Unit questionnaires and examination marks feedback

On the whole the responses to this course on the unit questionnaires (29 returned out of 38 students taking the course) were positive and gave the impression that most students had enjoyed the course. One person thought that the course was not well-organized and (presumably the same person) did not feel that the teaching was excellent.

There were various suggestions for ways in which the course could be improved.

Course content. One student commented that the material on calculations in homology was rather dull and a more categorial approach might have been more interesting. *I don’t know whether the person who made this comment did the level 4/6 course. There was some material on the categorical approach in the third lot of notes. The trouble with starting from this approach is that it is not clear what a homology class actually is.* The same person suggested doing differential topology. *I have taught this in the past but now there is a different course on Differential Manifolds.*

Lectures. A couple of people commented that I speak too fast. *I’m sorry about this. I ought to know this by now but it is a pity that it wasn’t mentioned during the course when I might have been able to do something about it.*

Support classes. Most critical comments were on the support classes. More lecturer input was asked for by a couple of people and there was the suggestion of focussing on a particular problem each week. *I was conscious that these did not go so well and I probably could have done better. I tend to assume that at this level students will take the initiative in seeking help.*

Examination. The examination went reasonably well. The marks were not scaled and there was a good proportion of first class and upper second class performances. The best scripts were really good. As usual there were a few students taking the level 4/MSc versions of the course who appeared to have done very little work on the additional reading.

Peter J. Eccles, July 2015.