

**Physics Department
Warwick University**

**Actions arising from the Student Staff Liaison
Committee meeting on 15th October 2019**

Building matters

- Maths/Phys students have no access from the Street to the workrooms.
Please see the response in the Action Point document from 17th May 2017. Note also that access to the workrooms is possible from the back when the Zeeman building is open.
- The refurbished S.019 (used for CMP II) is not a well-equipped room, as there is no easy use of desks for all.
We will report this to the Timetabling Office for the future. However unfortunately this room cannot be changed at this time.
- The rooms booked for Sets and Numbers and Analysis are too small.
We note that there are 397 students registered on Sets and Numbers and it is scheduled in L3 (capacity = 336) and MS.02 (capacity = 370). There are 400 students on Analysis, which is booked in MS.02. We will report this to Maths.

First year matters

- The dot and cross product have been removed from most A Level mathematics syllabuses, and therefore many students will meet them for the first time in PX149.
We have reminded the lecturer of this.
- Problem sheets for Foundations and Mechanics are usually handed out on a Monday, but the material is not always covered until the following Wednesday. Why?
Students can opt to start the problem sheet at the beginning of the week and do some independent reading, or attempt the problem sheet later in the week. We think most students value this choice.
- Why do small group teaching activities not appear on Tabula personal timetables?
Supervisions in Maths and examples classes in Physics do not appear on Tabula personal timetables, but all lectures (for modules on which a student has registered) and academic tutorials do. We recommend becoming familiar with the Central Timetabling website at <https://timetablingmanagement.warwick.ac.uk/sws1920>, on which you can find the timetable of any module, or for any cohort. All examples class rooms and times can be found there, for example.
- Why do we use both Mastering Physics and Moodle for assessments?
Mastering Physics is a piece of commercial software which is associated with the textbook that we use. The Moodle quizzes on PX149 were written by the Physics Department and integrated in Moodle, the University's visual learning environment.
- Why are there so many 9am lectures?
Most or all first years live on campus. 9am lectures are more rare in second year timetables, because most or all second years live off campus.

- Why does the lecturer on PX149 not print off the problem sheets, whereas the lecturers on PX145 and PX148 do.
We will pass this onto the lecturers. However *if* there is no expectation that the students will themselves print a sheet off, the Department is happy to move towards printing off fewer materials.

Second year matters

- The PX271 Errors worksheet deadline was set at noon however some students had lectures 1000-1300.
We will ask the lecturer to consider moving the deadline to 1400 in future.
- Some students reported having a very unbalanced timetable: three days with many lectures and two much lighter days.
A feature of the Physics and Maths/Physics courses at Warwick is the large number of courses offered by both departments, and the flexibility of which modules can be taken in the regulations. We have optimized the timetable over the years, and students are encouraged to study the cohort timetable (see the link above) when considering their module registrations. The departmental policy on the timetable is at <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/physics/current/teach/general/policies/timetable>
- Maths/Phys students do not take Geometry and Motion, which feeds into other modules, e.g. Vector Analysis.
Maths/Physics students study much of the Geometry and Motion syllabus through PX129 worksheets. Past experience shows that Maths/Phys students cope well with Vector Analysis, particularly as its applications are used extensively in E&M and Fluids, and the exam for Vector Analysis tends to concentrate more on using grad, div and curl than with the various proofs.

Third year matters

- The jump from PX277 to PX390 feels sudden to many students. Could students on PX277 be made to implement more numerical methods? Could PX390 have a more gentle start?
We will ask the two lecturers concerned to consider how best to facilitate the transition between these modules.

Fourth year matters

- Some students reported finding the lectures for RQM difficult to follow. Specifically, the handwriting is often difficult to read, the prose is minimal, and the verbal explanations unclear.
We have asked for these lectures to be observed by two senior members of staff. Feedback from these observations will be discussed with the lecturer.

Mathematics issues

- What is the requirement to transfer to Maths?
Conditions at <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/maths/undergrad/ughandbook/transfers/>.