

School of Computer Science and Engineering

Education Committee Meeting

Date: Friday, 12 September 2025

Time: 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Location: Hybrid format – Virtual via Microsoft Teams and in person at K17, Room 113.

ACADEMIC STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Aditya Joshi	Dylan Brotherston	Rachid Hamadi
Andrew Taylor	Eric Martin	Raveen DeSilva
Angela Finlayson	Flora Salim	Salil Kanhere
Arcot Sowmya	Gustavo Batista	Sara Ballouz
AsheshMahidadia	Hammond Pearce	Sebastian Sequoiah-Grayson
Basem Suleiman	Michael Johnson	Sonit Singh
Benjamin Tag	Nadeem Ahmed	Sushmita Ruj
Chun Tung Chou	Oliver Diessel	Wayne Wobcke (Chair)
	Paul Hunter	Zhengyi Yang

ATTENDEES (OBSERVERS, GUESTS, PROFESSIONAL STAFF, ETC.)

Shiling Wu(Secretary)	Maria Kim	Sebastianus Kandi
Victoria Jenkins	Nicholas George	Tina Tuomikoski

APOLOGIES/ NO RESPONSE

Alan Blair	Hui Guo	Ron Van der Meyden
Ali Darejeh	Jesse Laeuchli	Rahat Masood
Arash Shaghaghi	Jake Renzella	Raymond Louie
Bruno Gaeta	Jiaojiao Jiang	Sanjay Jha
Claude Sammut	Jingling Xue	Sasha Vassar
Dong Gong	John Shepherd	Serge Gaspers
Ellie Williams	Katie Clinch	Thomas Sewell
Erik Meijering	Kevin Elphinstone	Wen Hu
Fethi Rabhi	Kristian Mansfield	Wenjie Zhang
Francisco Cruz Naranjo	Mahbub Hassan	Xiaoyang Wang
Gelareh Mohammadi	Michael Bain	Xin Cao
Gernot Heiser	Michael Thielscher	Yang Song
Hao Xue	Nadine Marcus	Yuchao Jiang
Haris Aziz	Raymond Wong	Yuekang Li
Helen Paik	Richard Buckland	Yulei Su

1. OPENING OF MEETING

The Chair opened the meeting at 12:05 pm.

The recording of the meeting is set to auto-delete after 120 days to maintain confidentiality and use only for minute verification.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes from the 01 August 2025 meeting could not be approved due to the lack of quorum at the current meeting. Approval has been deferred to the next meeting

3. REVIEW OF ACTION SHEET

3.1. BSc (Computer Science) – India

- The Chair and the Head of School discussed the recent approval of the India ATP by the faculty, highlighting concerns about increased teaching commitments, lack of consultation, and ongoing uncertainties regarding staffing and program structure.
 - **Program Approval and Scope:** The India ATP was approved at faculty level for both the Computer Science and Data Science programs. The Data Science program was proposed by the School of Mathematics and Statistics without proper consultation with CSE, and includes more courses than initially planned, leading to concerns about overcommitment and insufficient consultation with the CSE team.
 - **Staffing and Delivery Uncertainties:** The Chair noted that most teaching in India would likely be delivered by locally employed staff, but there remains significant uncertainty about the division of responsibilities, including exam marking and the terms of a potential joint venture agreement.
 - **Cybersecurity Masters in India:** The Head of School explained that multiple versions of the Master of Cybersecurity are being taught out of Canberra, with one version proposed for India. The CSE team was only recently consulted about their stance, and the program's technical and management specialisations were clarified.
 - **Timeline for Combined Degrees:** The Chair and the Head of School discussed the BEd and BSc combined program, noting that its implementation is likely delayed until 2028 due to lengthy approval processes involving state education authorities.

3.2 Academic Program Review – Master of Cyber Security

- The Chair provided an update on behalf of Rahat Masood that the Master of Cybersecurity Academic Program Review document was submitted to the faculty for review. This relates to item 3.1 where the Master of Cybersecurity is proposed to be taught in India. The review is currently under faculty consideration and awaiting further discussion.

3.3 Thesis Supervision and Assessment Policy Review

- Chun Tung presented proposed changes to the thesis supervision and assessment panel policy, with detailed discussion among Chun Tung, The Chair, The Head of School, and others about supervisor eligibility, the role of adjunct and visiting staff, and the need for clearer requirements for external supervisors.



