

The University of Sheffield  
Department Of Computer Science

**Staff Student Liaison Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday 24 March**  
G22 Regent Court  
12:15

## **MINUTES**

**Present:**

Noel Sharkey (NES)	Chairman	Lex Rigby (LR)	Faculty Librarian
Kathryn Roden (KMR)	Minutes Secretary	George Wilson (GW)	Senior Programmer
Zoe Fletcher (ZCF)	Departmental Administrator	Anne Mugai (AM)	Union Link
Steve Maddock (SCM)	Year 1 Tutor	David Elston	Level 1 Student
Siobhan North (SDN)	Director of Teaching	Karthik Divakaruni	MSc Student
Dave Abbott (DJA)	Technical Support Manager		

**Apologies:** John Derrick (Head of Department), Richard Clayton (MSc Director), Daniela Romano (Year 2 Tutor), Chow Man Chun Jonathan (Level 1 Student), Tom Crayford (Level 1 Student), Ali Ayaz Gajani (Level 1 Student). Vaclav Hudec (Level 1 Student), Kyle Milner (Level 1 Student), Henry Sternberg (Level 2 Student), Tony Mustow (Level 3 Student), Dung Nguyen (Level 3 Student), Xin Sun (MSc Student).

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

**Noted:** In NES absence at the start of the meeting SDN took on the role of chair.

**Noted:** SDN welcomed the committee and acknowledged the apologies.

**Noted:** KMR commented that Paul Dilley is no longer going to be a student representative.

### **2. Matters arising from the last meeting**

**Noted:** The minutes of the last meeting were agreed by all present with one small amendment to be noted: In the apologies Richard Clayton is MSc Director and not Director of Teaching as stated.

**Action Continued from previous meeting:** (Item 2 on previous minutes). SDN to check with Georg Struth (PhD Director) to see if email regarding the lengths of the Transfer Report has been circulated to all PhD students.

**Action:** (Item 3.2 on previous minutes) KR to email level 1 representative (Jonathan Chow Man Chun) to see if the issue regarding printers has been resolved.

**Noted:** (Item 3.3 on previous minutes) CiCS have recalibrated all of the machines with touch screen units in the Information Commons.

**Noted:** (Item 3.3 on previous minutes) there are two possible rooms that students could use and book for meetings – the Computer Science Society room and the small room in the Lewin Lab

**Action:** ZCF to speak to head of the Computer Science Society (Henry Sternberg) to see if they would be happy to let the room be booked out and to see how often they would need the room

**Action:** Support to set up a trial booking page for students to reserve these rooms.

**Action:** KR to email all students when the booking system has gone live.

**Action continued from previous meeting:** (Item 7 on previous minutes) SDN to speak to Director of PGR Admissions (Georg Struth) about RTP modules.

### **3. Teaching Related Issues Level 1**

#### **3.1. Course Delivery**

##### **COM1002**

**Noted:** DE reported that some students were concerned by the lack of concrete notes to back up the lecture material and that many of them struggle to decipher notes written on the black board. SCM commented that this issue was addressed at the last TeachCom and that Georg Struth (course leader) is going to speak to the current lecturer of this course. It was also noted that there are more lecture notes on the website now.

**Noted:** DE commented that there were some problems with PhD students from Maths not turning up to give tutorials last semester. However, they did apologise after. SDN commented that if this happens again with no explanation then they should ensure the lecturer knows.

**Noted:** VH reported that some students are reluctant to ask the lecturer a question as they feel that he would think they were stupid. SDN commented that one of her tutees had the same problem, but now goes to see the lecturer directly when they have a question. SDN and SCM commented that it is important to ask questions and that it is also an important tool for the lecturer as they get to see where students are having problems.

##### **COM1003**

**Noted:** DE reported that some students would like more problem sheets and assignments. SCM commented that the pace of the course will change over the course of the year. There will be less 'hand holding' in the second semester to help student with the transition to the second year.

