

**Action points arising from the meeting of the  
Student Staff Liaison Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

**I.T. matters**

- **Origin and Solid State Simulation Project (SSS)** cannot be downloaded on Library computers.  
The University has a site license for Origin. We have asked I.T. Services to make sure that it appears on the Start Menu/Software Centre on University machines. It is only possible at present to download SSS onto a personally-owned machine but we will ask I.T. Services whether they are able to add this software to the Software Centre.
- There is no **Software Centre** on one of the computers (the one next to the Tardis) in the fifth floor undergraduate workroom.  
This has been reported to I.T. Services. In future, we invite students to report matters relating to hardware and software in the workrooms directly to the departmental secretary, Dan Martin, in P566. This should allow for a more speedy resolution than raising through the SSLC.

**Building matters**

- There are some windows without blinds in the fifth floor undergraduate workroom. Summer is approaching.  
This has been reported to the department's Technical Services Manager.

**First year matters**

- One of the **PX120** Lecture Capture recordings has poor audio.  
A link to the 16/17 Lecture Capture recordings for this module has been sent to all first year students by email.
- One student wrote that "*one assignment for **PX120** had a mark scheme inconsistent with lecture examples. After contacting the lecturer it appeared that the issue was that the wording did not reflect the required method.*"  
The question has been re-worded for next academic year.

**Second year matters**

- In this year's presentation of **PX268** there is very little written down by the lecturer during lectures.  
The lecturer uploads annotated notes after the lecture. His idea is that students should make notes on what he says during the lecture and use his annotated notes to check and augment their own notes made in the lectures. We will review the effectiveness of this approach after the module has been completed. However, there is a balance to be struck between reciting a script to be copied down and encouraging students to create their own notes.

**Third year matters**

- It was reported that **PX424** is running smoothly.  
We are pleased to hear this and have passed this comment to the module leader.
- It was reported that some students are particularly enjoying the lectures for **PX370**, **PX385**, and **PX388**.  
We are pleased to hear this and have passed this comment to the module leaders.
- Some students found the software used for the computer simulations in **PX442** to be dated and tedious. They also reported that the academic demonstrator and the Lab Head had given different advice on which model should be used, with much time wasted as a result. More generally, some students said that introductory lectures at the beginning of the module would be useful: they felt that there was some knowledge assumed in the module which Maths and Physics students do not generally have.
  - i) The software has now been discussed at the Education Committee. The Laboratory Team will look at improvements to/replacement of the software provided for this activity.
  - ii) Very little knowledge is assumed. However we will look at giving more introductory material to Maths/Physics students.
  - iii) This laboratory is designed for Masters level students, who should be prepared to engage in the spirit of real laboratory work rather than expect to rely heavily on scripts.
  - iv) The replacement of one demonstrator for a single day did lead to some mixing of messages. We apologise for this.
- Some students found a big jump in difficulty between assignments 4 and 5 on **PX390**. They asked whether there could be more practice exercises and workshops to support the module in Term 2. It was rumoured that some students received assignment 5 feedback before assignment 6 was handed in, and some students did not. It was however noted that all students did receive the cohort-level feedback on assignment 5 before the assignment 6 due date.
  - i) We are considering how to schedule the workshop sessions next year, and will explore options to expand them including using PhD student demonstrators.
  - ii) There are a range of assignments of varying difficulty through the year: this allows for most students to do well, while still challenging the stronger students. This is a final year module, and it is not expected that all students should be able to fully and correctly complete every assignment task. We note that even in Assignments 5 and 6, most students completed the majority of the exercise.
  - iii) As the lecturer noted in an email to PX390 students, a small proportion of students received their feedback a few days earlier than others. This was due to an error on our part in misconfiguring a Moodle setting. This was unfortunate given the timing, and we apologise for potentially advantaging these students.

#### Fourth year matters

- Lectures for **PX441** are not being recorded, and no notes are uploaded online.  
According to the University, lecturers cannot be forced to use Lecture Capture. The lecturer is happy for students to collect copies of his notes from the undergraduate office.

#### Mathematics matters

- Some students reported finding the marking on an in-class test for **MA222** rather harsh. For instance, students were required to state that a particular radius was positive.

If students have questions about the marking schemes for maths modules, they should be brought up at the Maths SSLC.