

# Split of courses across UG3/UG4 and MSc boards of examiners

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## Background

Last year we re-classified most of the courses that are taken by UG4 and MSc students as “Year 4, Level 11”. This meant we could run just one version for both groups, as well as offering MInf students the choice to take them in either Year 4 or Year 5. However, it did mean they were all allocated to the UG4 Board of Examiners (BoE). That board then had a lot of courses to process (around 30), which meant that scrutiny meetings and exam boards were very long, and the external examiners (EEs) were overstretched. (There are only 2 EEs on the UG4 BoE, and they also serve on the UG3 BoE.) The MSc BoE, in contrast, had comparatively few courses to consider (around 18), even though it includes four EEs. In addition to that, the imbalance resulted in a large number of internal examiners on the UG4 BoE, as under current rules, all lecturers on courses dealt with by a given BoE are internal examiners on that BoE. This made it difficult to achieve a quorum of examiners for BoE meetings.

## Proposal

We would like to address this issue by moving some year 4, level 11 courses to the MSc BoE. Moving all level 11 courses would cause an imbalance the other way (it would overload the MSc BoE), hence we are proposing to split the year 4, level 11 courses alphabetically between the two boards. This type of split is easy to reproduce, and can be adjusted every year, if required by a change in the number of courses being offered.

In addition to this, to streamline board operations, we propose:

1. The number of EEs for the UG3 and UG4 BoEs should be increased to three.
2. The number of EEs for the MSc BoE should be decreased to three.
3. Every course dealt with by a given board should be represented by exactly one internal examiner.

Proposal (3) can be implemented by selecting one of the course lecturers as the internal examiner (currently all course lecturers are internal examiners). This selection should be made by the BoE convener at the beginning of the year, taking into account which other BoEs the lecturer serves on (ideally, each lecturer should have to serve on only one board).

The proposed distribution of courses across boards, and the proposed BoE memberships are attached below. Although reduced in size since last year, all BoEs still have a large number of internal examiners. This means a substantial effort in staff hours simply for attendance, and members this year strongly recommended we consider how to reduce this.

For the main programme meetings, a smaller board of 8-12 teaching staff seems sufficient to responsibly scrutinise cases and resolve decisions. However, it is still important that at the

preliminary meetings each individual course has representation from one of the staff teaching it.

These conflicting constraints mean we are not proposing further reduction in board size this year; but would welcome comments and recommendations about how to do so in a future proposal.

## Appendix A: Proposed distribution of courses across BoEs for 2015/2016

### **UG3 Board of Examiners**

#### *Year 3 Level 9*

AI Large Practical

Computer Architecture

Computer Communications and Networks

Computer Design

Computer Science Large Practical

Foundations of Natural Language Processing

Introduction to Vision and Robotics

Logic Programming

Operating Systems

System Design Project

Undergraduate Research Practical

#### *Year 3 Level 10*

Agent Based Systems

Algorithms and Data Structures

Compiling Techniques

Computational Cognitive Science

Computer Security

Database Systems

Elements of Programming Languages

Introduction to Theoretical Computer Science

Introductory Applied Machine Learning

Professional Issues

Software Engineering with Objects and Components

Software Testing

## **UG4/5 Board of Examiners**

*Year 4 Level 10*

Intelligent Autonomous Robotics

System Level Integration Practical

*Year 4 Level 11*

Adaptive Learning Environments 1

Advanced Vision

Algorithmic Game Theory and its Applications

Automated Reasoning

Automatic Speech Recognition

Compiler Optimisation

Computational Complexity

Computer Algebra

Computer Animation & Visualisation

Computer Graphics

Computer Networking

Distributed Systems

Embedded Systems

Honours Project (Informatics)

MInf Project (Part 1)

MInf Project (Part 2)

## **MSc Board of Examiners**

*Year 4 Level 11*

Extreme Computing

Human-Computer Interaction

Introduction to Quantum Computing

Machine Learning & Pattern Recognition

Machine Learning Practical  
Machine Translation  
Natural Language Understanding  
Parallel Architectures  
Parallel Programming Languages and Systems  
Secure Programming  
Semantic Web Systems  
Social and Technological Networks  
Software Architecture Process and Management  
Topics in Cognitive Modelling  
Topics in Natural Language Processing  
Types and Semantics for Programming Languages

*Year 5 Level 9*

Introduction to Java Programming

*Year 5 Level 11*

Accelerated Natural Language Processing  
Advanced Topics in Foundations of Databases  
Applied Databases  
Bioinformatics 1  
Bioinformatics 2  
Case Studies in Design Informatics 1  
Case Studies in Design Informatics 2  
Computational Cognitive Neuroscience  
Introduction to Research in Data Science  
Music Informatics  
Neural Computation  
Neural Information Processing  
Pervasive Parallelism  
Probabilistic Modelling and Reasoning

Reinforcement Learning

Robot Learning and Sensorimotor Control

Robotics: Science and Systems

Informatics Research Review

Informatics Research Proposal

Masters Dissertation (Design Informatics)

MSc Dissertation (Informatics)

MSc by Research Thesis (Data Science)

MSc by Research Thesis (Data Science; 120pt)

MSc by Research Thesis (Pervasive Parallelism)

Robotics and Autonomous Systems Research Thesis

## Appendix B: Proposed BoE memberships for 2015/2016

Each Board has a list of full members, nominated by the School, who are expected to participate in Board meetings and hold responsibility for decisions made by the Board (see Taught Assessment Regulation 36).

In addition, all academic staff involved in teaching any course are invited to be present "in attendance" at meetings of the corresponding Board of Examiners (see Taught Assessment Regulation 38).

### **UG3 Board of Examiners**

Convener: C Stirling

Year Organiser: V Nagarajan

Regulations expert: tba, ideally chosen from those below

Internal examiners

S Anderson

M Arapinis

J Bradfield

J Cheney

M Cryan

C Dubach  
M Fourman  
N Goddard  
P Guagliardo  
F Keller  
J Lee  
M Lee  
M O'Boyle  
P Patras  
A Rajan  
M Rovatsos  
N Schneider  
A Smaill  
P Stevens  
H Thompson  
N Topham

**UG4/5 Board of Examiners**

Convenor: I Stark

Year Organisers: M Cryan, M Marina

Regulations expert: tba, ideally chosen from those below

Internal examiners

D Arvind  
I Diakonikolas  
K Etesami  
J Fleuriot  
B Franke  
K Kalorkoti  
T Komura  
H Leather

H Pain

D Sannella

H Shimodaira

T Thorne

B Webb

### **MSc Board of Examiners**

Convenor: F Keller

Year Organisers: P Jackson

Regulations expert: tba, ideally chosen from those below

#### Internal examiners

S Anderson

P Anderson

D Arvind

D Aspinall

S Cohen

M Cole

B Fisher

J Fleuriot

S Goldwater

K Heafield

M Hennig

M Herrmann

L Libkin

A Lopez

C Lucas

S Maneth

V Nagarajan

J Oberlander

S Renals

R Sarkar

P Series

A Smaill

A Storkey

C Sutton

M Van Rossum

S Vijayakumar

P Wadler

P Wallden

B Webber