#### **COM1006**

**Noted:** VH reported that the lecturer of this module will often interrupt the lecture if they see students using electronic devices such as lap tops or mobile phones. SCM responded that students should be able to use lap tops to take down lecture notes and that it is especially important for students with learning disabilities such as dyslexia.

**Action:** SCM to speak to lecturer.

**Noted:** JCMC reported that the lecturer sometimes refuses to answer questions raised by certain students. SDN asked if it was certain students that the lecturer picked on. DE responded that if students have been talking then he may not answer their questions.

### **3.2. Library and IT**

**Noted:** DE reported that students have trouble finding the network guide as it is not in the A-Z.

**Action:** GW to add the network guide to the A-Z.

### **3.3. Other**

#### **COM1003**

**Noted:** Some students have concerns regarding the fact that some of the groups have very experienced programmers where as other groups have no members with any experience. They are concerned as the winners gain extra marks and that this may not be fair. SCM responded that it will be interesting to see all the feedback at the end of the module. The competitive element can then be reviewed after the feedback has been received.

## **4. Teaching Related Issues Level 2**

### **4.1. Course Delivery**

#### **COM2090**

**Noted:** AM reported that students are unaware of the assessment methods involved and they feel there is a lack of feedback.

**Action:** NES to speak to module lecturer about this.

#### **COM2030**

**Noted:** AM reported that some students would like to have solutions for the exercise sheets as at the moment they are not sure if they are right or wrong.

**Action:** NES to speak to module lecturer regarding the possibility of going through answers during classes. SCM commented that it could help if students also ask more questions during the classes.

#### **COM3420**

**Noted:** AM reported that some students are finding that the tutorials and blogs are not very clear and can be very confusing to understand. AM commented that they are always having to ask epiGenesys questions and so are creating more work for them. It may be better to have a more open discussion boards where students can share problems and how to work through them.

**Action:** NES to take comments to course lecturers.

#### **4.2. Library and IT**

**Noted:** Students commented that it would be more convenient to be able to top up their UCards from the Lewin Computer Room.

**Action:** GW to look in to this.

**Noted:** HS reported that there are limited copies of the core text form COM2030 in the library.

**Action:** Library Representative to look into this.

#### **4.3. Resources**

**Noted:** Some students would like the browsers in the lab upgrading, and would like Google Chrome to be installed. DA responded that this will hopefully be done over Easter vacation.

**Noted:** Some students have concerns regarding the overcrowding in the Lewin Computer Room. They often have to share chairs, or stand up. SDN responded that due to health and safety they are not allowed to bring in extra chairs. However, the University should be opening two new large computer rooms over the summer which may be able to be used for teaching.

#### **4.4. Other**

**Noted:** HS reported that some students questioned the need for two copies of assignments when handing in when other departments only have to hand in one, or indeed why not entirely electronic. SDN commented that in an ideal situation it would all be done electronically, however it isn't always the easiest way to mark the work. SCM added that if students want to have a copy back then we need two copies as one has to be kept for the external examiner.

### **5. Teaching Relater Issues MSc**

#### **5.1. Library and IT**

**Noted:** KD reported that some students have complained about the Wifi connection at St Georges Library. DA

**Action:** DA to raise this issue with CiCs.

**Noted:** AM also commented that you can't always establish a connection in G12a, but it only happens during Software Hut. DA responded that this could be a connectivity issue.

**Action:** DA to look further into networking Wifi in the Lewin Computer room.

### **6. Any other Business**

**Noted:** NES would like Student Representatives to make a note of how many students raised each issue that are brought to the meetings.

**Action:** KR to feed back this comment to all the representatives as not all were present at the meeting.

**Noted:** ZCF reported that the module evaluation has not been done yet because the member of staff normally responsible for doing this has now left the department. They will hopefully be done in April and in time for the next SSLCOM.

**Noted:** ZCF commented that for semester 2 the Faculty will be running the module and programme evaluation.

## **7. Date of Next meeting**

**Noted:** The next meeting will be on Wednesday 28 April at 12:15 in G22.