Mathematics and Statistics Student-Staff Exchange Meeting
18th March 2015

Andrew Bowler, Maura Paterson, Amarpreet Rattan, Jing Xu
Cassie Fernandes (minutes)

Akber Mehmood (Student rep, BSc Maths Full-time Year 1)
Christine Halvorsen, Tanya Rofani (Student reps, Graduate Certificate Statistics)

AB: We would encourage all finalist students to complete the National Student Survey. Information about this can be found at this link, http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/aig/student-feedback-at-birkbeck

Examination dates have now been published on the Exams webpage. Students should ensure they confirm their modules via their My Birkbeck profile in order for an Exams admission slip to be generated. This is viewable on the Exams timetable section of students My Birkbeck profile.

AM: Students were expecting the Probability & Statistics lectures to be a bit more applied, and more like the model of Stephen Hodges Algebra 1 lectures, where he starts with an example and then teaches the theory surrounding it.

JX: When you start learning Statistics, you need to lay the foundations and teach the underlying principles, before applying it to practical examples.

AB: Different lecturers have different approaches, however we will pass these comments onto the new lecturer teaching the Probability & Statistics module in 2015/16.

Year 3 student: We would like all typed up notes to be on Moodle, with exercises and solutions, and assignments to be marked quicker. For the Statistics: Theory & Practice module we would have preferred a block of 6-9pm teaching, rather than just 6-7:30pm blocks on different days.

AB: There were real issues with IT room bookings this year, with confirmation only made very late, and not for the schedule we had requested. This impacted on the overall teaching arrangements for this module. Teaching scheduling weren’t ideal but were the best we could arrange given the last minute IT room booking problems. Obtaining teaching and IT rooms has been very difficult this year.

AM: There seem to be too few revision lectures scheduled for the Summer term.

AB: Remember that students can contact lecturers in the Summer term either during their office hours or by emailing them for an appointment, depending on the lecturers preference. Eva Szatmari can help students with Year 1 modules. Further details can be found at this link,
CH & TR: We would like marked assignments to be returned quickly. Feedback from assignment 1 could help with completion of assignment 2, otherwise an extension for assignment 2 should be given.
The Maths for Statistics resources were difficult to locate.

AB: I was ill at the start of this year, which delayed marking of assignments.

CF: Maths for Statistics notes resources were not all initially linked on Moodle, however this had been rectified earlier this year, and so all resources (notes, exam papers etc) are either on Moodle or linked from there.

MP: We will try to have material circulated in lectures on Moodle for 2015/16.

CH & TR: As a positive point, time keeping for lecturers has been very good, which is good for students coming after work.

Year 3 student: It isn’t too good having three lecturers teaching the same module.

CH & TR: How will the Statistics: Theory & Practice exam paper be written.

JX: The timetabling and teaching loads should be better next year, so we hope to have only two lecturers teaching this module.
The style of exam questions doesn’t vary from year to year, or lecturer to lecturer.
The particular lecturers will be setting questions for the parts of the module that they taught.

AB: Dr Brooms has been teaching the Statistics: Theory & Practice module for many years, so he will keep an overall eye on the exam paper, to ensure that it is in line with past papers.

CH & TR: When should students interested in applying for the MSc Statistics submit their application?

AB: The earlier you apply the better, you can then just be given a conditional offer on passing the Graduate Certificate in Statistics at the right level.

MSc Maths student: We understand that typed up notes for MSc modules may not be provided, as these modules have not been running long. However it would be useful to have an indication of topics/points covered within a lecture.