

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?

- Don't.
- Study on your own the material from the book. Don't go to the lectures or the tutorials. They're a waste of time.

Comments Report

What did you find most valuable about the course?

- The textbook. The only thing I gained for the course was from studying the textbook.
- Working examples in lectures in detail.

Comments Report

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

- Make it clearer where we are going; most of the time we were proving theorems without any context. By the time we got to the point, we had been going through proofs for an hour and it was hard to follow. Also, organize tutorials better and find someone who knows how to tutor; genuinely awful tutorials.
- The course is remarkably badly taught. The lecturer spent the first 4 weeks covering year 2 probability material (and some trivial applications of basic probability on algorithms at the very first lecture). The pace was very very slow the first 6 weeks. We should have spent the first week on the basic material for revision and then move straight to chapter 5 (which could have also been taught at year 2, but is new). Lastly to internalise this kind of mathematics one needs to solve many problems, much more than she recommends in the lectures and those in tutorials and the courseworks.
- There's not much point in having a "formative" coursework if the feedback isn't returned at all.

Comments Report

Please add any other comments you have about workshops and tutors

- I attended only one tutorial. The tutor shared my opinion about the trivial nature of most of the course. He wasn't particularly helpful at the tutorial; we may just as well have been given the solutions.
- Many tutorial sheets were released too late to give us any chance at attempting them before the tutorials.
- Questions were good but the tutor was not.