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- **Supervisor Group Definitions:** Chun Tung outlined four groups eligible for thesis supervision: CSE academics (including conjoined, adjunct, and visiting), CSE postdoctoral fellows, UNSW academics, and qualified external researchers or industry practitioners, with varying requirements for each group.
- **Eligibility and Approval for External Supervisors:** The committee discussed the need to tighten requirements for Group 4 (external/industry supervisors), with The Chair suggesting that appointments be subject to approval by the relevant authority, and Chun Tung agreeing to clarify this in the policy.
 - **Group 1:** CSE academics (including conjoins) at Levels A-E.
 - **Group 2:** Post doctoral research fellows at CSE.
 - **Group 3:** UNSW academics (including conjoins) at Levels A-E or post-doctoral fellows not affiliated with CSE.
 - **Group 4:** Qualified researchers/academics outside of UNSW and industrial practitioners.
- **Role of Adjunct and Visiting Staff:** The Head of School raised questions about whether adjunct and visiting staff should be allowed as primary supervisors, referencing current rules for PhD supervision and suggesting that CSE staff should remain primary supervisors for honours theses due to familiarity with CSE requirements.
- **Co-Supervision and Assessment Structure:** The committee debated whether a CSE academic should always be a co-supervisor (not just an assessor) when the main supervisor is from outside CSE, balancing the need for policy clarity with concerns about staff capacity.
- **Voting Outcome:** A vote on the proposed policy changes was attempted but failed due to lack of quorum; Chun Tung agreed to further modify the document for future consideration.

3.4. Semester Model Transition and Calendar Project Planning

- The Chair led an extensive discussion on preparations for the university's transition to a semester model in 2028, outlining key planning questions, teaching load distribution, course revisions, lab space requirements, and the need for cluster meetings, with input from the Head of School, Chun Tung Chou, and others.
 - **Key Planning Questions:** The Chair presented five critical questions for teaching clusters to address: semester offerings for each course, capacity needs (especially lab space), teaching load distribution, required course revisions, and the potential need for new courses to fill curriculum gaps.
 - **Course Splitting and Sequencing:** The committee discussed whether to split large courses (e.g., neural networks, computer vision) into undergraduate and postgraduate streams, and how to sequence core courses for programs like the MIT, considering prerequisite structures and the need for new offerings such as software project management.
 - **Lab Space and Resource Planning:** The Chair and others highlighted anticipated lab space shortages under the semester model, the need for accurate data on lab and tutorial



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requirements, and the importance of early engagement with the Space Committee to secure necessary resources.

- **Cluster Meetings and Deadlines:** The Chair emphasised the urgency of cluster meetings to address these planning questions, aiming for provisional answers by the end of T3, and agreed to circulate the list of clusters and responsible staff for follow-up.
- **Assessment and Exam Considerations:** The group discussed the implications of large enrolments for exam logistics, including the need for in-person, invigilated lab exams, and the challenges posed by central exam space limits and the use of generative AI.

4. ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1. Master of Artificial Intelligence (Online) Proposal

- Sonit Singh provided an update on the initial proposal for a fully online Master of Artificial Intelligence, with discussion among Sonit, the Chair, Flora Salim, and the Head of School about program structure, market analysis, technical versus literacy focus, and resource implications.
 - **Program Structure and Market Analysis:** Sonit explained that the proposal is for a 72-credit online degree, with market analysis indicating demand for both technical and literacy-focused AI education, and plans for specialisations such as AI in healthcare or law.
 - **Course Content and Delivery:** The initial course basket includes several existing CSE courses, but the need to revise or create online versions was noted, with concerns raised about the significant effort and cost involved.
 - **Technical Background Requirements:** The Chair and the Head of School stressed the importance of requiring a technical background for students in technical courses, referencing challenges in the current online cybersecurity program where such prerequisites are lacking.
 - **Resource and Funding Concerns:** The Head of School and the Chair highlighted that the current funding model for online courses does not adequately cover the higher resource demands of technical subjects, and that the school is currently losing money on these offerings.
 - **Face-to-Face AI Degree Discussion:** Flora inquired about the possibility of a face-to-face AI degree for international students, and the Head of School clarified that the school has previously decided against offering standalone AI degrees, preferring to maintain AI as a specialisation within broader programs.

