

## Annual Report of the Teaching Committee 2014–2015

1. The Teaching Committee is required by its terms of reference to provide an annual report to the Faculty Board.

2. The members of the Teaching Committee this year have been

|                           |             |                 |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Nathanael Berestycki (M)  | *Zhiqi Bu   | Tom Fisher      | Berry Groisman          |
| Colm Caulfield (E, Chair) | Ron Horgan  | Peter O'Donnell | *Miren Radia            |
| Nilanjanna Datta (LE)     | András Zsák | Mike Tehranchi  | John Lister (ML, Chair) |

\* denotes Junior members

Junior members are nominated by the Chair of the Committee and appointed by the Faculty Board. Expressions of interest were sought by means of an e-mail to all Part IB and Part II students before the beginning of the academical year, and one representative was appointed from each year on the basis of the applications and comments from Directors of Studies.

3. We met a total of 6 times in the academic year 2014/15, and dealt with some items by circulation. As usual, the major item on the agenda was a review of the undergraduate Tripos examinations, but some other matters also needed attention.

We provided a detailed report on the undergraduate examinations to the Faculty Board based on reports of the Examiners and the External Examiners, on examination statistics and the actual questions, and on the information from the e-mail questionnaires. This report was considered by the Board at its November meeting, having previously been received by the meeting of Directors of Studies. Our report was used as the basis of the Faculty Board's response to the Education Committee of the General Board. Resultant changes to the Schedules included: (i) changing the short-beta threshold to 7/10 (ii) moving to cumulative percentages for the class-border guidelines (iii) clarification of the classification criteria at the 3rd/Fail boundary. The Part II course Partial Differential Equations was referred to the Curriculum Committee, and has been suppressed for 2015/16.

We reported on the National Student Survey findings and in general on feedback.

The CATAM Director and I met with Duncan McCallum of the Student Registry to discuss the long-standing issue of penalties for plagiarism in CATAM; stricter guidelines have now been agreed for 2015/16.

4. Prompted by student feedback, we conducted two opinion polls: (i) on the undergraduate examination timetable and (ii) on the popularity of 'accelerated' lecturing of 16-lecture courses in Part IB. As a result, a new timetable was used in the 2015 examinations, and Numerical Analysis will be accelerated in Lent 2016 in addition to Complex Methods/Analysis.

5. We provided a report to Heads of Department (and to the Director of the Statslab) on the teaching of their departments, based on the paper and on-line questionnaires. A small number of courses/lecturers were referred to the Heads of Department for possible action. In general, the feedback from students was very positive.

In this years report we drew the attention of the Heads of Department to a total of 10 courses (out of 61): for 6 of these we recommended some action be taken by HoDs; for the other 4 courses the issues were either relatively minor or related to the schedule and/or the take-up.

We also drew attention to 13 courses where the feedback was outstanding.

6. In addition, members of the Teaching Committee were involved in various miscellaneous activities (for some of which the Board has received an independent report), including:

- Attending early lectures of all new lecturers and some other lecturers, and discussing their lecturing;
- Monitoring electronic student feedback on the Feedback line and in second-week questionnaires;

- Advising on the choice of lecturers;
- Advising on the timetable for lectures;
- Advising on the redistribution of questions to accommodate the new Part II C course;
- Advising students of the significance of CATAM credit to encourage take-up.
- The Pilkington Teaching Prize Committee (prize awarded to Dr Gog);
- Induction session for first year students;
- Induction sessions for second and third year students;
- Examination briefing session for Part IA students;
- Supervisor training sessions.

John Lister  
September 17, 2015