

## Annual Report of the Teaching Committee 2015–2016

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

Nilanjana Datta	*Claudia Feng	Tom Fisher	Berry Groisman
Richard Jozsa	Peter O'Donnell	*Miren Radia	András Zsák
Mike Tehranchi	John Lister (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 2015/16, and dealt with some items by circulation. As usual, the major item on the agenda was the review of the undergraduate Tripos examinations, but other items have 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, and was used as the basis of the Faculty Board's response to the General Board's Education Committee. Agreed recommendations were transmitted to this year's Examiners.

This year there has been an unusual flurry of consultation papers from the central bodies. We provided the Faculty response to questionnaires on student workload, on examinations and assessment, and on publication of class lists.

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

We reviewed the classification criteria for the Mathematical Tripos, and reported that standards are appropriately high, and employment rates and starting salaries for Cambridge mathematicians are better than for our main competitors.

4. A new Part II course on Automata and Formal Languages was introduced and had very good attendance. Part IB Numerical Analysis was front-loaded in the Lent Term. The 'short-beta' threshold has been reduced to 7/10. Procedures for treatment of absent candidates and illegible scripts in examinations have been clarified. Guidance on workload has been added to the Schedules. Solutions to sample Tripos questions have been put online.

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 year's report we drew the attention of the Heads of Department to a total of 7 courses (out of 61): for 3 of these we recommended some action be taken by HoDs; for 3 we took action ourselves; the Part II course Cosmology was referred to the Curriculum Committee, and a significantly revised schedule has now been approved for 2016/17.

We also drew attention to 10 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;
- Email communication to students regarding course information
- 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  
May 9, 2016