

Mathematics Undergraduate Representative Committee

Wednesday 28 February 1996

Present

- Tom Chothia (Chair), Ailsa Burkimsher, Penny Burnham, Mark Colman, Chris Dickson, Richard Harrison, Anthony Henley, Andrew Huddleston, Owen Massey, James Mushin, Erica Neely, Helen Poole, Michael Reid (Magdalen), Francis Tang, Russell Taylor, Salim Tharani, Beth Turner, Ann Warland, Bob Wilton, Ben Woolley, Brigitte Worth, and Terry Boon (Secretary).

Apologies

- Received from Helen Haworth, Deirdre Hollingsworth, and Jim Oliver.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- The minutes of the MURC Meeting of 24 January were approved.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Comments were again made on the quality of lecturers.

Refreshments Machines

- Terry Boon reported that the Institute was considering upgrading the drinks machine to a higher-quality but more expensive model and removing the food machine, and that there was also a possibility of the basement area being renovated. However, the Institute wanted to know the views of undergraduates on these matters.
- The meeting thought that upgrading the drinks machine would be an improvement. It had no strong objection to the removal of the food machine: it was thought that the machine was not used much, so would hardly be missed. The meeting did not think that the renovation of the basement was worthwhile, as students had no reason to spend time there. It was thought that the money could be better used for other purposes: improving the lighting at the Institute, for example.

Entrance Examination

- It was reported that, now that Mode E had been abolished, maths applicants would be expected to sit a single exam when they came up for interview.
- The meeting thought that it was important that potential applicants were informed of the new system, but (given the other options) was generally happy with it.

Open Day

- [Russell Taylor](#) reported that the Maths Open Day would be on Saturday 18th May. He asked for volunteers for various jobs. In addition, a representative from each college would be needed on the day; it was agreed to arrange these representatives at the next MURC meeting.

Bookstall

- [Tom Chothia](#) reported that the Institute would contribute £300 to help restart the second-hand bookstall.
- [Brigitte Worth](#) reported on the provisional arrangements. A weekly session would be held in the Institute. The bookstall would only deal with books on a list of titles approved by MURC (and the meeting suggested some changes to the provisional list). The stall would buy books for just under half of the price when new, and sell them at just over half. The system for managing payments, receipts, and the signatories of the bookstall account was discussed.
- Brigitte also asked for volunteers to run the stall.

Induction Day

- Discussion of this was postponed to give reps the opportunity to consult first-years on their opinions on the Induction Day.

Mailshot

- The meeting discussed the mailshot to be sent to all undergraduate mathematicians. It decided to include information about the bookstall, MURC social events, MURC's Internet presence, and the name of each college's MURC rep.
- [Tom Chothia](#) agreed to write the mailshot, which reps would then distribute to mathematicians in their colleges.

Lectures in the University Museum

- The meeting noted that noisy visitors to the Museum were disturbing lectures held there in the afternoon. It was suggested that lectures not be scheduled in the Museum in the afternoon if this were feasible. (However, it was thought that the Museum was

used only when necessary anyway.) Closing the door to the lecture theatre was also suggested.

- It was noted that the lecture theatre did have air-conditioning, but that it was not being used at the moment.

Engineering and Computer Science

- The only overlap between ECS and the maths courses was thought to be two computation papers, so it seemed that the ECS course had little to do with MURC.

Social Events

- [Chris Dickson](#) suggested either a restaurant trip or a trip to Laserquest, both events being intended for MURC reps and their friends. Other reps suggested a more alcohol-oriented event.
- There was some apathy about the ideas, but no objections.

Internet

- [Terry Boon](#) reported that the application for a MURC account was in progress.
- The meeting discussed the contents of a MURC World Wide Web site. Suggestions included information about MURC; links to maths sites in Oxford containing lecture notes, demonstrations etc.; and a list of textbooks wanted and for sale to complement the MURC bookstall.

Four-year Course

- It was reported that the qualification received would be an MMath.

Mathematics and Finance

- There were fears about the likely oversubscription for the 20 places on this o-paper course. It was reported that this problem had arisen at the last meeting of the Sub-Faculty, who were pushing the Economics faculty for more places. It had been suggested at that meeting that extra tuition from outside Oxford might be brought in.