

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE NATURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

Unconfirmed minutes of a meeting of the Committee of Management for the Natural Sciences Tripos held at **2pm on Tuesday 13th June 2006** in the Seminar B Room, 17 Mill Lane.

Present Dr N Holmes, (Chair), Dr D Buscher, Dr B Nolan, Mrs S Stobbs, Dr I Wilson, Dr N Woodcock, Professor G Worster, Tom Whyntie, and Mrs K Allen (Secretary).

Apologies:, Mr A Jefferies, Dr J Little, Dr J Keeler, Dr K. Plaisted, Professor TW Clyne, Dr S Holden, Dr K Johnstone, Professor D Ward and Amish Lakhani

TWO PAPERS TABLED: CM.372, Maths and CM.373 CARET. (as AOB)

319. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2006 were approved.

320. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee noted that the Secretary had written to the Faculty Boards of Biology, and the Senior Tutors Committee and the Admissions Office about their representatives on the Committee, and that this might be the last meeting for Dr Plaisted, Mr Jefferies and Mrs Stobbs.

321. MATTERS ARISING

i. Payment of Supervisors of Part III projects (minute 284,314i)

The Committee noted the Standing Committee's positive response to their request; however, they would like to clarify that the Senior Tutors acceptance of the proposal would also include payments to supervisors of Part II projects, as detailed in its letter of 23 January 2006.

The Secretary will write the STC for clarification.

ii. Late submission of work (minute 298, 305ii, 314ii)

After a lengthy discussion of the General Board's Education Committee's response (**CM. 367**), it was agreed that for extenuating circumstances the Applications Committee remained the appropriate body to handle these. However, for minor pieces of work, continually assessed work or field work reports, the Committee decided to invite the NST Departments to submit their current local practices for approval by the Committee; a consistency of approach would need to be adopted. Once approval has been given, these policies are to be clearly communicated to students, published in any Course material and/or put onto web pages. The amendment to Regulation 14 was agreed upon.

The Secretary will write to Departmental Teaching Committee's and the Draftsman.

iii. Offer holders for 2006 entry (DRC) (minute 315)

The Secretary had contacted the Head of the DRC, who had confirmed that Departments will be made aware of students entering their Department with a disability and what adjustments, if any, will need to be made, as soon as they have the relevant information.

316. REPORTED AND STRAIGHTFORWARD BUSINESS

The Committee received a paper of reported business (**CM.362**). It included:

- Minutes of the Strategic Committee for the NST, 5 May 2006 (**CM.363**)
- Changes to regulations: BBS Dissertation submission dates, and suspension of paper 10 for HPS.
- Draft Annual Report, 2005-6 (**CM.364**)
- Programme Specification, 2006-7 (**CM.365**)
- Electronic Calculators in Examinations, 2005-6: Notice (**CM.370**)

Regarding the minutes of the strategic Committee, the Committee welcomed the proposed changes to the Computer Science Tripos, moving the current 25% option into the NST.

Currently the Programme Specification does not make any mention to the mechanism to transfer into (or out) of the Tripos. The Secretary informed the Committee that the format of PS is currently being reviewed by the Education section.

317. MATTERS ARISING NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

i) Entry Requirements to Part III

Learning and Teaching Review of Part III Natural Sciences Tripos

The General Board Learning and Teaching Review of Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos (NST), made a recommendation that the Committee of Management of the NST considers the entry requirements to Part III. The present requirements could be seen as too low a hurdle and not comparable to the normal standard demanded of applicants to other Master's courses.

The Senior Tutors Committee has endorsed the NST Committees' recommendations to raise the entry into Part III, by expecting students to achieve a II.2 class at both Part IB and Part II. Decisions concerning the admission of students transferring from another Tripos, or not achieving the minimum entry levels would be judged on a case-by-case basis by the individual Departments concerned. This will be effective for October 2008. The Prospectus and web pages will be updated.

ii) Part II Allocations (minute 300, 305v)

The Committee noted that the on-line self service facility from CamSIS had progressed well and students had successfully entered their options. Mark books will be sent to Departments from student Records on Friday 16 June for allocation purposes. Round one ends on 20 June, when the majority of students will have been placed. There will then be an opportunity for unsuccessful students to reconsider their choices. The final meeting of Departments to place the remaining students will be on Monday 26 June.

318. PROPOSAL FOR A PART IA NATURAL SCIENCES CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the proposals submitted by Hong King from Chemistry, including the proposal to form a Consultative Committee at Part IA (**CM.369**).

After careful consideration the Committee could see no value in creating another consultative body. The Committee agreed that it was the job of the supervisors to support all students, whatever their ability, including stretching the exceptionally able students. The use of extension questions could be used if felt to be of value. Mr Tom Whyntie (student rep on various Physical Sciences Committees) will contact Hong King to discuss his ideas.

319. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **MATHEMATICS IN THE NST** (Strategic Committee minutes 190)

Professor G Worster updated the Committee on the current proposals (**CM.372**). It was reported that the Wednesday-afternoon examples classes are to be abolished, as is the Lent Term course on computing techniques. Some of the key material from the latter will be incorporated into the Michaelmas Term course, "Computing Techniques and Applications." There will be an exercise associated with that course, which had previously been assessed at the beginning of the Easter Term.

The Committee discussed the timing of the assessed exercise, and asked if this could be rescheduled as it would cause clashes for the Geological Sciences field trip.

Professor G Worster agreed to contact Dr F King and would notify the Committee.

- **PART IA PRACTICAL REGISTRATIONS (CARET)**

A proposal had been received from CARET (CM.373) which details the developmental work necessary to recertify the algorithm. This will entail a minimum of 20 days work required to meet all of the phase 2 requirements. CARET currently charges £400 per day so this gives an estimated financial commitment of £8,000.

CARET had already undertaken to run the system for the live allocation process in October if required. They envisage that at least some further resource will be required after October to get the system to the point where routine operation is possible with minimal technical supervision.

After some discussion the Committee decided to approach the Schools to assess their ability to jointly fund this further work, and Dr K Johnstone, Dr N Holmes and Mrs K Allen will contact CARET to progress the necessary minimum work to be undertaken.

320. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting shall take place at **2:00 pm** on **Tuesday 17 October 2006** in Seminar B Room at 17 Mill Lane.