Department of Physics
Warwick University

Actions arising from the meeting of the Student Staff Liaison Committee on Monday 22nd November 2021

First year matters

- PX148: some of the longer parts of questions on the examples class sheets are not worth many marks and are 'not worth doing'.
  We would disagree! There is intrinsic value in studying this Physics. The examples class sheets are designed to encourage you to keep up with the lecture material throughout the term, and we do not encourage obsession about marks.
- PX149: can students submit online quizzes past the deadline for a reduced mark?
  No, this is not possible. Offering extensions on weekly work is not helpful, as it means less time is available to do the work the following week. Again, these regular assessments should serve as encouragement to keep up with the lectures.

Second year matters

- Why are exams this academic year shorter than those last year, despite having the same number of marks available?
  The examinations last year were open book, so we allowed extra time for students to consult study materials. This year the examinations will be closed book, and this extra time is not required. The exams will therefore return to their pre-Covid lengths.
- PX271: can we have the feedback on the first lab-book before the following lab-book submission is due?
  We endeavour to return lab books as soon as possible, and always within 20 working days. However, the timetable (partly driven by COVID restrictions) and staff constraints mean that it is not possible to commit to returning all lab books before the next lab book is due.
- PX276: all the lecture notes are released at the beginning of the module, so it is difficult to structure our study over the two terms. There are also not many videos.
  As this is a core module, we would encourage you to seek support from your personal tutor, and to use the "examples of the week" as a guide to your expected progress.
- Could the rules on calculator use in exams be clarified?
  If your calculator can plot a graph, then buy one that cannot. We do not want to insist that all students buy a particular model, as that could incur unnecessary expense.
- PX282: could we have clarification on what is assessed and what is not?
  All the material covered in the video lectures for the Solar System part of the course is examinable (but not the linked radio programmes). The exam will test understanding with a mixture of descriptions and explanations, derivations and calculations. The format will be similar to the open book past papers for PX279 (and the mock paper), which are linked from the Moodle page. These past paper questions should be a good guide to the level and depth of the questions. The main difference from the closed-book paper is that questions might include derivations.

Third year matters

- PX382: Could the notes be released at the end of the module with the blanks filled in?
  The blanks are there to encourage students to read through the lecture slides and to watch the lectures. In the past students have complained that others have a complete set of lecture notes without attending any of the lectures. Compared to copying out a full set of lecture notes, the amount of writing required is low.
  Will we get feedback on the online assessments?
  Yes, after all the students with extensions have submitted.
- PX385: Enthusiastic delivery and very clear structure of what to do each week.
  We are pleased to receive this positive feedback, and will pass it on to the lecturer.
- PX428: Inconsistent (sometimes contradictory) feedback on lab reports.
  We would encourage students to approach the marker of their lab report, to discuss the 'story' they want to tell, or to ask questions about the content or the structure.

Fourth year matters

- PX435: One student reported that there were no videos.
  The module website says "Note that about 20 videos are embedded within the Moodle books, ranging from 5 to 20 minutes duration. Sometimes a video is embedded in a page that already contains text and plots, and is offered so as to e.g. work through some maths by hand. Sometimes there are set pieces where there's just an embedded video and a link to some slides; the content is then only in the video/slides." We would encourage all students taking the module to provide feedback through the end-of-module questionnaire, which will be studied by the lecturer and the Department. Can we repeat that you can always ask the lecturer about what they are doing during the module.

- PX444: Seems to contain more material than other modules of the same credit weighting.
  The flavour of fourth year modules, which are often related to current research, can vary between lecturer and area of physics. In some areas, where the research literature is quite accessible, it is valuable to ask you to read recent papers.

Mathematics matters

- MA137: poor legibility in the recording of the writing on the board.
  This has now been raised in the Maths SSLC. We would encourage you to raise such matters directly with the lecturer, to facilitate a more speedy resolution. One suggestion (for the future), might be that the lecturer takes a photo of what is written on the board to upload afterwards.