

# 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?

- Begin the coursework early to have time for exploration if you're not familiar with programming smart contracts or interacting with blockchains in general.
- If you are interested in blockchain technology/ distributed applications the course won't let you down. It is good course explaining the high-level concepts of blockchain technology from multiple standpoints. The course is not particularly demanding in demanding terms of a mathematical background but requires a lot of critical thinking. The course complements really well with the course "Introduction to Modern Cryptography". If a student takes both courses he will have a good foundation on Blockchain and he will be able to perform individual research on the subject.
- Read the Princeton book on Blockchains and Distributed Lecturers alongside the lectures, at least for the first month.
- Start the coursework early. Do solidity tutorials in advance of starting the coursework

## Comments Report

What did you find most valuable about the course?

- A good balance of theory and hands-on practice.
- Project helped me understand some of the concepts.
- The fact that we have a course related to blockchain technology is on its own a huge thing.
- The course covers blockchain technology from all perspectives and gives you multiple ways to approach the subject.
- The opportunity to learn how to program a smart contract, deploy it on a private blockchain and test other student's apps. This course gives us a complete introduction about Blockchain.

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## Comments Report

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

- Have clearer coursework instructions. Make the discussion forum earlier to help with coursework. Have labs so we could learn how to code in solidity before the coursework came out
- Make the topics covered within the lecture more concise. Ensure substitute lecturers are better prepared.
- Most of the issues of the course came from the fact that it was its first year.
- One improvement of the course is to make the teaching more interactive with the audience similar to the way IMC is structured.
- The course was not that well organized and as a result not so coherent. The assignment could be improved further if we used geth/web3 instead of remix. Nevertheless, the assignment is well structured and is a good starting point to think about security when writing smart contracts. However, as this was the first year when the course was taught it is expected.
- Organisation of the coursework. Many things were only clarified after questions from students, the environment for the coursework had some issues (though it's understandable since it's the first year of the course) and the deadline had to be pushed around due to these.
- This course should contain more practise lab, we can understand more by doing.
- Topic of each lecture should be made clear. Too little guidance on project. Should introduce some lab sessions to help with coursework. Quality of lecture recording is awful, should use Media Hopper Replay instead.

## Comments Report

Please add any other comments you have about workshops and tutors

- No tutorials, workshops or labs for this course.