

Minutes of the biannual meeting of the Directors of Studies in Mathematics

**held at 11am, Tuesday 7th May 2013
in the New Combination Room, Corpus Christi College**

Present: Christopher Brookes (CC), Tadashi Tokieda (TH), Thomas Forster (ED), Anita Briginshaw (SE), Julia Goedecke (Q, N), Julian Holstein (CHR), Robert Hunt (CHR), Orsola Rath Spivack (LC), Jonathan Evans (CAI), Ross Lawther (G), Simon Wadsley (HO), Chris Warner (R), Stephen Siklos (JE), Julia Gog (Q), John Lister (T), Irena Borzym (CTH), Wayne Boucher (PEM), Andra Zsak (PET), Vladimir Dokchitser (EM), Adriana Pesci (DOW), Sophia Demoulini (DOW), Vicky Neale (ME), Henri Johnston (JN), Berry Groisman (SID), Rachel Camina (F), Christopher Tout (CHU), Peter O'Donnell (ED), Stephen Cowley (EM)

1. Apologies: Julius Ross (SID), Gareth Taylor (CC), Philip Dawid (DAR). Imre Leader (T), Maciej Dunajski (CL). Stuart Martin (M)

2. The minutes of the meeting of 13 November 2012 were approved

3. Matters arising from the minutes

(a) A*A*A offers and the usefulness of physics

Dr Cowley reported that the Faculty Board no longer says that physics is useful, the website is up to date but the printed version is not yet altered. Discussions with the Admissions Forum and Senior Tutors are continuing on A*A*A offers.

(b) C courses

It was noted that the Curriculum Committee has reviewed the C courses in the light of low take up and the summary of the conclusions of the review were received.

(c) III supervision/examples classes

Dr Cowley said that the recent report from the Part III committee does not formulate a policy He hoped that the 12 year old guide for examples classes would be updated. Various directors of studies described problems from this academic year with supervision claims and reports and there was further discussion about the viability and degree of feedback from examples classes.

4. Tripos matters

(a) Progression from Part II to Part III

(i) Nominees for the Permissions Committee

It was agreed to nominate Dr Brookes, Dr Martin and Dr Pesci. The Faculty Board will appoint the committee and chair on 23 May.

(ii) Dr Cowley asked whether colleges knew of cases where students were switching to Part III in other courses with a lower academic hurdle. Some colleges reported an increased interest in Part III astrophysics.

(b) Guide to lecturing in the Mathematical Tripos

There was general support for the draft Guide and it was thought that it would be good to have separate sections on Part III and NST lecturing.

(c) A possible restructuring of the credit for CATAM

The Faculty Board had asked for comments on a paper by Dr Lister concerning the replacement of the alpha and beta quality marks by a merit mark. There was general support for the proposal, assuming that examiners continue to base borderlines on merit marks and that the pass/fail criteria are reviewed in the light of the change. The proposed scaling factors for CATAM in Parts IB and II were discussed and Dr Hunt suggested that it would be better to have the same number of marks available in CATAM in both IB and II and so the number of possible units in II should be adjusted. There was general support for the scaling factors proposed.

(d) Supervisors' websites

Dr Siklos reported that supervisors were not regularly using the two websites and that Dr Ross was working on improvements and would welcome comments. It was thought that more publicity was perhaps required and that there could be some instructions for directors of studies. The sites were quite difficult to find.

6. Admissions matters

There was some discussion about the rules of the winter pool with regards to second interviews but there was no consensus about whether change was desirable.

7. STEP

Dr Siklos said there was nothing to report.

8. Other matters

(a) Athena Swan

Dr Cowley reported that the Faculty would be applying for an Athena Swan award.

(b) Teaching students with Asperger syndrome

Dr Briginshaw recommended the course with that name organised by the Disability Resources Centre.

(c) Smith-Knight-Rayleigh prizes

Dr Cowley reported on the future changes in the regulations.

9. Any Other Business

(a) Dr Camina asked whether there is a quality mark associated with the physics element of the Mathematics with Physics option in IA and Dr Lister said that candidates were not awarded alphas but were awarded a merit mark for their physics paper.

(b) In connection with plagiarism and CATAM Dr Cowley asked for help from directors of studies to enforce honesty.

10 Date of next meeting: 2pm on 19 November in Trinity Hall