Teaching Committee Minutes

Wednesday 15th March, 2pm, Room 4.31/4.33

Present: Alan Smaill (Convenor)

Björn Franke (Director of Teaching)

Christophe Dubache

Sharon Goldwater

Fotios Papadogeorgopoulos (student rep)

Helen Pain

Gillian Bell

Colin Stirling

Boris Grot

Paul Jackson

In Attendance: Gregor Hall (administrator)

1. **Apologies for Absence:**   Paul Anderson

   Iain Murray

   Frank Keller

   Myrto Arapinis

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

3. **Matters Arising** - reviewing actions from February 2017 Teaching Committee:

5.1: Item: 1st Year Tutorials
ACTION: the Director of Teaching was tasked with looking into possible solutions.
RESPONSE: ITO and DoT will continue to monitor staff tutoring workload and emphasise the need to pre-honours year teaching.

5.2 Articulation between Maths and Informatics
ACTION: MF to adjust learning outcomes of this course for Board of Studies Approval; cc Alex Welsh.
RESPONSE: Revised learning outcomes presented at Board of Studies; changes approved at BoS; needs tweaked and re-submitted.

6: Item: December Exam Diet Marking Deadlines:
ACTION: BF to liaise with ITO and generate a draft policy, with a final policy to be in effect by December 2017 exam diet.

RESPONSE: on-going.

7.1: Splitting of Classes
ACTION: BF to continue this discussion outside the Committee; cc Vicky MacTaggart due to Timetabling involvement.
RESPONSE: on-going as part of the duty allocation process led by Stuart Anderson.

7.2: MSc Project Allocation
ACTION: BF to speak to supervisors
RESPONSE: Completed.

8: Proposed Change in Exam Scrutiny Process
ACTION: HP to provide an example of this system to BF and AS for further consideration.
RESPONSE: Completed – see "Revised Exam Scrutiny Process" Item.

9: Necessity of Year Organiser Reports as a standing item
ACTION: ITO to update:
web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/admin/allocation-duties/admin-duties/year-organiser
RESPONSE: Completed.

11: Student Access to Examination Scripts
ACTION: ITO to put policy in place.
RESPONSE: to be added to webpage.

12: Exam Rubric Clarification
ACTION: ITO to action on exam PCs
RESPONSE: Completed.

4. **Changing DMMR from closed book to open book - Kousha Etessami & Colin Stirling:** Colin took the Committee through the proposal. One committee member agreed with the proposal on the basis that students would be better off understanding a subject than memorising it. The paper would be expected to be slightly harder due to this change – it was mooted that the students should be made aware of this. It was also suggested that an example of the exam questions be made available for students. This proposal was approved by Committee.
   ACTION: ITO to (a) let externals know of the change in S1 of 2017/2018 and (b) check rubric. New lecturer to prepare sample question. Stuart Anderson & Martin Wright are doing duty allocation for 2017/2018 – Colin to inform the eventual lecturer.

5. **Revised Exam Scrutiny Process - Alan Smaill:** Alan ran through the proposal. Comments included: the initial onus for finding a reviewer would be on the course exam setter, tracking the reviewer assignments would probably be administered by

ITO, and the BoE convenor should know the assignments. One committee member was of the opinion that the external examiners should get to see the tracking document as they had found this helpful in their experience as an external. The security aspects of the proposed system were raised; one member suggested having a separate room for papers within the Forum but another countered with the fact that the ITO would be back in Appleton Tower by this point, and visiting ITO would be a lot easier than visiting Forrest Hill. It was asked if it was acceptable for co-authored exam papers to be reviewed by one of the authors; the consensus was that while that would be acceptable (as long as they were reviewing the part they didn't set, obviously) a third person would be better practice.

ACTION: Alan Smaill to produce a version of this form for Committee.

6. **Ordinary Degree Handling - Björn Franke & Gillian Bell:** Björn explained the current method used to handle students who end up with an Ordinary degree, and proposed an alternative. The current regulations dictate the current (and rather odd) situation whereby it is actually easier to get a 3rd class Honours degree than an Ordinary degree. One suggestion was to remove the UG2 hurdle, which prompted the view that doing so would result in more appeals. Another was to raise the UG3 hurdle to the same of the MInf programme. It was noted that the UG2 hurdle was difficult to handle in APT.
ACTION: Björn Franke to form a team to put together a full proposal to be presented at the next TC.

7. **Report for Teaching Committee on MSc Selection - Recruitment Committee:** The Recruitment Officer took the Committee through this clarification of existing criteria for admission to MSc programmes. It was asserted that the rapid expansion of the MSc cohort was to some degree due to the fact that the criteria have remained unchanged for some time. It was reported that goal (c) of this report – "Start trying to build a model of outcomes based on data from admissions" – had drawn strong criticism outside Teaching Committee. The response was that such data would have to be used in a considered way. It was observed that applicants with considerable industrial programming experience may not meet the criteria, but the reply was that the selector would be able to progress such applications. The effect of variable English language competency on the student body at large was also discussed. The Recruitment Committee were to continue working on this project.

8. **Director of Teaching's report - Björn Franke:** the Strategy Committee defined the future roles of DoT and Deputy DoT. The DoT's role will be concerned with mainly strategic issues, whereas the Deputy DoT will handle day-to-day Teaching tasks. These roles should be better supported, possibly with resource provided to handle administration. One committee member proposed the creation of the post of Learning Support Officer.
ACTION: DoT to seek out interest in the Deputy DoT role.

9. **AOCB:** Kami Vaniea is Coordinator of Equality and Diversity and also performs outreach functions. The creation of an Academic Outreach Officer would ease the burden on the C.E.D and improve the Outreach function. Such a post would require an academic.

   ACTION: DoT and Helen Pain to generate a proposal for the creation of the role of Academic Outreach Officer.