

Teaching Committee Minutes

Tuesday 12th December, 2pm, Appleton Tower Room 7.14

Present: Alan Smaill (Convenor)
Gillian Bell
Christophe Dubache
Mark Van Rossum
Pavlos Andreadis (University Teacher)
John Longley
Mary Cryan
Richard Mayr
Guido Sanguinetti

In Attendance: Gregor Hall (administrator)

18.17 Apologies for Absence: Helen Pain
Sharon Goldwater
Stuart Anderson
Iain Murray

ACTION: The student reps for Teaching Committee – Nikita Samarin and Caterina Mrose should be emailed prior to each TC meeting.

RESPONSE: IT contacted them.

18.18 Minutes of Previous Meetings – approved

18.19 Matters Arising

(TC 10th May 2017, Matters Arising 3.2) - Revised Exam Scrutiny Process.

ACTION: ITO to update Semester 2 Exam Setting Deadlines; to be completed. Gantt chart to be added to page.

(TC May 10th, Item 4) - Proposal to Remove Elevated Hurdles for Progression to Honours - B. Franke. **ACTION:** DoT to contact Business School, Convenor to contact PPLS.

The Convenor contacted PPLS in order to understand better how they handle this.

ACTION: Convenor to send details to Gillian Bell. DoT to contact Business School.

18.04 Moderating IPP Marks - G. Sanguinetti

ACTION: The DoT will consult with the Convenors on the subject and get back to the proposer.

The Committee discussed the proposal. One concern that arose was that Teaching Staff marking IPP would likely be consistent in their marking but Teaching Assistants would probably vary more. The proposer pointed out that he wanted the moderation system to be a “light touch” scheme. This would involve using tutors to provide feedback on what they see as unusual marks – for instance, a good student getting a poor mark. These cases would then be moderated. A member pointed out that (Semester 1) IRR is marked by tutors, (Semester 2) IPP by supervisors. The proposer added that he wanted to avoid double marking, and mentioned that the majority of students did not have an extreme mark. It was suggested that feedback could be added by tutors to assist the markers. The course organiser, who is relinquishing this role in 2018-19, stressed the need for the new course organiser to have a robust system in place, and also mentioned the difficulty in recruiting tutors. The marking scheme was discussed, with the possibility of having fixed marks e.g. 50 or 60 or 70.

ACTION: It was agreed to move forward with the plan to take feedback from the tutors regarding cases they saw as unusual, and the course organiser would moderate these cases appropriately. Marking guidelines are to be fleshed out and a marking form devised.

18.12 Draft Learning and Teaching Plan - Director of Teaching

Action: ITO to hold SSLCs this semester. The DoT will review the role of Year Organiser.

RESPONSE: SSLCs held for Semester 1.

ACTION: DoT to confirm his action.

18.16-01 (AOCB) Food and Drink in Labs

ACTION: ITO will put up signs discouraging eating in computer labs.

RESPONSE: Complete.

18.06-03 (AOCB) Student access to the Forum.

ACTION: ITO to look into this.

RESPONSE: Martin Wright and DoT emailed 17/11/2017, awaiting comments.

ACTION: ITO to chase.

18.20 School of Informatics QA Report 2016/17 - DoT / Director of Quality

The DoQ produces two annual quality reports, one for the Taught programmes and one for PGR programmes. He introduced the report produced for 2016-17, and its accompanying quality model. These reports include statistical information and qualitative reporting in order to provide a “birds-eye view” of the School’s achievements and issues. The QA reports feed into the College’s five-yearly review of teaching, and in the last two years the templates used have been more open-ended than in previous years. The DoQ took the Committee through the “main stories” of the year, which included:

- The space constraints of Forrest Hill

- Timetabling challenges
- Successful re-structuring of the Year 3 programmes
- The large number of MSc students and the difficulties that such a large cohort generates, such as finding enough IRR tutors and project supervisors, and the wide spectrum of ability that must be catered for
- Low student satisfaction rates

The DoQ invited discussion on the items. The MSc cohort provoked discussion. One member was of the belief that the difficulties caused by its size had not been outweighed by the revenue generated in tuition fees. Despite the cap in numbers, another member raised the difficulty of estimating conversion rates; it was pointed out that the previous DoT had encouraged a closer relationship with Admissions. It was opined that the wide spectrum of ability in the cohort brought its own challenges, one opinion being that the students with lesser ability cause a disproportionate use of teaching resources.

Student satisfaction was also considered. The issue for advertising the successes of the School was raised. Possibilities included greater use of social media, blogging the student rep meetings, and using the various screens in Appleton Tower to advertise positive aspects of Informatics. It was hoped that the move to Appleton Tower will improve student satisfaction.

18.21 AOCB - The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 10th, 2pm, AT 7.14.