

**Computer Science  
Student Staff Liaison Committee  
Friday 9th November 2012, 1pm, 4.01 MVB**

**Present**

**Staff -**

Lesley Jones (LJ, Chair & SSLC Co-ordinator), Andrew Calway (AC, HoD), Peter Flach (PF), Colin Dalton (CD), Syed Rahman (SR, IT rep)

In attendance – Donna Exon-Bartlett (DEB, minutes)

**Students -**

Yr 1: Sahaj Sawhney (SS), Akshay Sandri (AS)

Yr 2: Charlie McNeill (CM), Alfred Omachar (AO)

Yr 3: Ved Uttamchandani (VU)

Yr 4: Jamie Ansell (JA)

MSc: Shannon Yew (SY), Olukunle Akinwusi (OA), Vijay Kumar (VK), Apollos Ezeogu (AE)

**1. Apologies**

Amir Chohan

**2. Chair's Welcome**

LJ welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked our new undergraduate and MSc reps for taking on the role.

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting for approval**

**3.1** SR reported the university policy regarding DropBox is NOT to use it.

**3.2** VU asked if issue 4.1 regarding student workload had been discussed? AC reported this will be discussed at the next Annual Progress Review meeting (scheduled for December).

**3.3** VU raised Issue 4.4, regarding the software accessibility. AC thanked yr rep for bringing this point up again. SR reported this is a licensing issue, and is ongoing.

**4. Departmental Matters to report**

**4.1** Dr Andrew Calway is the new CS HoD, with immediate effect.

**4.2** LJ reported she had received several questions from students regarding lack of January exams for units taught in TB1. LJ informed the committee that this will change from next year across the University, when TB1 units will be examined in January and TB2 units in May/June.

**4.3** Change in Lecture start times. LJ reported a few lecturers are using the old system of lectures starting 10 past the hour. **Action: LJ will send a reminder email to staff.**

**4.4** Print credit - this issue is still under discussion. **Action: LJ will feedback to students when discussions have been finalised.**

**4.5** LJ will make feedback to these meetings better for students to access.

**4.6** Kiosk for student hand in of coursework - the Kiosk, located in the MVB school office, is for MVSE students only.

**4.7** Space – the school is listening to students, and providing extra study space now, and more is planned for the future.

4.8 The issue of an undergrad common room was raised at the EE SSLC. Please feed back to LJ if this is something that CS students would like.

#### 5. Yr 1 Reps

Both yr 1 reps reported no problems, and informed the committee the new cohort is happy!

#### 6. Yr 2 Reps

6.1 CM reported Yr 2 cohort are very happy with the new TV downstairs, however would like to request whiteboards be put up for group work. **Action: LJ to feed back to Hayley Frapwell.**

6.2 CD reported that the prospect of having student meeting rooms is currently under discussion.

6.3 CM reported the vending machine downstairs is not working. **Action: DEB will report this.**

6.4 The WIFI coverage in 1.07/1.08 is poor. SR suggested reporting this via Topdesk.

6.5 AO asked if the department can offer UG's more 'research' based internships, as opposed to Industry internships. PF noted that students interested in research should approach academic staff directly. **Action: AC will investigate the possibilities of more research internships.**

6.6 AO also informed the committee that lectures are not always consistent, and are sometime interrupted. For example, a lecture may be on a Monday for weeks 1-5, then change to a Friday after week 5 (Data Structures).

#### 7. Yr3 Reps

7.1 VU informed the committee that students taking Cryptography A unit in the Physics Building are being affected by the current building works taking place. However, he has spoken with Sarah Wilden (FEO), regarding relocating this lecture, while the works are being carried out. He is expecting to hear back today or early next week. *Post meeting note: These lectures have now been moved to an alternative building.*

7.2 Central forums on Blackboard are proving to be problematic, and when posting on BB, notifications are not being received. CM reported, Yr 2 is getting around this issue by using Google groups, and it is proving a lot better. SR informed students we have a dedicated BB team, and we should use them by reporting BB issues via Topdesk. SR queried the students using other ways of communicating, as deviating from a university system makes it difficult for issues to be tracked in the future. AC accepted this is a serious problem, and will investigate the issues surrounding BB. A temporary fix may be to reintroduce our own departmental forums again, and link them to BB.

