

**Physics Department  
Warwick University**

**Meeting of the  
Student Staff Liaison Committee  
on 19th October 2020**

**First year matters**

- First years get lost handing in weekly sheets.  
Jon Duffy provided a map and photos at the beginning of the term. There is also a text description on the PX146 and PX129 Moodle pages.

**Second year matters**

- Some students would like to know in which weeks all PX modules run.  
Please see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/physics/current/teach/physics/year2/regulations/>
- Some students would like to receive notifications of edits to Moodle pages.  
If there is an important piece of information which a module leader should communicate to students, they should make an announcement via the Latest News block on the Moodle page for their module. This should trigger an email to all students registered on the module. Please make sure you check your emails regularly. Do notify us if you think that any change was not sufficiently broadcast, and we will look into it.
- Some students have a tutorial on a Wednesday afternoon but this clashes with a sporting activity.  
Tutorial scheduling was difficult this year, because we had a number of constraints: to avoid live events held in Maths (for Maths/Phys students), avoid live events in Physics, avoid labs (for Physics students), avoid 9am and 6pm starts, and leave a one hour buffer either side of live events to allow for travel to and from campus. There were a small number of tutorials scheduled for Wednesday afternoons. Please inform your tutor (or the Senior Tutor, Michael Pounds) if you have an important clash, and we can try to make alternative arrangements. We have accommodated the few requests for changes we have so far received.
- The asynchronous material for PX267 is released according to a published schedule. Some students requested that it be released all at once or earlier (when it's ready).  
We noted at the meeting that some students voiced support for this structured release of material, and that other students said they felt overwhelmed in modules where a lot of material was released at once. Please continue to give feedback through module questionnaires, which we can review before term 2 starts.
- Different platforms are used for uploading videos. Can this be made more consistent?  
This term has involved quite a bit of experimentation, as we get used to delivering more material online. We encourage students to provide feedback through the module questionnaires. Both the Microsoft Stream and eStream platforms are fully supported by the University. We believe that both are excellent and do not want to force staff into using one or the other.

- Some students commented positively on the way in which the PX279 material was structured and delivered this year.  
We are pleased to hear this and will pass this feedback on to the lecturer.
- Some students suggested retaining the live events post-Covid.  
We are pleased to hear that the live events are valued. It is probably too early to make a decision on this just yet.
- If a student gets a positive test, what should they do if they are struggling with work?  
So far there have been a small number of physics students with a positive test. The Senior Tutor has been in contact with all of them (by phone where possible, or by email) to see how they are getting on, and to provide support. There are a larger number of students self-isolating. All of these students have been sent an email by the UG office providing guidance, and their tutor informed. Students who are struggling to cope with their workload as a result of any such disruption are encouraged to make contact with their personal tutor in the first instance, and/or to contact Wellbeing Services.

### Third year matters

- Some students requested access to last year's lecture material.  
We are considering whether and when to release lecture capture recordings.
- Some students requested a reading week.  
There are no plans for a reading week.
- The live events which are used to work through examples are generally well received. Some live events have been less well structured, with the lecturer spending time waiting for questions, or discussing tangential topics. Some students felt that attending live events was most productive when they were on top of the work for the module; if they were behind, they preferred to catch up with the recording of the live event.  
We have posted this feedback on the various discussion fora we have set up for lecturers.
- Some lecturers have insufficient broadband for live events.  
We have suggested to colleagues that they use the University network where they do not have a good home connection.
- Some students requested the release of the solutions to the PX382 Moodle quizzes.  
We publish answers to many problems, including weekly problems and previous examination questions. However, we do not want to encourage the "learning of answers". We therefore leave to the module leader the decision on which assessments and problems to publish answers to. Students are encouraged to discuss questions about the material with the module leader (through the forum, by email, or in person), or with their tutor.

### Fourth year matters

- More information on teaching this year before the first day of term would have been welcome.  
We posted the plans for teaching in the Handbook on 14<sup>th</sup> August. We emailed all students reminding them to look regularly at the Handbook on 14<sup>th</sup> September. From week 0 onwards we posted detailed information on individual modules on their respective homepages. It seems that the 14<sup>th</sup> September email ended up in many students' spam folders. This is unfortunate and we have asked IT services to investigate.

We would emphasize that the Handbook and the Module Homepages are the definitive sources of information about the course. Emails are used to remind people of things but are reserved mainly for direct person to person contact. We are conscious that the more all-class emails people receive the less they tend to be read.

### **Mathematics matters**

- There are no recordings for Multivariable Calculus. The live sessions are used to cover some of the material from the (voluminous) notes. Some students are therefore finding this module difficult to study.  
We have discussed MA259 with representatives of Maths who were aware that students were finding the module hard to engage with. For some modules, material from previous presentations is accessible through echo360.
- The live events for Advanced Linear Algebra (MA251) are good, as are the notes, and the module support. Positive feedback was also received on Geometry and Analysis III.  
We are pleased to hear this.
- Topics in Mathematical Biology has a lot of (optional?) reading, and some students are unclear about what is required knowledge.  
It is usually best to approach the module leader directly about individual modules.