

**MATHEMATICAL INSTITUTE  
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE WITH GRADUATES**

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Consultative Committee with Graduates meeting  
held on Tuesday 09 May 2023 at 1.00pm

**Present:** Mareli Grady, Peter Howell, Boyang Liu, Benedickt Stock, Patrick Nairne, Maria Tsiannis, Shyam Popat, Maks Manko, Leo Gitin.

**In attendance:** Tom Sanders

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2023**

The minutes were approved.

**3. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted the following:

- a. MSc Supervision: The PGT review is looking at MSc supervision and standardisation across courses.
- b. Travel funding: Finance will conduct a data review over the next financial year.
- c. Junior seminars: £200 per research group has been approved by Research Committee, but the process for accessing this is not established. Students wishing to run a junior seminar and access these funds should contact their Seminar Approver and Research Group Assistant. **[Action:** DHAA to add to the student handbook]
- d. Race Equality Action Plan: Head of HR and Faculty Services has asked to update CCG at the meeting in MT.
- e. Example classes: Concerns passed on to team and work will take place over the summer to see if the process can be simplified to reduce error.

**4. Research student survey results**

Departmental induction dissatisfaction stood out. Suggestion that arrival experience of new students can be improved, perhaps by ensuring a personal welcome by the supervisor or buddy. Guidance for buddies may also need to be updated and enhanced, and having the buddy lunch a bit earlier can help new students settle in. **[Action:** DHAA]

Suggestion that handbook should be circulated as a link rather than email copy to prevent versioning issues. **[Action:** DHAA]

Agreed that CCG members will circulate an agenda items request to the groups they represent prior to committee meetings, to increase the profile of CCG and the reps. DHAA to send links to mailing list page and committee webpage to members. **[Action:** DHAA]

<https://lists.maths.ox.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo>

<https://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/members/governance/committees/standing-orders-and-memberships/consultative-committee-graduates>

**5. Outcomes of ICC review**

Intercollegiate Classes Working group recommendations, subject to approval by Teaching Committee:

Proposed changes 2023-24

- Part B intercollegiate classes – problem sheets will be reformatted into the three-part structure seen in Part C problem sheets, to reduce marking workload for TAs and allow sufficient feedback to students.
- Part C intercollegiate classes – only problem sheets 1 and 3 will be marked, and TAs not required in classes
- Problem sheet solutions will be released for Part C sheets that are not being marked.
- Large courses – a pilot of having 1 or 2 very large classes (30-50 students) run by a DPhil class tutor with multiple markers who are not required to attend the classes. The course lecturer will offer 4 office hours to give students opportunity to ask questions. Office hours can be held either in person in classrooms or via Teams.
- TAs will be paid an additional 2 hours of preparation time in Week 1 or 2 of term per set of classes, unless they are doing multiple sets for the same course.
- Enhanced intercollegiate class training will be given to DPhil students, as well as improved guidance for TAs.
- Specific student consultations will take place on whether the department should consider releasing all problem sheet solutions instead of marking work at Part C.

#### Proposed changes 2024-25

Based on feedback from students in 2023/24 academic year, Teaching Committee will consider further reducing marking at Part C if appropriate.

CCG members expressed concern about exam performance with less marked work at Part C. CCG member expressed concern about how TAs will build up teaching experience to become Tutors. This can be achieved by acting as TAs for Part B, where TAs will still be present in classes.

It was noted that if TAs don't attend classes, Tutor will need to take the register and provide it to the TA, as this is usually entered at same time as grade.

[**Action:** DGS to feed back to GSC]

#### 6. Graduate outreach strategy

CCG member reported that most graduate course and institution recommendations are by word of mouth. Suggestion that allowing prospective applicants to contact a DPhil student or the RGA in the research group they are interested in (rather than just academics) might allow for more informal queries.

Suggestion for admissions videos by research group to capture differences.

It was mentioned that webpages of DPhils are not always updated to make them informative and friendly, which may also help prospective applicants. Suggestion for more communication on the benefits of updated webpages to graduate students.

[**Action:** DHAA to send communication to PGR students]

#### 7. Circulation of career/job adverts

The committee discussed the best way to circulate career or job adverts aimed at graduate students. Agreed that a section in bulletin for job adverts would be ideal.

[**Action:** DHAA to agree job advert advertising with Dyrol Lombard]

**8. AOB**

Thank you to outgoing members (Boyang Liu, Maks Manko). From MT the new DGS will be Tom Sanders, and the DHAA will be Dave Borthwick.

**Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 24 October 2023**