7.3 Image Processing and Computer Vision unit: complaints received regarding the workload. 5% weighting for one piece of coursework is disproportionate to the amount of work required. The work balance needs to be investigated and improved. AC informed the committee a new version of the unit is being worked on, and this will be addressed.

## 8. Yr 4 Reps

8.1 JA (CS issues raised by Rajitha, who is no longer a year rep):

- Again Blackboard issues raised.
- Reading lists: LJ commented that we set *recommended* reading lists, not compulsory reading lists. CD suggested, students contact him regarding library book requests. He also mentioned we should have recommended books in the library, and if not, at least E books.
- Systems Security unit – there is a delay in getting the labs ready. AC acknowledged this is a serious issue, and the dean has been involved. SR informed the committee he has been involved with this issue, and has been in touch with the Networks Team about this. The Networks Team are happy to discuss the issues. Current suggestions are for students to use their own laptops, if they have them, and we'll provide equipment for people who do not/or can't use their own equipment. SR is planning to meet with the Networks Team next week.
- Some students have fed back they are not happy with having group projects in yr 4 units (Production project or Robotics systems project?).

8.2 Maths & CS:

Yr 4 projects: Yr 3 have been told to hand in a project specification by a certain date. Current Yr 4 students were told they did not have to hand in a project specification at a late date, however, if they did have to, this would have been too short notice. **Action: LJ to ask Bogdan to brief students in sufficient time, at end of Year 3.**

8.3 We will need to recruit another Yr 4 rep to join SSLC. **Action: LJ to arrange this.**

## 9. CSE Reps

No reps present, as attended EE SSLC meeting.

## 10. MSc Reps

10.1 SY bought up the issue of disruption in lectures taking place in the Physics Building.

The Software Engineering lecture has been affected by room booking problems. For example, last week the lecture had moved, but students were not informed until they got to the lecture hall, to be presented with a sign on the door saying the lecture had moved. **Action: LJ to look into this.**

10.2 The issue of having a personal tutor or mentor PhD student was raised. **Action: AC to speak to the school about this.**

10.3 Students are having issues accessing the back door of QB, to attend lectures. **Action: LJ to investigate this.**

10.4 MSc students would like to have the use of a local common room facility, to microwave food etc. **Action: LW will feed this back to the School Manager.**

10.5 Computer Architecture unit is not well organised. Assignments seem to be set every week, and deadlines keep changing. **Action: AC will look into this straight away.**

10.6 OA & AE raised issues concerning the fact there is not enough time to learn all computing languages before unit deadlines are due, and suggested extending some of the deadlines to give more time to learn the languages first? It was mentioned that many students have no tutorials

for any of the language units. A suggestion was to issue a pre requisite for the language units in course information, so this would be less of an issue for students in the future.

**10.7** Design Verification unit: the suggestion of a tutorial for this unit was also raised. CD asked if the Design Verification unit was changed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester, would this help?

VU mentioned there are online tutorials, accessible to students.

AC suggested conversion course MSc students partake in a languages crash course, and this could be an option in the future.

**10.8** VK – Theoretical content of course:

Cyber Security aspect of the MS53 course is very theoretical, and lacks practical exposure, and how to apply the theory being learnt. The Systems Security unit hopes to introduce a more practical aspect in the future. SR mentioned he is trying to arrange more fixed labs for next year, and will try to arrange a temporary solution in the meantime. It was also mentioned the Cryptography units are very theoretical too, and involves only one exam in June, and no coursework. Students would like a knowledge test, halfway through the year. **Action: LJ to clarify this with the unit director.**

*Post meeting note: Martijn Stam confirmed that during weeks 11 & 12 there will be revision classes where he will go through a past paper which will be set in advance in order to give students an idea as to how they are progressing.*

**10.9** Students raised the issue of a week off during the year, for example, a reading week, as other faculties offer this?

## **11. AOB**

Students asked when exam week is likely to be, and if exact dates are known yet? It was mentioned, either weeks 11/12 or 12/13. **Action: LJ will look into this, and inform students accordingly.**

## **12. Date of next meeting**

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2013