

Minutes of APTS Advisory Committee meeting (AC10) on 15th September, 2016

Present: Chris Brignell (Nottingham), David Croydon (APTS co-director), Jochen Einbeck (Durham), David Elston (BioSS, over Skype), Sarah Filippi (Oxford, over Skype), Bärbel Finkenstädt Rand (Warwick), Adam Johansen (APTS co-director), Wilfrid Kendall (APTS co-director), Kathryn Leeming (Bristol, Student representative), Kanchan Mukherjee (Lancaster), Brendan Murphy (University College Dublin, over Skype), Antony Overstall (Glasgow), David Selby (Warwick, Student representative), Len Thomas (St Andrews, over Skype).

Apologies: Stuart Barber (Leeds), Julian Faraway (Bath) Chris Ferro (Exeter), Finn Lindgren (Edinburgh), Jonty Rougier (Bristol)

In Attendance: Paul Jenkins (APTS Programme Manager)

Meeting held at: C1.06, Zeeman Building, University of Warwick

Meeting Began: 14:00

Meeting Ended: 15:00

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1 Changes to APTS Management Team

Co-director WSK is succeeded by DAC.

Programme Manager BG left at the end of June 2016.

PJ will be taking on the Programme Manager role over the course of the coming year.

2 Minutes of Advisory Committee meeting on 17th September 2015

The previously circulated minutes were agreed.

3 Matters arising

3.1 From Advisory Committee Meeting AC9

ADAM JOHANSEN AC9/2.2.2: Rendered irrelevant by EC10/10, below.

WILFRID KENDALL AC9/7: The New Collaboration agreement has been signed by 14 institutions; we await an imminent signature from Oxford.

3.2 From Executive Committee Meeting EC10

ADAM JOHANSEN EC10/10: Applied Stochastic Processes has now been moved to week 2; a new module on *High-dimensional Statistics* (to be provided by Rajen Shah, Cambridge), which will take place in week 3, now replaces *Statistical Asymptotics*.

4 Report of APTS 2015–2016

ADAM JOHANSEN Numbers are healthy. This is the first year numbers have not increased, but they are still above targets. More are attending all four weeks than ever. We have one new host institution—Durham. All member institutions for 2016/17 are unchanged from 2015/16.

Student feedback

DAVID SELBY Some preliminary material was supplied late. Glasgow's arrived only the day before APTS week. KATHRYN LEEMING Preliminary material for Cambridge was also late. DAVID SELBY The APTS website for preliminary material contains broken links and is poorly organised. ADAM JOHANSEN Apologies for this on behalf of APTS. The relevant part of the website is currently under review.

ADAM JOHANSEN Most modules were mostly rated "Just right" in terms of level, except *Statistical Asymptotics*, for which about half the students thought it was too hard, and *Survival Analysis*, for which about half the students thought it was too easy. KATHRYN LEEMING There was a general feeling among students that the pace of *Survival analysis* was a fraction too slow.

WILFRID KENDALL It would be useful to add to the APTS report a two-way table comparing usage of preliminary material with the difficulty ratings of the modules. This could even be communicated to the students to motivate their engagement with the material beforehand. ADAM JOHANSEN A correlation does exist.

Action: Trial this in the coming year. (ADAM JOHANSEN)

ADAM JOHANSEN The response rate has been lower since feedback was collected electronically. In future we will return to collecting it on paper.

ADAM JOHANSEN Some institutions have noted that students are not taking assessments seriously enough. The current arrangement is flexible however: APTS is not resourced to assess students but makes available material suitable for light touch assessment for use, as they see appropriate, by students' own institutions. WILFRID KENDALL The position of APTS has been to avoid an undergraduate style of assessment. KANCHAN MUKHERJEE At Lancaster we ask students to speak for 10 minutes on the material. DAVID CROYDON Do we collect any feedback on assessments? ADAM JOHANSEN We do not.

ADAM JOHANSEN Some module leaders have requested more interactivity in their modules—e.g. giving solutions to exercises and classes conducted during the APTS week. We prefer to leave such decisions to module leaders in the absence of strong reasons to do otherwise.

