

**Meeting of the
Student Staff Liaison Committee on
21st February 2022**

First year matters

- PX120: it still difficult to read material displayed on the visualiser in Ramphal.
After this was raised at the previous SSLC meeting, we raised this with the lecturer, who has tried to improve the clarity. We will pass the message on.
- PX146: Fourier Series sheet is difficult and takes many hours to prepare.
The five PX146 worksheets are collectively worth 6 CATS credits, and should therefore take approximately 60 hours to complete. We agree that the Fourier sheet is more difficult than some others, and therefore we would expect most students to spend more than $60/5 = 12$ hours on completing it.
- Why do the examples class sheets contribute to the mark for PX129/PX146, rather than the corresponding lecture modules?
Many students from outside of the Physics Department take, for example, PX120 and PX148. The examples sheets marked by the graduate students who run the associated examples classes, and we do not have enough postgraduates to run classes for all of these outside students. This system is therefore designed to prioritise our teaching resource for our home students.

Second year matters

- PX262: lecturer often overruns, and we would like a break between lectures.
We would encourage you to report such matters directly to the lecturer at the time, but we will also pass this on.
- Physics with Business: IB261 seminars clashed with labs.
To satisfy the regulations on this programme, there are many WBS modules from which students can choose. It is important to make this choice taking account of the timetable, as it is not possible to rearrange laboratory allocations.

Third year matters

- PX390: this is a difficult and time-consuming module, which appeals mainly to “expert coders”. The feedback is not very useful (individualised).
Yes, this module is set up to help prepare to work in IT, which is the sector many of you have good chances of working (even if not as coders). It is (by University norms) a 150 hour module. Unlike examined modules, where the credit is banked before the exam season starts, it does not involve revision. We doubt that students put in more than 150 hours. At the same time, students are generally well-rewarded for the work they do put in (the average marks are quite high).
- PX387: the lecturer sometimes does not wait for students to catch up before removing text from the visualiser.

We recommend that such matters are raised directly with the lecturer at the time, but we will pass this on. Lecturers may need repeated reminders from the floor!

- PX398: the presentation style is different from most other PX modules.
We are aware that there were some teething problems with this new module (eg it was hard to record what was written on a whiteboard), but we think this module has now bedded in, with a good set of printed notes and recordings.

Fourth year matters

- PX440: does not adequately prepare for PX4 modules (which require tensors and group theory, but not complex analysis).
PX440 is the only module we teach which is set up to give a flavour of what maths actually is (it is not just a toolkit). Complex analysis is an excellent vehicle for this. The topic is covered in much the same way by the Maths department in one of their modules. Second, it covers ideas that are relevant to many physics modules. Understanding the analytic structure of propagators (particle physics) and response functions generally (condensed matter physics) requires knowledge of complex analysis. Group theory is the last topic that could ever be covered this way. Particle physics modules refer to some results from group theory (representations of a v small number of Lie groups). Snippets like this and the notation of tensors should be covered where they are needed in the corresponding physics modules. (Maths teach 90L of group theory before they even mention representations or Lie groups.)

Mathematics matters

None