

Mathematics Undergraduate Representative Committee

Wednesday 23 October 1996

Present

- [Tom Chothia](#) (Chair), Jacquie Ashmore, Ailsa Burkimsher, [Mark Colman](#), Chris M Dickson, [Richard Harrison](#), Anthony Henley, Andrew Huddleston, Janet Lucke, [James Mushin](#), Erica Neely, Daryl Noyce (Trinity), Helen Poole, [Francis Tang](#), [Russell Taylor](#), Beth Turner, Salim Tharani, [Ann Warland](#), Bob Wilton, [Brigitte Worth](#), and [Terry Boon](#) (Secretary).
- Apologies
- Received from Helen Haworth, Alison Ingoe, Owen Massey, Jim Oliver, and Ben Wooley.

[Minutes](#) of the meeting of 5 June 1996

- One amendment was made: it was noted that [Ann Warland](#) had submitted apologies for her absence from this meeting. The minutes were then approved.

Revision of the standing orders

- It had been noted that the present standing orders did not reflect MURC's structure or activities well, so [Terry Boon](#) had drafted a new set and had circulated them before the meeting.
- A few minor amendments were made. The "Communications Officer" was renamed the "Publicity Officer". The "Open Day Manager/Organiser" was renamed the "Open Day Co-ordinator". An Open Day Co-ordinator was given a place on the JCCU, and a "the" was inserted to add clarity.
- The committee then approved the revised version. However, to take effect officially, the revisions would require approval from elsewhere in the Institute (as MURC's standing orders constituted appendix A to a Faculty document).

Committee changeover

- In accordance with recent tradition and the new standing orders, this would be the last meeting of the current committee. New representatives would take over at the Seventh Week meeting.
- [Tom Chothia](#) encouraged current members of the committee to continue to represent their college next year. However, he did urge representatives who were not continuing to find a replacement. He emphasised that anyone studying Maths, Maths and Philosophy, Maths and Computation, or Computation was eligible, as long as they were not finalists who would be leaving in the coming year.

Appointment of an open-day co-ordinator

- [Mark Colman](#) agreed to make the necessary arrangements for the Open Day until new Open Day Co-ordinators were appointed at the following meeting.

Induction Day

- Freshers had not been well-informed about this. A few colleges had not told them about this Friday afternoon session until Friday lunchtime. It had also clashed with the Friday afternoon Freshers' Fair session, which caused problems for some colleges' mathematicians. It was suggested that, in future years, the Institute send a circular to all first-year mathematicians to tell them about the induction, to ensure that all students were aware of it.
- There had seemed to be poor co-ordination between the computation induction and the session at the Maths Institute.

Four-year course

- [Tom Chothia](#) reported that he had received a reply from Dr G A Stoy to his letter reporting undergraduates' concern about the lack of applied courses in section c (the fourth-year courses). The reply acknowledged his letter, but said that any changes would have to go through the normal committee procedure.

Section b intercollegiate classes

- It was noted that the organisation of these had often been poor.
 - Many of the classes were heavily oversubscribed. Students had therefore been arbitrarily moved, leading to clashes. Some of the oversubscription had been caused by second-years signing up for classes, and some thought it was unjust that they, taking courses early, be allowed to take places from third-years.
 - It was suggested that the classes be organised earlier, perhaps at the end of the preceding Trinity Term. There was praise for those lecturers who had taken time in their lectures to organise classes and ensure that everybody had a suitable slot.
 - The arrangements for handing in work were also criticised. It was noted that some classes were still, halfway through Second Week, without a marker. Some of the deadlines had also been thought unreasonable.

Bookstall

- It was reported that the bookstall was now being held at the Maths Institute every Wednesday morning. It had been extremely successful so far. [Brigitte Worth](#) asked MURC representatives to encourage second- and third-years to sell redundant textbooks to the stall, as it was currently short of books to sell. It was reported that the stall would now deal in all books on course reading lists (with occasional exceptions).

The meeting agreed that the stall could get rid of the books which it had received from the previous booksale some years previously but which it thought unsellable.

- In response to a plea for another volunteer to work at the stall, [Mark Colman](#) agreed to help.

Social events

- [Chris Dickson](#) reported that, it being his twenty-first birthday, there would be a celebration of this at Pizza Express that evening; he invited all present to attend.
- Chris also reported that there was a room in Keble which could be used for a cocktail party or the like. It was decided that there would be a party, which Chris agreed to organise. Some representatives expressed interest in attending: it was suggested that the wine should be bought on a sale-or-return basis. The meeting declined to hear the details of licensing legislation. It was agreed that the event should be described as "MURC" rather than "Maths", in the hope of attracting more people (or of deterring fewer).

Mailshot

- [Terry Boon](#) produced a draft of a new mailshot which he had prepared for possible distribution to freshers. It was decided to circulate it to all mathematicians, with a few amendments.

University strike

- It was reported that there was likely to be a national strike by students on Tuesday 19 November. It had been called by the NUS in protest at cuts in government funding for higher education and the possible introduction of top-up fees.
- It was suggested that MURC, as the representative body for undergraduate mathematicians, take a position on the strike. However, [Tom Chothia](#) said he thought that this was more a matter for JCRs and did not concern MURC.

Vote of Thanks

- [Chris Dickson](#) proposed a vote of thanks for the work done by [Tom Chothia](#) and [Terry Boon](#) over the last year. It was noted that this year's committee had been accomplished far more than the previous year.