leads to a timetabling constraint that should be mentioned elsewhere in the proposal.

Prohibited Combinations

___No

Specify any courses that may not be taken in combination with the proposed course].

Other Requirements/Additional Information

___No

This information is often used by MSc students and students from other Schools to see if they have appropriate background without having done our School's courses. So please avoid course titles, instead list specific knowledge and skills (such as mathematical concepts, programming ability or specific languages, etc).

Also list any other constraints on registration, for example: "Only available to 4th Year Informatics students including those on joint degrees." or "This course is open to all Informatics students including those on joint degrees, and to students in the School of Mathematics. Other external students whose DPT does not list this course should seek permission from the course organiser."

Visiting Student Pre-requisites

___None

1. Placement in degree programme tables: for level 9-11 courses only

This section is for consideration by the Board of Studies and will be used later by ITO to determine where the course will be added to existing degree programme tables.

Is this course restricted to students on a specific degree?

___No

___Yes (please specify and provide justification):

E.g., some courses are only available to students on a specific CDT or MSc.

Is this course compulsory for students on any

___No

degree(s)?

___ Yes (please specify and provide justification):

Any issues for part-time students?

Normally, part-time students have access to the same courses as full-time students on the equivalent degree. If you anticipate any problems with this, please specify here.

For optional courses:

If this course is available but non-compulsory for students on various degrees (most courses), please fill in this section. The choices here determine where the course appears in degree programme tables (DPTs) and the 2-3 character tags are displayed in the Informatics sortable course list.

Should this course be tagged as ‘ML’ (machine learning foundations and methods)?

___ No
___ Yes

Courses with the ML tag are typically very high-demand and most degrees limit the number of ML credits. If your course might appeal to a similar audience but draw off students from these large courses, please select 'no' and choose one of the tags below.

If you chose ‘no’, please choose at least one of the following tags...

Ideally, select exactly one, unless there is a good argument for more than one. These three are used in various combinations for many of our degrees.

___ **FSS** (CS foundations, systems, and software)
___ **AIA** (artificial intelligence applications and paradigms)
___ **COG** (cognitive science: including HCI and NLP courses, but not most other AI courses. Please restrict to courses most relevant to natural cognition.)

...and also tick if any of the following tags or categories apply.

Do not tick any of these if you selected ‘ML’ already.

___ **NS** (natural systems: e.g., computation by or about biological or social systems. Many COG courses are also NS. This tag is mainly relevant for MSc in Informatics.)
___ **SE** (software engineering: including courses that are highly relevant to SE degrees. All SE courses should also be FSS. This tag is mainly relevant for UG SE degrees.)
___ Databases and data management systems (used for Data Science MSc and MSc(R))
___ Unstructured data and applications (used for Data Science MSc and MSc(R))
___ Level 11 Security courses (used for Security MSc)

If you are not sure which tags are most appropriate or have other questions about this section, please note any comments/issues here.

1. **Comments from colleagues**

All course proposal should be sent to relevant colleagues in the area as well as to the appropriate year organizer and BoS Academic Secretary for comment in good time before the BoS meeting. Please indicate here what feedback has been solicited and received.

Additional Comments

Summarise any comments received from relevant individuals prior to proposing the course. If you have not discussed this proposal with others please note this.

Year Organiser Comments

Year Organisers are responsible for maintaining the official Year Guides for every year of study, which, among other things, provide guidance on available course choices and specialist areas. The Year Organisers of all years for which the course will be offered should be consulted on the appropriateness and relevance on the course. Issues to consider here include balance of course offerings across semesters, subject areas, and credit levels, timetabling implications, fit into the administrative structures used in delivering that year.]

BoS Academic Secretary Comments

Proposals must be checked by the Secretary of the Board of Studies prior to discussion at the actual Board meeting. This is a placeholder for their comments, mainly on the formal quality of the content provided above.