Present

Staff -
Zoe Lawrence (ZL, Chair & SSLC Co-ordinator), Andrew Calway (AC, HoD), Emily Bednall (EB, minutes)

Students -
Andreas Yiannakou (AY- Computer Science Conversion),
Dafni Antotsiou (DA- Adv Comp: Creative Technology),
Milad Abdullah (MA- Adv Comp: Machine Learning, Data Mining and High Performance Computing)
Abhishek Mitra (AM- Adv Comp: Internet Technologies with Security)
Kamran Ghazi Azami (KG- Adv Microelectronic Systems Engineering)

1. Apologies
Alisdair Venn (Adv Computing), Kamran Ghazi Azami (Adv Microelectronic Systems Engineering),
Amir Chohan (UG rep), Syed Rahman (IT rep)

2. Minutes of Last Meeting
Minutes have been circulated to all via email and are also available online.

3. Action Summary from Last Meeting
Papers were circulated containing the action summary.

Ongoing Actions:

3.1 Linux Labs (software out of date and browsers not installed): ZL reported that IT are aware of this and are working on the issue.

3.2 Formation of IT Committee with IT student reps: This proposal from AC is in progress. Action – ongoing for AC

3.3 Requests for feedback on exams: AC explained that it is not University policy to provide individual exam feedback. ZL will look into the possibility of markers providing a short synopsis including any general marking points. ZL also advised that if a student has major concerns, they do have the opportunity to go through their paper with the marker present. Action – ZL to look into

3.4 Filming of lectures: ZL reported that the faculty is going to trial a lecture capture system next year where lectures are filmed and put online. MA raised concerns about attendance level decreasing but ZL believes that this would be monitored as part of the trial. ZL also added that the lectures could serve as a useful revision tool.

3.5 Request for skeleton notes available online prior to lectures: ZL has emailed staff about this and feels it is a valid request which could be a useful tool for the students if given in form of prompts, not full notes. However, AC feels uncomfortable with the proposal as he thinks lecture attendance will fall. Discussions gave general consensus that attendance is mainly influenced by the quality of the lecturer and not by provision of notes. Also, those who would be likely to not attend are already missing lectures. ZL also pointed out that notes are always
put online at some point anyway. AC concluded that the choice should be left up to individual staff and MA added that there had not actually been any requests from MSc students regarding this matter.

3.6 **Anonymous marking:** Colin Dalton is currently producing a handbook for staff about this.

3.7 **Lockers:** This is in progress but likely to take a couple more months due to staff absence. ZL reminded students about availability of lockers in QB in the meantime.

3.8 **Cloud Computing timetabling problems:** This has been communicated to the Graduate Education Team (GET) and will be taken into account for next year.

**MSc Actions:**

3.9 **Introductory week concerns:** Summary of suggested improvements sent to GET. Action completed.

3.10 **Further extension of deadline for synopsis submission:** Action completed.

3.11 **PG students social life in CS department:** ZL noted to GET team to incorporate this into intro week planning for next year and to ensure CS rep is invited to the welcome talk.

3.12 **Networking/Careers events for PG:** This was raised with GET. GET feel it is not their role to organise events but are happy to support and facilitate them.

3.13 **Guidance for assessments:** MA informed that around 90% of assignments have clear objectives but the other 10% lack an ‘aim’. ZL advised that as this is not a large scale problem, students should approach their unit organisers in individual cases. It can then be fed upwards if necessary.

3.14 **Crypto A:** AM and AC met to discuss this. Students strongly feel that the exam was not a fair test of the classes/teaching they had received but AC emphasised that the course does not “teach to exam” and feels the paper was appropriate. ZL explained that comments regarding this unit will be taken into consideration at the June exam board.

3.15 **Multiple clashing deadlines in March:** This has now been resolved.

3.16 **Demoralising feedback from staff:** This is still continuing along with sarcastic comments in response to students asking basic questions. ZL has passed this on to HoS emphasising it as something which needs to be communicated across all schools and the faculty (including QB).

**ACTION – ZL to liaise with HoS**

4. **Feedback from Faculty SSLCs**

Nothing to report.

5. **Reminder of Faculty SSLCs**

The next faculty SSLC is on Thursday 1st May. MA is going to attend.

6. **Department Matters to report/ discuss**

6.1 AM asked if units could be re-organised for next year as currently there is a very uneven balance of coursework between TB1 and TB2. AC will investigate resolving this but warned there may be constraints because the units involved are often taught as part of other programmes too.

**ACTION – AC to look into**

6.2 AM raised concerns about many of the deadlines occurring close together. AC stressed that deadlines coinciding does not necessarily mean limited time. The important factor is length of time between the deadline and setting the coursework. He emphasised time management as
an important part of the MSc course and advised students to always check the credits to ensure they spend suitable proportions of time on each assignment. ZL reminded that students should approach the necessary member of staff if they have problems meeting a deadline.

7. **Advanced Computing - Alisdair Venn**
   Nothing to report- apologies from AV.

8. **Advanced Computing: Creative Technology – Dafni Antotsiou**
   DA reported difficulties with coursework involving Maya due to University computers not supporting the software. Students have requested to have the most recent version installed on campus. The deadline has now passed so ZL reminded that issues like this should be raised asap for actions to be taken. AC will liaise with IT as a good session is clearly needed. **ACTION – AC to liaise with IT**

   Nothing to report.

10. **Advanced Computing: Machine Learning, Data Mining and High Performance Computing – Milad Abdullah**
    10.1 MA reported that students have enjoyed the recent competition/game strategy that has been used for cohort ranking. AC cautioned that more needs to be done to look into this new approach but is pleased it has proved popular so far.
    10.2 It was requested that teaching blocks are swapped for EMATM0004 and EMATM0012 as at the moment the more advanced unit is taught in TB1. AC will check if this is feasible. **ACTION – AC to check**
    10.3 Students want to know what happens in week 25 ‘revision week’. AC informed that this is purely for student revision and there will be no lectures, although some staff may offer optional revision sessions.

11. **Advanced Microelectronic Systems Engineering – Kamran Ghazi Azami**
    Nothing to report – apologies from KG.

12. **PGT Computer Science – Andreas Yiannakou**
    AY reported that students have been impressed by the detailed and prompt feedback they have received from markers this semester.

13. **AOB**
    13.1 Students were given an extension for the synopsis and literature list for COMSM2202 and have requested an additional extension for the 2nd May ‘Research review’ deadline. AC will investigate this with unit organisers but explained there may be constraints due to time needed for marking and the close proximity to the exam period. **ACTION – AC to investigate**
    13.2 Feedback for the synopsis and literature list has not yet been received. This feedback is essential to be able to start work on the review so AC and ZL advised students to talk to Kirsten Cater and Mike Fraser (unit directors) regarding this.
13.3 There was broad agreement that the split PGT/UG SSLC meeting worked well and ZL added that the attendance of an UG student rep would be a beneficial edition to the meeting.

14. **Close of Department SSLCs**

14.1 ZL reminded students that even though this is the last SSLC of the year, if any further issues arise they should still contact ZL and/or AC straight away.

14.2 ZL was thanked by everyone for organising the meeting.

Meeting closed 2pm