

## DRAFT

### Summary of the Examiners' Reports on Mathematics in Parts 1A and 1B of the Natural Sciences Tripos

2018

This report provides a summary of the main points made in the Examiners' reports and provides some commentary following a meeting of the NST Mathematics Teaching Committee held on Friday 2 November, at which the reports were discussed

Both 1A and 1B examinations seem to have gone very well. There are just two points that I would like to raise.

#### 1A

It was very pleasing to read that no corrections were required on either of the two examination papers.

There are a number of detailed recommendations in the examiners' reports, to which the current chair of examiners should pay attention. Here, we highlight two points that require approval of the Faculty Board:

(i) The examiners recommend that the marks for Scientific Computing are incorporated within the marks for CST rather than in the marks for Maths in NST for those students taking the Computer Sciences Tripos. [**Is this sensible?**] Such a change in practice would require the cooperation of the Computer Lab. If such a change is not implemented then greater efforts are required to ensure the timely delivery of marks for the Scientific Computing practicals.

(ii) The practice of using Assessors to help with the marking of scripts is welcomed by the examiners [**Do we approve?**], who now recommend that Assessors be enabled to enter marks into the marks system themselves rather than requiring Examiners to perform the mark entry. [**What do we recommend?**]

The median mark of 15 on Section A of Paper 1 is encouraging but we note the median mark of only 12 on section A of Paper 2, which is down from 14 last year. This may be a result of poor preparation but examiners should ensure that the questions in Section A remain entirely straightforward.

## **IB**

There was one correction required on Paper I and one correction required on Paper II. Neither was identified during the examination but only later. The examiners took appropriate actions to take account of these during marking.

There are a few recommendations made by the examiners, to which the current chair of examiners should pay attention.

There was a significant issue this year with the computer projects, where one student had used alternative software that resulted in blank submissions. Although appropriate rectification was made for the student concerned, there should for the future be an early alert made in cases where there is any cause for concern that an electronic submission may have been compromised.

## **Examinations generally**

Although the Sports Hall is generally thought to provide a good space for examinations, both sets of examiners drew attention to the inadequacy of provision for making written announcements, for example and especially for corrections to questions. Thankfully, there was no call for such facility this year but it seems an urgent matter that requires rectification.