



Meeting **BOARD OF STUDIES FOR THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE**  
Place Microsoft Teams  
Date Tuesday 28 July 2020 at 14:15

Present	Professor N Brook Dr R Bradford Professor A Burrows Professor F Burstall Dr S Flower Professor C Frost Dr A Gorbach Professor M Hejmadi Dr R James Professor M Jones Professor T Mays Professor N McHugh Professor P Milewski Dr F Nemetz  Dr A Preston Dr F Qin Dr P Rogers Dr T Shardlow Professor D Tosh Dr J White Professor C Wilson Dr M Wright	Dean of Science (Chair) Department of Computer Science Head of Department of Chemistry Department of Mathematical Sciences Department of Chemistry Deputy Dean of Science Department of Physics Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) Head of Department of Physics Department of Chemistry Faculty of Engineering and Design Head of Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology Head of Department of Mathematical Sciences Department of Computer Science (alternate for Professor M Fraser)  Department of Biology and Biochemistry School of Management Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology Department of Mathematical Sciences Department of Biology and Biochemistry Head of Natural Sciences Associate Dean (Research) Department of Computer Science
In attendance	Mrs M Hallett Mrs A L Harper Mrs S Paine Mrs T Buckley Ms P Gabriel	Faculty Assistant Registrar (Secretary) Faculty of Science (Observer) Programmes Manager (Operations) (Observer) Programmes Officer (Observer) Programmes Officer (Observer)
Apologies	Dr N Fotaki Professor M Fraser Mr C Lai Mr C Okayo Dr G Stothart Professor S Ward	Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology Department of Computer Science UG student representative PGT student representative Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Associate Dean (International)

**Action**

**7026 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 21 July 2020 (Paper 283), and there were no matters arising.

**7027 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

The Chair expressed thanks to Professor Burstall for his contribution to the Board for

the past 5 years. The Board noted that this would be Professor Burstall's last meeting as he was stepping down from the Board to re-join the Maths DoS team from 1 August 2020. Professor Burstall would be replaced by Professor Jeyabal Sivaloganathan for 2020/21.

**7028 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.



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Present	Professor N Brook	Dean of Science (Chair)
	Dr R Bradford	Department of Computer Science
	Professor A Burrows	Head of Department of Chemistry
	Professor F Burstall	Department of Mathematical Sciences
	Dr S Flower	Department of Chemistry
	Professor C Frost	Deputy Dean of Science
	Dr A Gorbach	Department of Physics
	Professor M Hejmadi	Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching)
	Dr R James	Head of Department of Physics
	Professor M Jones	Department of Chemistry
	Professor T Mays	Faculty of Engineering and Design
	Professor N McHugh	Head of Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology
	Professor P Milewski	Head of Department of Mathematical Sciences
	Dr F Nemetz	Department of Computer Science (alternate for Professor M Fraser)
	Dr A Preston	Department of Biology and Biochemistry
	Dr F Qin	School of Management
Dr P Rogers	Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology	
Dr T Shardlow	Department of Mathematical Sciences	
Professor D Tosh	Department of Biology and Biochemistry	
Dr J White	Head of Natural Sciences	
Professor C Wilson	Associate Dean (Research)	
Dr M Wright	Department of Computer Science	
In attendance	Mrs M Hallett	Faculty Assistant Registrar (Secretary)
	Mrs A L Harper	Faculty of Science (Observer)
	Mrs S Paine	Programmes Manager (Operations) (Observer)
	Mrs T Buckley	Programmes Officer (Observer)
	Ms P Gabriel	Programmes Officer (Observer)
Apologies	Dr N Fotaki	Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology
	Professor M Fraser	Department of Computer Science
	Mr C Lai	UG student representative
	Mr C Okayo	PGT student representative
	Dr G Stothart	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
	Professor S Ward	Associate Dean (International)

**Action**

**7029 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 21 July 2020 (Paper 283), and there were no matters arising.

## **7030 SEMESTER 2 SCALING REPORT AND ERRORS IN EXAMINATION PAPERS**

The Board considered scaling of unit marks (Paper 284A) and errors in examination papers (Paper 284B) in Semester 2 2019/20.

The Chair commented that it was unsurprising, following the move to online 24 hour exams due to Covid19, that a greater number of units had been scaled compared to this time last year. There had been 38 instances of scaling (compared to 12 in Semester 2 last year); 1 in Biology & Biochemistry (2 last year), 4 in Chemistry (0 last year), 8 in Computer Science (2 last year), 15 in Maths (3 last year), 9 in Pharmacy & Pharmacology (1 last year) and 1 in Physics (4 last year), including 1 unit where the mean mark was not atypical (MA10207), and 79 instances (excluding IFY units) of means that were atypical but not scaled (compared to 49 last year).

The Chair enquired as to whether members considered all instances of scaling in Paper 284A to indeed constitute 'scaling' (of which students must be informed) as would normally be carried out by BEUs, or could instead be categorised as 'mark adjustments' (of which students do not need to be informed) in order to implement 'No Detriment' measures. The Board agreed that the aim of the no detriment policy was to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by Covid19 and the move to an online teaching and assessment environment; scaling had been necessary, outside of the no detriment policy, to ensure that marks reflected accurately the standards achieved.

The Board agreed that, in readiness for next year, Departments should continue to review the design of online open-book exams to ensure they provide an appropriate level of academic challenge in testing that the learning outcomes have been achieved. The Board noted that the open-book exams had led to an uplift in marks in Semester 2 and, particularly in the Department of Mathematical Sciences, a rise in assessment offences. The Department of Mathematical Sciences had incorporated a harder question in exam papers in order to distinguish the stronger candidates, but overall there had still been an uplift in marks.

The Board discussed whether it would be possible to set 3 hour (as opposed to 24 hour) online exams in January 2021, as had several other universities this year (e.g. Exeter and Bristol). At least one External Examiner had raised concern regarding the 24 hour exam period. The Chair reported that he would work with the Department of Mathematical Sciences on the need for a shorter timeframe for online exams, e.g. 3 hours plus additional time for uploading / other issues, at the University level for 2021/22; the SU had previously expressed concern that this could disadvantage students. The Board also noted that open-book exams enable candidates to use their knowledge to demonstrate synthesis of ideas as opposed to just information they have crammed. Any proposal would need to take into account different time-zones. The Board noted that the new platform for online assessment (Inspera) to be trialled in 2021/22 will enable greater flexibility, e.g. different exam start times. It was reported that, using Moodle, Coventry University had set a 12 hour window within which candidates could choose when to start the exam and for which they would then have 4 hours to complete. The Board agreed it would be interesting to review how the Faculty had fared in comparison to the other Faculties/School, with regard to assessment offences and scaling, where they had set timeframes for exams longer than 24 hours.

The Board agreed that the report on errors in examination papers (Paper 284B) did not identify any unusual problems or issues.

## **7031 FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020 (Paper 285).

## **7032 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.