Physics Department
Warwick University

Meeting of the
Student Staff Liaison Committee on
Thursday 18th June 2020

First year matters

- Online tutorials and revision sessions are generally well received.
  We are pleased to hear this.
- Some tutors stopped tutorials once the quantum material had been covered.
  If this happened, it should not have done so. All tutors were asked to support students' revision and, for physics students, the electronics in the second half of term 3.

Second year matters

- One question on the Hamiltonian Mechanics paper was quite similar to one from a previous year.
  We have guidance for exam setters and checkers to avoid undue similarities between papers, and we apologise that this case slipped through the net. We intend to be extra vigilant this summer (when exams will almost certainly again be online).
- Are lab extensions to lab reports permitted?
  Self-certified extensions are not permitted. A student who has concerns about not meeting a report deadline can approach the module leader in the first instance. (Extensions have in the past been granted for this module.)
- PX263 and PX275 were difficult papers – some students are worried about how marks will be scaled.
  One of these modules was almost bang on target (with a scaling factor of 1.01), and the other was actually scaled down (with a scaling factor of 0.92).
- Feedback for the second lab report was really thorough.
  We are pleased to hear this.

Third year matters

- In general it was felt that students preferred FBOBEs to Moodle exams.
  Moodle exams will not be used this summer — all exams will be FBOBEs.
- One student reported having 6 exams over 7 days.
  The University timetables examinations in blocks mainly by years. They consider two half-modules (7.5 credits) as the equivalent of one examination.

Fourth year matters

- How lenient will the department be with proof — and prose — answers, when assessing whether copying has occurred?
  We would encourage students to write naturally rather than to worry about being accused of cheating. For short definitions we know that the text book will have the most succinct phrase and that is indeed what students can reasonably call on - however that type of question is less likely to be asked in open book exams. For any "explanation" that is more than a sentence there is usually considerable scope for using your own words. These may be similar to those used elsewhere, but the exercise is about explaining, not memorising material.
- Students could obtain answers to RQM exam material from Gauge Theory notes – this situation seems unfair.
  Q2b)(ii) might have been easier for students who had done Gauge Theories, in particular if they were able to associate the question with the material from the handouts of the Gauge Theory module. In those handouts the result is referred to as "the completeness relation" but

not in the RQM question. However, the question is a reasonable test of the learning outcomes of the RQM module, and students who have not done Gauge Theories should not have been significantly disadvantaged in attempting to answer it. Material relating to Q2c) is also explored in APP and Gauge theories but the question is a good test of what was taught in RQM.

Students should be able to answer questions in any given examination provided they have engaged with the module. This was the case here. However, as explained in our guide to choosing options, modules in related areas will tend to reinforce each other. It is not possible to ensure that students, who have taken further modules in a given area, will not have a deeper understanding of the subject matter than those that have not.

- Some exam questions on the Advanced Particle Physics paper were not relevant to the syllabus.
  All questions on the APP examination were covered in the taught syllabus.
- Some students reported receiving automated messages requesting the upload of evidence for a mitigating circumstances application.
  When a claim is submitted, there is the opportunity to either submit evidence, or declare that it will be submitted by a certain date. Tabula will send automated reminders around this deadline.

Mathematics matters

- Can we have answers to the Maths revision material on the PX129 page?
  The Maths department did not publish answers to all the revision material they made available.