Student costs

ADAM JOHANSEN There will be no EPSRC travel allowances in subsequent years, but the totals involved are small. As has been planned since the start of the second APTS Grant, registration fees will continue to

increase slowly until they fully cover the cost of APTS operations (expected to be between £180 and £200 depending upon registration numbers at the end of the next five years of operation). KANCHAN MUKHERJEE How are allowances calculated? ADAM JOHANSEN There was an algorithm based on 2nd class rail fares.

Alumni questionnaire responses

DAVID ELSTON Those agreeing that APTS facilitates networking with peers is surprisingly low. CHRIS BRIGNALL Is there an Alumni Facebook group? ADAM JOHANSEN There is a LinkedIn group, but it is not well used. DAVID SELBY Individual cohorts have set up their own unofficial Facebook groups. WILFRID KENDALL There is an alumni mailing list, but its use is restricted to academic matters.

ADAM JOHANSEN Some alumni have requested to see a list of attendees at their APTS weeks, which would help with networking, but there are possibly data protection issues. One possibility would be to set-up an opt-in webform for student contact information that can be distributed to the cohort.

Action: Trial this in the coming year. (ADAM JOHANSEN)

5 Programme for APTS 2016–2017

1. Cambridge 12–16 December, 2016
Statistical Computing (Finn Lindgren)
Statistical Inference (Jonty Rougier)
2. Oxford 20–24 March, 2017
Applied Stochastic Processes (Stephen Connor and Amanda Turner)
Statistical Modelling (Antony Overstall)
3. Durham 3–7 July, 2017
High-dimensional Statistics (Rajen Shah)
Computer Intensive Statistics (Adam Johansen)
4. Glasgow 21–25 August, 2017
Nonparametric Smoothing (Adrian Bowman and Ludger Evers)
Survival analysis (Ingrid Van Keilegom)

Registration Fees: £145 for each week, 20% reduction for students attending all 4 weeks.
Accommodation and food / food only costs for each of the weeks will be:

	Accommodation and Food	Food Only
Cambridge	£290	£105
Oxford	£315	£115
Durham	£310	£105
Glasgow	£335	£115

6 Dates and Locations for APTS 2017–2018

1. Cambridge 11–15 December, 2017
2. Nottingham 16–20 April, 2018
3. Southampton 9–13 July, 2018 [Clashes with NI Public Holiday]
4. Glasgow 20–24 August, 2018

7 Elections

7.1 Advisory Committee representative to the Executive Committee

Brendan Murphy's term is at an end. He has agreed to stand again.

No other nominations were forthcoming.

Agreed: Brendan Murphy is elected for another 2 year term.

8 Priority order

ADAM JOHANSEN With a view to informing a later discussion at the EC in January. (1) Should there be any changes to the priority ordering system articulated in the constitution, in particular, should EPSRC-funded students still be prioritised over others? (2) Is the UI, MI, SI trichotomy helpful?

(1) It was noted that the EPSRC requires "100 hours" of training for EPSRC-funded research students. WILFRID KENDALL The APTS constitution does not explicitly give EPSRC-funded students any priority.

(2) WILFRID KENDALL MI status is intended to incentivise institutions to use all four APTS weeks. DAVID ELSTON UI status is probably needed for legal reasons. ADAM JOHANSEN Absolutely.

No strong views were expressed that any change was required.

9 Any other business and general feedback

9.1 Date of Next Meeting

Planned date 14th September 2017, 14:00.

9.2 General feedback

ADAM JOHANSEN Forwarded student feedback (via Ian White at the MRC Biostatistics Unit in Cambridge) notes that some APTS weeks come late in the year. "Would a rearrangement like two APTS weeks in each of the Xmas and Easter holidays be possible? This would also reduce the perceived clash with PhD upgradings around September."

ADAM JOHANSEN Week 4 has already been brought forward one month. Any further forward into mid-summer and many students and lecturers might be away. ANTONY OVERSTALL Can week 3 be moved forward? ADAM JOHANSEN This would probably clash with many summer terms. DAVID CROYDON Attendance is lower in week 4. ADAM JOHANSEN The first two weeks cover more foundational material. WILFRID KENDALL Some attendees do not get funding for all four weeks.