4.2. Course Name Changes

- Oliver Diessel explained that course names for COMP3601 and COMP4601 are being updated to better reflect their design focus, with no changes to content. The Head of School suggested consulting new embedded systems staff as they join the school.

4.3. Assessment Feedback and Marking Standards

- Eric Martin raised concerns about the lack of substantive feedback in thesis and project assessments, prompting a discussion with the Chair, the Head of School, Oliver Diessel, and others about the importance of detailed feedback, mark justification, and possible policy changes.
 - **Current Feedback Practices:** Eric observed that many assessments provide only marks without meaningful feedback, which is problematic for students seeking justification for their results and for processes such as medal consideration.
 - **Policy and Enforcement Options:** The committee considered options such as not



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accepting results without feedback, encouraging use of rubric language, and clarifying expectations for both high and low marks.

- **Workload and Mark Granularity:** Oliver suggested that the current marking scale may be too fine-grained, advocating for a coarser approach, and noted the significant time required to provide thorough feedback.
- **Importance for Awards and Progression:** The Head of School emphasised that thesis marks are critical for medal decisions and must be justified, especially when there are discrepancies between coursework and thesis performance.

5. REPORTS

5.1. Administrative Updates

- **ECOS and Timesheet Reminders**
 - The Chair reminded staff to check ECOS entries for accuracy, especially regarding hurdle requirements, and to ensure timesheets are submitted weekly or fortnightly, accurately reflecting work done.
- **Peer Review of Teaching**
 - All relevant staff are required to sign up for the Term 3 peer review of teaching by the specified deadline using the faculty-circulated link.

5.2. Faculty Reviews

- The Chair outlined three major upcoming reviews requiring school input:
 - Design teaching across the faculty
 - All service teaching (including mathematics)
 - Comprehensive review of all engineering programs and double degrees

5.3. Accreditation

- Oliver Diessel requested that course convenors complete forms on professional practice engagement for accreditation purposes, clarifying that only conveners need to submit these.

5.4. Assessment and Academic Integrity

- The Chair reported on ongoing challenges with academic integrity, including increased use of generative AI, high failure rates in courses with exam hurdles, and new tactics for cheating.
 - **Generative AI and Failure Rates:** The Chair noted that students are achieving high assignment marks, likely with the help of generative AI, but failing in-person exams, leading to high failure rates and the need for better preparation and assessment design.
 - **Cheating Tactics:** New cheating methods were observed, such as students leaving exams early to obtain medical certificates, failing to save answers, and using concealed devices for communication during exams.
 - **Faculty Response:** The faculty encourages reporting of academic integrity issues and is organising seminars to share strategies for addressing these challenges.

5.5. Policy Consultation

- The Chair and Raveen De Silva noted the release of a draft new assessment and progression policy for university-wide consultation. Staff were encouraged to review the document and submit feedback before the deadline of 18 September.

5.6. Other School/University Committees

- No additional reports were received or tabled.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS



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- None.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- Thesis Supervision Policy Revision (Chun Tung Chou): Revise the thesis supervision policy document to clarify requirements for Group 4 supervisors and update terminology regarding conjoined, adjunct, and visiting appointments, incorporating feedback from the committee discussion.
- Teaching Cluster Responsibilities List (Chair): Publish the list of teaching clusters and assign responsible persons for each cluster to facilitate follow-up on the calendar project discussions.
- Lab and Space Planning for Semester Model (Chair, Andrew Taylor): Coordinate with relevant staff and volunteers to review current and anticipated lab usage, including specialised labs, and provide input for the upcoming meeting with the Space Committee regarding space requirements under the semester model.
- MIT Software Project Management Prerequisites (Chair): Determine and formalise the prerequisite structure for the new software project management course (COMP9820) in the MIT program, ensuring alignment with capstone requirements and addressing identified skills gaps.
- Advanced Algorithms Course Content Agreement (Chair, Raveen De Silva, and relevant cluster members): Convene the relevant teaching cluster to agree on the content and structure of the proposed advanced algorithms course for 2028, ensuring it addresses the needs of the theory specialisation.
- Course Accreditation Forms Completion (All Course Conveners): Complete the required accreditation forms for respective courses, including details on professional practice engagement.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 pm.

DR WAYNE WOBCKE

Chair



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