

**Action points arising from the meeting of the  
Student Staff Liaison Committee on 12th May 2021**

**I.T. matters**

- The AEP occasionally freezes for a minute or so, and this is perhaps more likely during exams with larger cohorts.  
We have reported this to the web development team. You have been given an extra 45 minutes on each exam to cover this type of interruption.

**Remote Study & Online Working**

- Students would like to return to f2f teaching as soon as possible, as in person lectures encourages them to keep up to date with the lecture content. Additionally, it is a really important part of the degree to socialise with peers and discuss the content. As well as this, it is significantly easier and faster to ask lecturers questions when in person either during the lecture or at the end, though many do also prefer to email lecturers.  
We are planning our teaching for next academic year. The University is taking a cautious approach assuming that the Government's social distancing requirements will not be lifted in time for Term 1. Our approach will be to do as much f2f as possible. However large indoor lectures are the least likely to be allowed soon.
- An aspect of online learning that students have enjoyed is the live lectures held on Teams. This has enabled students to go through examples with lecturers for an entire hour, in a way that was not done in most modules pre Covid.  
This is good news.
- Though students enjoyed the live lectures, the attendance at these dropped through the term. This was due to students falling behind on lecture content, which was very easy to do when they are pre-recorded.
- Pre-recorded lectures were well done on the whole by physics lecturers. However, students with visual/auditory processing issues found those lectures which were solely PowerPoint slides/somebody writing on a piece of paper were challenging to understand and the transcripts were often unreliable. Those students much preferred lecturers who included a video of them speaking (i.e. their face) as well as what they were writing as it was easier to understand.  
We are passing this message on to lecturers for next year.

**First year matters**

- Some students requested more thorough PX101 notes, and more examples.  
The relevant sections of Young & Freedman are a good accompaniment to the lecture material. All students are encouraged to submit solutions to the weekly examples sheets, and to attend the examples classes on this material. We will pass these comments back to the lecturer.
- The PX140 Moodle quizzes can seem 'unforgiving' — how sensitive is the system to significant figures and rounding? Are we given the correct answers to these questions?  
The accepted range for numerical answers was set at a reasonable level for individual questions. There was perhaps one question in quiz 2 which was a little ambiguous, which the lecturer will

have a look at. Immediately after a quiz attempt, you are shown your marks, and which of your answers were correct. The full set of correct solutions are revealed when the quiz closes.

## Second year matters

- PX276: The two different conventions for Fourier transforms are used throughout the lecture materials from this and previous years. Solutions are not provided to some of the module problems.  
Being familiar with both conventions is useful, as they are both widely used in the textbooks and published papers. In an exam, both conventions will be accepted. *We will ask the lecturer to comment on the solutions to module problems, and update this document as necessary.*
- Some students requested advice on transferring between the four and three year degrees. Transferring between the four and three year courses is possible until early in the vacation at the end of the second year. You are advised to speak to your tutor before applying to transfer course. Applications are made on [Student Records Online](#).

## Third year matters

- The exams this year (especially MA exams) seem tougher than in previous years. This is reported every year in SSLC! Doing an exam under time pressure, and without access to solutions, can sometimes make a paper appear harder than ones attempted during revision in a more relaxed setting. Our intention was certainly *not* to set harder papers this year, but also not to set easier ones where standard answers could just be copied from notes; the usual scaling algorithm will apply.
- The Project vivas went well — the assessors made the students feel relaxed. We are pleased to receive this feedback, and will let the convenor of the Project module know.

## Fourth year matters

- Some students reported disappointment with the quantity of feedback on their Project report. They received a greater quantity of prose feedback (and grades against specific criteria) on laboratory reports in previous years.  
Feedback on the project report is really the response of the “referees” to the presentation of the science. The project viva also contains feedback. Unlike the feedback on lab reports, there should not be extensive comments designed to help prepare future reports.
- There is no specimen paper for PX447 Quantum Computing (but there are many examples). There are 101 module problems provided. We will pass this back to the lecturer.
- PX443 Planets, Exoplanets and Life and PX444 The Distant Universe set too much required reading (published papers). PX431 also contained more material than modules like PX436. The amount of written material to study can be higher in less theoretical modules, like PX431, PX443 and PX444. We believe that the amount of work required (per CATS credit) should be broadly equivalent across all modules. We will ask the lecturers to review the amount of work they are asking for.

## Maths matters

- Some students reported that they are this year running out of time in MA exams, whereas in previous years they have had enough time.

We will pass this on to Maths.