Semester 1 Report, 2017/2018 Academic Year

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Reflection: Semester 1

Most of the first semester has passed by with settling in and adjusting to the role. Fortunately, the class representatives in every year were (and are still) very active, helpful and supportive. Much of the second half was spent on preparing for events in the second semester. Below are the events/ changes that took place with the involvement of the president:

- Held 3 Class Representatives' Forum. Ensured that all reps were aware of their module coordinators and vice versa, to encourage effective conversation between them.

- Held one SSCC meeting in week 5. The SSCC was not aware of any major issues, and therefore most of the session was a briefing session between the student representatives and the teaching staff. Changing weighting on coursework heavy modules was discussed, however, it was agreed that the current weighting is most likely the most beneficial and sensible based on the courses' contents.

- Set up a mentoring scheme to help newcomers settle in (first years, direct-entry second years, master's students and first-year PhDs). We had great interest with 88 mentees and 40 mentors signing up. General feedback from mentors was that a) they felt meeting the mentees has definitely helped them, and b) most of them have not met their mentees after their inital meeting as most questions were centred around knowledge of the department and module choices in particular.

- Created and distributed information sheets of the student representatives around the department to boost awareness of this kind of support. These sheets are also on display on the department's slideshows in the entrance hall. Several students and staff members have given positive feedback about this, as previously the only publicity was a blog entry on the CS website and on some suboptimally placed information sheets that did not include photographs.

- Boosted awareness of first- and second-year examples classes through the utilisation of the monitors available in the department and posters. Again, received good feedback from students.

Looking ahead: Semester 2

This semester, besides small changes, will be focused on the following:

- CS Ball 2018: Finally, there seems to be opportunity to hold the first inclusive ball in the department (there have been balls organised previously, but they were mainly for the postgraduate community during the summer). An organising committee has been set up, and we are planning to hold the event in late April. It is likely that most of the funding will come from ticket sales and the department, as currently, we do not see much scope for sponsorship opportunities. We are currently planning for 200 - 250 attendees.

- Research Fayre: To expose ongoing research in the school, an event is being organised in March, mainly by the department, where the groups in the school will be presenting their research throughout a day. The school president sits on the organising committee and is mainly focused on promoting the event to undergraduates and helping on the day.

- Mid-semester module questionnaire: To aid preparation for the SSCC meetings and to help better understand what is going well and what is going badly in modules, the school will be trialling mid-semester questionnaires at the suggestion of the school president.

- Promoting the NSS: The department has been enjoying a very prestigious place for a good number of years for now. It is the school president's hope that he can help promote the NSS among final year students, so the department can retain its position. This effort also includes providing information on the correct interpretation of a few ambiguous questions present in the survey.