Physics Department
Warwick University

Action points arising from the meeting of the Student Staff Liaison Committee on Thursday 17th January 2019

Building matters

- The writing desks in R0.21 have been removed.
  Estates removed the desks when they noticed that they were breaking easily and leaving sharp metal edges – a health and safety concern. We have been advised that clipboards are being provided as a short term measure, whilst Estates consider a longer term fix.

First year matters

- MathsPhys students had an exam on the Saturday of week 15, then three assignments due in on the following Sunday / Monday. They feel that they could have had more leeway.
  The January exam is usually earlier in the week. One disadvantage of extending the deadline for the assignments in a particular week, is that it reduces the time available to complete the assignments for the following week. However, we will bear this in mind should there be an exam scheduled late in week 15 again.
- Students asked if it was possible to get a departmental dog.
  We understand that some members of the SSLC prefer cats.

Second year matters

- PX271:
  (1) Students were pleased that the lab report deadline was in week 2 and not in week 1.
  We do try to ensure that assessment deadlines are distributed sensibly.
  (2) Some students thought that not all demonstrators were always constructive. There was one occasion when all of the electronics demonstrators disappeared for around an hour.
  We have passed this back to the module leader.
  (3) Students feel the mark scheme for the group presentation could be clearer.
  There are 13 points listed on the feedback form and there is a one hour introduction session about this activity where these points are discussed with an opportunity to ask questions. The module leader is happy to discuss this further.

- PX265. Students would like lecture notes released sooner following the lecture.
  We understand that the current aim is to upload the scans at the end of each topic, to better encourage students to attend lectures. However, we have passed this comment back to the lecturer.
- PX262. Students would like lecture notes released sooner following the lecture, so they are better able to catch up before the next.
  We understand that the current aim is to upload the scans at the end of each week, to better encourage students to attend lectures. However, we have passed this comment back to the lecturer.

- PX276. There are not enough seats in the lecture theatre for all of the students. (This is possibly caused by students from the Maths department taking the module as an option.)
  There are currently 69 students registered (only 3 from Maths). The capacity of Lib1 is 80. We understand that this is not everyone's favourite room, but hopefully the fact that we are not using the room at full capacity means that everyone can get a reasonable view of the material presented.
- PX277. Students are happy with the module overall but would like demonstrators to have more clarity on how much they are allowed to help with questions in workshops.
  We have passed this comment back to the module leader.
- PX267. Students feel that the spare week of lectures could be used for going through a past paper or more examples.
  We have passed this comment back to the lecturer. One or two spare lectures are actually built in to cover for staff illnesses, unexpected closure of the university (on account of the weather for example). So it is normal for one or two lecture slots not to be used. On a related note: as with any module, students can present a list of questions that they would like clarifying. The lecturer will normally post answers to the questions on the module forum. This is explained in the Student Handbook.

Third year matters

- There is a deadline clash between PX390 (computing) and PX442 (laboratory).
  We apologise for not noticing this earlier. The deadline for PX390 has now been moved to the following week and all students taking PX390 have been notified.
- PX390. Some students feel the links between lectures and the assignments are vague.
  We have passed this on to the lecturer. We note that computing modules are skills modules. They do not follow the model of theory modules, where problems and assignments support and develop material covered in lectures. In a computing module, doing the assignments should help you develop your skill and speed at computing. The lectures should provide some additional information and motivation for the assignments but not take you through the tasks.
- PX388. Some students felt that the use of printed handouts, and occasionally being asked to write things in these handouts, makes it difficult to engage with the material.
  We have passed this comment back to the lecturer.

Fourth year matters

- PX436. The module on the whole has been very well received.
  We are pleased to receive this positive feedback. It has been passed back to the lecturer.
- PX431. Students like the style of lectures.
  We are pleased to receive this positive feedback. It has been passed back to the lecturer.
- PX445. Students like having some choice on what content is lectured.
  We are pleased to receive this positive feedback. It has been passed back to the lecturer.
- PX402. It is felt that there are significant discrepancies in the standard of marking for both the work done and project book marks.
  We put a lot of effort into marking the work done and the reports. The markers' comments are closely monitored and the marks moderated to ensure uniform standards.
- PX425. Marks for assignments in the module were consistently slow to come back—sometimes such that one assignment's feedback could not influence submission of the next.

The lecturer acknowledges that some feedback was late and apologises for this. Overall he was happy that students were doing so well.

Mathematics matters

- MA106. Some assignment questions are asked to be completed in MATLAB. It was asked if students could be given freedom to complete the tasks in Python, the language first year Physics students learn.
  The questions in this module which require Matlab only ever require the copying of lines of code from the assignment sheet into Matlab. The module team doubt that these questions would be easier to solve using Python. The content of the Maths for Computing module (taken by Maths students) is certainly not required to answer the MA106 questions efficiently and to a high standard!