

Minutes (confirmed) of the Maths DoS meeting

Held 14:00, 17 November 2014, Upper Hall 1, Fitzwilliam College

In attendance: R Camina (*F*, Chair), S Siklos (*JE*), A Zsák (*PET*), S Pitts (Chair of Part III Committee), J Goedecke (*N*), S Demoulini (*DOW*), S Antonakoudis (*EM*), O Rath Spivak (*LC*), A Pesci (*DOW*), T Tokieda (*TH*), R Hunt (*CHR*), J Gilbey (*JE*), S Martin (*M*), I Borzym (*CTH*), B Groisman (*SID*), S Wadsley (*HO*), W Boucher (*SID*), P O'Donnell (*ED*), J Button (*SE*), S Cowley (*EM* & Chair of the Faculty), C Tout (*CHU*), J R Lister (*T*), J Gog (*Q*), C Warner (*R*), T Forster (*CH* & *ED*), D Stewart (*K*), A Shadrin (*PEM*), M Wingate (*F* & CATAM Director), J Evans (*CAI*)

Apologies: C Brookes (*CC*), C Cawthorn (*CC*), M Dörrzapf (*JN*), R Lawther (*G*), P Smith (*MUR*), G Taylor (*JE*), H Wilton (*T*)

0. Introductions were made.

1. It was agreed to move Admission Matters up the agenda, from item 8 to after item 4, Tripos Matters

2. The minutes of the meeting of 6 May 2014 were approved.

3. Matters arising

(a) Admissions Committee: Membership was approved.

(b) The Teaching and Learning report was received.

4. Tripos matters:

(a) The Teaching Committee report was received. The variability of difficulty between years and courses is an issue of concern, but directors-of-studies can warn their students that this occurs, and to a degree, is likely to occur at some level. Figures were circulated which showed the impact of CATAM marks on students' final results. It was agreed to circulate the figures to the students. The meeting expressed strong support for lowering the minimum mark for a β on a short question to 7/10, but it did not strongly support raising the minimum mark for a β on a long question to 12/20 (opinion was split on the latter question). Views were collected regarding a statement (§5.4 of the report) on the minimum number of courses in which competency should be demonstrated in order to obtain a pass.

(b) A paper was received on Part III examples classes. Three main points are that (1) Group sizes should be 12 or fewer, with an absolute upper bound at 15. (2) CamCORS reports should contain some text with nontrivial feedback. (3) Claims made for absent students can only be made in limited circumstances.

(c) Report by the Athena/SWAN panel was received. Several recommendations were made

i. At least 1 female student should be a member of welcome teams.

ii. Interviewees should have at least 1 female interviewer.

- iii. All students should have had at least 1 female supervisor during their undergraduate career.
- iv. Remind all students (Parts IA, IB, II) that they should consider aiming to stay for Part III.
- v. Colleges should adopt similar procedure as the faculty re advertising for vacancies.
- vi. Draw attention to the Emmy Noether Society and other initiatives

A lengthy discussion was held covering many aspects of this issue. **ACTION:** Directors-of-studies to investigate issues affecting expectations and performance of the 2013-14 Part IA female mathematicians.

- (d) The CATAM Director made a few points regarding electronic submission of write-ups: (1) Each student should submit PDF files to CamTools, just as MPhil CompBio students are doing. Part III essays will be collected the same way. The students will receive instructions in due course. [CATAM programs will still be collected using the same method as in past years.] (2) Hard copies will still be collected as before. Assessors still want to mark the hard copies and redundancy will be a safety net as electronic submission is being done for the first time. (3) Paper and electronic copies must be identical. Checks will be done. (4) Scanned PDFs cannot be allowed. Everything must be produced using a word processor (or graphing programme, etc.)

5. Admissions matters:

- (a) This year there is a slight decrease in numbers, but an upward shift in UMS scores. Colleges do not send in completed spreadsheets this year. CamTools is a more secure way than e-mail to share data about people: files can be deleted from CamTools, but e-mails to the DoS mailing list can never be said to have been deleted.
- (b) Procedures of Winter Pool were agreed. This year offers to mature and deferred students from the pool would be done by negotiation.
- (c) It was agreed that a letter by Dr Forster re Part III admissions should be sent to the Part III committee.
- (d) The meeting acknowledged its gratitude to Dr Siklos for his years of service as Faculty Admissions Officer and Undergraduate Teaching Co-ordinator. These vacancies need to be filled, with the former role more urgently needed.

6. Faculty Board:

- (a) The meeting received and approved recommendations from the Faculty Board amending the membership and remit of the Mathematics Undergraduate Admissions Committee.
- (b) It was agreed that the supervision norms document should state that 40-45 hours supervision was the norm for mathematics Part IA.
- (c) The proposed scaling of Part III marks for CamSIS was approved: Distinction/Merit borderline shall be mapped to 75%, the Merit/Honours borderline to 70%, and the Honours/Fail borderline to 60%.

7. **NSS Survey:** The meeting received the report of the survey and had a brief discussion.
8. **Career skills feedback:** The meeting discussed activities in College intended to further the careers skills of undergraduate mathematicians. Student talks and teaching by older students to younger students were given as examples. **ACTION:** Chair of the meeting to e-mail Secretary of the Faculty Board.
9. **Any other business:**
 - (a) Reminder that DoS are (should be) members of the faculty. DoS input has led to Complex methods and Analysis being lectured thrice weekly and to a better system for examples classes in Part III.
 - (b) A plea was made to accept payment claims by PhD students helping Part III students prepare Part III seminars.
 - (c) I Borzym was nominated to the Part III permissions committee.
 - (d) Maths cafe happens and appears to be working well.
 - (e) The Part III committee's response to external examiners was received.