

**Action points arising from the meeting of the
Student Staff Liaison Committee on 21st June 2021**

First Year Matters

- Exams: The AEP froze at the start of the PX149 exam, with students experiencing delays of up to 20 minutes.
We recognise that this would have been concerning for students at the time. In this case, the 45-minute period at the end of the exam would have provided enough time to complete the paper and upload the answers.
- PX148 Mechanics and Relativity was commended for its online delivery.
We are pleased to hear this and will pass it on to the lecturer.

Second Year Matters

- PX271 Physics Skills: It was reported that there had been a suggestion that post exam lab sessions might be organised for the electronics and microprocessors workshops for those students who had had to perform these online.
We think that it would be difficult to run such sessions this term as many students are at home or now unavailable, and would therefore miss out. We will offer an optional laboratory session in Week 0 of the next academic year if there is interest. Details will be posted to the relevant students via the PX271 moodle page.
- Third Year Project Briefing: The project briefing was missed by a number of students because they had not been aware of it. Information relevant only to BSc or MPhys project students could be clearer. The recording has been made available.
We will pass this on to the project organiser. Now that the session recording is available, everyone should have access to the information. However, if students have missed any information please contact the project coordinator.
- PX264 Physics of Fluids, PX267 Hamiltonian and PX268 Stars were commended for their online delivery.
We are pleased to hear this and will pass it on to the lecturers.

Third Year Matters

- MA3D1 Fluid dynamics: exam was reported to be hard, and not aligned with the module content.
- PX366 Statistical Physics was commended for its online delivery.
We are pleased to hear this and will pass it on to the lecturer.

Fourth Year Matters

- PX402: Physics Project:
 - There was confusion over the poster deadline, with different times and dates posted.

The deadline was moved to give more time, taking into account the exam schedule in week 7. This was communicated via email, but we apologise that this caused confusion as it contradicted previously posted information.

- It was unclear what to expect in the poster vivas and what to prepare. Vivas were of different lengths of time. Students with vivas scheduled later had an advantage, as they had a better idea of what to expect.

We apologise for any lack of clarity. The poster session has for many years had the flavour of a festival. It was seen by almost all students as rewarding. Online, this aspect has been hard to reproduce. If we continue with online poster sessions, we will explore ways to recover the intended spirit of the sessions.

The poster viva should be a discussion between a presenter and their audience and not a talk. While some small introductory comments at the start may help initiate the discussion, these should be as short as possible

- For some experimental projects, moving online in term 2 significantly changed the nature of the projects, and the work did not always follow the contingency plans. The requirement for the Department to move projects fully online in term two changed the nature of experimental projects in particular. Supervisors had previously made contingency plans for the projects for this academic year, but the course of the projects in term 2 would necessarily have been largely determined by how the projects had proceeded in term 1.

- PX423 Kinetic Theory exam was very hard and some students thought they were in the wrong exam.
This feedback has been passed back to the lecturer
- PX438 Physics for Fusion Power. Changes of syllabus were not made clear. The previous lecturer helped explain this where possible. It would have helped to have an indication how the exam questions would differ from previous years, although the examination was perceived to be fair.
We apologise for any lack of clarity.
- PX443 Planets, Exoplanets and Life: the module was delivered very well online.
We are pleased to hear this and will pass it on to the lecturer.

Maths Issues

- The maths exam papers were harder than those from the physics department. There was also time pressure, and some papers were difficult to finish within time.
This information will be passed back to the Maths Department(?)

IT Services

- MA3D1 Fluid dynamics: The exam was hosted on moodle. An error was reported where an exam was submitted, and a receipt received, but the exam paper was not actually present on moodle.
We will pass this on to Maths.
- The AEP occasionally caused problems downloading exam papers, resulting in some students being able to begin before others, and hence have more time.

We recognise that this would have been concerning for students. The 45 minute period at the end of the exams should still have provided enough time to complete the paper and upload the pdfs.

- Sometimes uploading answer pdfs could take up to 20 minutes. It was not clear whether the upload needed to commence or complete before the deadline.

Building/Health and Safety/Online and Remote working

- No issues reported.