

# Informatics Student Course Feedback 2017/18

<http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/surveys/2017-18>

This report contains feedback from students about a course taught in the School of Informatics during the 2017/18 academic year, in response to the following questions:

- What would you say to students interested in taking this course?
- What did you find most valuable about the course?
- What improvements, if any, would you make to the course?
- Please add any other comments you have about workshops and tutors

Each course organiser receives this report as well as statistics on multiple-choice responses. All these reports, together with student feedback about individual members of teaching staff, are collected and sent to the Director of Learning and Teaching.

Please note that these are personal responses from individual students: some courses only have a few responses and a small sample can be unrepresentative.

Stereotyping and bias, especially unconscious bias, is a serious concern in any survey gathering personal responses. All students received the rubric below before completing the surveys, and you can read a brief introduction to issues of unconscious bias on the university web pages at <http://edin.ac/2iypZBv>

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## **Rubric given to all students taking the end-of-course feedback survey**

We value your opinions on the courses you take here at the University, as they allow us to shape future delivery and development. We welcome constructive comments about your courses, whether positive or negative, and ask you to give details about any issues in order to help the course organiser to understand and address them.

We encourage you to be aware of the potential for bias in the completion of these questionnaires, so we have developed resources which may be helpful to you:

- Equality, Diversity and Unconscious Bias (<http://edin.ac/2iypZBv>)

You also have a responsibility to provide feedback in a manner which does not breach the University's Dignity and Respect Policy:

- University of Edinburgh Dignity and Respect Policy (<http://edin.ac/1Cq0VZY>)

The results of the questionnaires will never be analysed in a way that seeks to identify individual students from their responses. However, should you wish to remain anonymous, please do not identify yourself in your answers to the survey questionnaire implicitly or explicitly.

## Comments Report

What advice would you give to a student taking this course in future?

- Attend all lectures and tutorials because it is WORTH IT.
- Do not take this course.
- Don't go to lectures. Read the book instead.
- If Richard Mayr is teaching it, either don't take it OR take it and make sure you read about all the topics in the CRLS textbook (+ go to the tutorials). The latter IS a viable option and the course is certainly a useful one.
- If it's Dr Richard Mayr as the lecturer, you will have to read CLRS instead of going to the lectures, but if you're into this kind of stuff, it's still worth taking (and quite easy).
- Prepare for boring lectures haha
- The course is hard if you do not like proofs, but I found it really interesting and I learnt some new algorithms. It is really useful if you want to improve your algorithmic knowledge, but be prepared to be challenged. Bear in mind that you mind have to do some individual studying to actually understand.

## Comments Report

What did you find most valuable about the course?

- I liked the subject a lot.
- The book
- The course textbook is incredibly helpful. The tutorial sheets were also very good.
- The different algorithms learned, they were very interesting and challenging. Also the weekly tutorials were very useful to understand the course and have some much needed practise
- The explanations of concepts were very clear and the lecturer was always wonderfully prepared.
- The material covered in the class is useful.
- The material covered was new to me and very interesting, although some of it really difficult.

## Comments Report

What improvements, if any, would you make to the course?

- Ban Richard Mayr from teaching!!! Get someone who can show some excitement about the subject. (Maybe from school of maths?)
- Change the lecturer. Richard Mayr cannot teach properly.  
Please, change the summative assignment. It is genuinely embarrassing to have around 1/3 to 1/2 of the total marks allocated to questions which are mostly just rewriting proofs from the slides or from the textbook.  
The formative assignment has had its problems, too. Some questions were way too challenging when compared to the level of difficulty of the questions covered in the lectures, the level of difficulty of the tutorial sheets and of the summative assignment.
- Different lecturer, tophat, less dry slides. Anything to make it more engaging.
- Dr. Mayr is the most unhelpful professor I have ever had. Firstly, his explanations are confusing and monotone. But far, far worse is his rude and disrespectful treatment of his students. His attitude is absolutely unacceptable, and the learning environment he cultivates is hostile. He is utterly unapproachable and has a strong negative reaction to anyone asking questions. I cannot phrase too strongly what a poor professor he is.
- None.
- The lecturer was not at all helpful in terms of teaching or willingness to help. The lectures were boring, the lecturer is hard to comprehend and there was only talking, not even a single example on board for such a practical course. Also, I believe the lecturer could have done much more to improve the user experience, for example set up a piazza forum for questions or record the lectures
- This course was not taught well. There was some disconnect between lectures and tutorials and material was given for the 2016/17 year and not updated for this year.

## Comments Report

Please add any other comments you have about workshops and tutors

- Amazing idea to have past students as tutors - the atmosphere is so much better and then know well how to explain things!
- Dr Mayr is the most boring tutor I have ever had, there was nothing interesting about spending an hour on tutorials
- My tutor could have been a little bit better but he was definitely not bad and the tutorial sheets were good.
- The tutorials were too easy.
- Tutors were quite good. Any one of them could replace the lecturer and do a WAAAAAY better job than him.