

Mathematics Undergraduate Representative Committee

Wednesday 29 January 1997

Present

- Tom Chothia and Juliet Kemp (co-Chairs), Musab Bora, Mark Colman, Jonathan Emberson, Neil Gillespie, Katie Golding, Stephen Gower, Philip Hannay, Jim Hanson, Claire Jones, Tom Lancaster, Tom Lorenc, Paul Meredith, Erica Neely, Stephen Nichols, Chris Nix, Louise Pickwell, Emma Pointon, Anthony Rustell, Chris Swift, Chris Tebbet, Julius Ross, and Terry Boon (Secretary).

Minutes of the meeting of 27 November 1996

- These were approved.

Calculators in Mods

- It was reported that the general feeling amongst undergraduates was opposed to a complete ban; first-years were particularly unhappy with the idea. This was not because they wanted the powerful and easily-abused features which modern calculators incorporated, but because they wanted a check for arithmetic and the like. It was thought that permitting only single-line calculators would be a reasonable restriction.
- If a total ban were imposed, the meeting hoped that exam papers would be set taking this into account so that candidates would not be disadvantaged. If the ban were imposed in 1997, the papers should be set accordingly, and amended if necessary.

Mailshot

- A draft of this had been circulated. Some minor changes to make it more relevant to students (such as raising the profile of the bookstall) and to bring it up to date were discussed.
- Tom Chothia explained the distribution method for the mailshot. Appropriate numbers would be sent to college representatives, and they would be expected to distribute them to the maths undergraduates in their college.

Bookstall

- The following formal motions was passed, changing the signatories on the bank account for the bookstall.
 - That National Westminster Bank Plc (the Bank) be authorised to honour all cheques or other orders for payment drawn upon any account or accounts for

the time being kept with the Bank in the name of the Club notwithstanding that any such payment may cause such account or accounts to be overdrawn or increase any existing overdraft provided they are signed by any one of the below signatures.

- That the Bank be authorised to accept all requests and receipts for the delivery of securities papers or other property if signed by any one of the below.
- That the Bank be given a list of the signing Officers and be advised in writing under the hand of the Secretary of any changes that may take place and the Bank be entitled to act upon the signatures so given.
- That these Resolutions be communicated to the Bank and remain in force until revoked by notice in writing to the Bank signed by the Chairman or the Secretary acting or purporting to act on behalf of the Society Club or Association and the Bank shall be entitled to act upon such notice.
- Specimen Signatures: Miss [Juliet Kemp](#), Mr Neil Gillespie, Miss Emma Pointon, Mr [Chris Tebbet](#), Mr James Hanson, Mr Musab Bora, Mr Terence Boon, and Mr [Mark Colman](#).

Social Events

- [Tom Chothia](#) related the embryonic social programme with which MURC had been involved during the previous year: a get-together in the Lamb and Flag for those heavily involved with running the MURC Open Day, a punt party, and Chris M Dickson's birthday celebration.
- An absence of money was recognised as being an obstacle to organising events. The existence of events (drinks and a tea-party) for Maths and Philosophy students, funded by their department, was noted, and it was suggested that MURC ask for funding from the Institute for similar events for maths students in general.
- However, doubts as to whether many people would care to attend maths social events, and the lack of any volunteers for the post of Social Rep, contributed to a decision that MURC not attempt to organise any social events this year.

Any Other Business

- Exam schedules:
 - It was asked whether provisional timetables for Finals or Mods had yet been drawn up. This was not known, although it was expected that the Mods schedule, not having to include any options, would be a straight run of five papers in 2 ½ days.
- Section c:
 - A number of questions were raised: whether MURC had been informed of the courses to be offered by the Logic and Geometry Panels (which had not made returns at the time the last information had been circulated), what Mathematical Methods were, and whether a course in Complexity and Cryptography would be available. None present knew the answers.
- Section o:

- There was concern about the dependencies of various o-papers on other papers. The philosophy papers required that a candidate also take b1 (although some of those taking some of the philosophy papers commented that b1 had been fairly irrelevant). Other o-papers, while not requiring a candidate to *sit* other papers, did make use of material from other courses. The problem had been exacerbated by the late publication of the section o synopses, so this information had not been available to students when choosing courses.
- Institute Notes:
 - It was noted that the Institute was running out of the recommended sets of notes for first-year abstract algebra.
- Lecturers:
 - It was suggested that there be some method of providing preliminary feedback to lecturers in the early part of a course. The main use of this would be for *constructive* feedback, so that the lecturer could make improvements for the remainder of the course, rather than as another number-crunching exercise.
 - This was thought a good idea. However, there was no conclusion reached about exactly how it could be implemented.