

Action points arising from the meeting of the Student Staff Liaison Committee on 21st November 2022

First year matters

- How much disruption will first years experience due to strike action?
There is no known disruption to first year teaching in Physics (although strikers are not obliged to inform the Department in advance).
- Can we have more whiteboard pens for the UG workroom?
We have now delivered these. Do feel free to ask for replenishments directly from Duncan in Physics Stores (P1.40).

Second year matters

- PX267 Hamiltonian Mechanics: we have not done any Hamiltonian Mechanics yet.
Any introductory module on Hamiltonian mechanics would almost always start with Lagrangian mechanics. In fact, most people would assume that a module on Hamiltonian mechanics would include a lot on Lagrangian mechanics. In 2022/23 there is a new lecturer on this module, and some of the material has been re-ordered. The syllabus is however unchanged.
- PX281 Computational Physics: there is occasionally some ambiguous wording in the problem sets.
We will pass this directly to the lecturer. We recommend that you write to the module convenor with specific examples, either in the module feedback questionnaire, through the SSLC forum, or directly by email.
- PX262 Quantum Mechanics & Its Applications: some of the material in an assessed quiz was not covered in lectures, but rather referred to material from PX101 Quantum Phenomena or this year's Moodle book for the module.
We will pass this to the lecturer. However, we would regard the material in the PX262 Moodle book (and foundational material from PX101) as examinable.
- PX275 Mathematical Methods for Physicists: (i) the second worksheet referred to a theorem by Pappus, which had not been covered in lectures; (ii) on occasion it is difficult to see some material presented on the visualiser.
*(i) As you are aware, the delivery of this module has been disrupted due to staff illness, and there have been two lecturers providing cover this term. We apologise that this slipped through. Fortunately, the part of the worksheet which related to this was small, and the theorem is accessible.
(ii) We are not quite sure what the visualiser comment refers to, as both visualisers are working OK today (12/12/2022).*

- PX280 Environmental Physics: the lecturer sometimes writes down an equation with gaps in the first instance: could he write down the whole equation and only then explain it?
On occasion the lecturer will write down part of an equation, then explain it, and then add further terms, and then explain those. This way of introducing and building up an equation is thought to be helpful; however, if there is sufficient feedback to the contrary, this approach can easily be changed.
- A full set of typed notes would be useful for all modules.
From the 9th May 2022 action point document:

We leave decisions on how to prepare lecture notes to individual staff members. Some staff believe that encouraging students to look for support from textbooks is essential, while others like to produce their own texts. We support both approaches.

Third year matters

- PX3A3 Electrodynamics: hand-written lecture notes can be illegible at times, with steps also skipped. The notes also have mistakes in them.
We will pass this to the lecturer. We understand that the handwritten notes from last academic year have been uploaded. As these accompanied pre-recorded lectures, rather than live performances, they are neater.
- PX3A2 Quantum Physics of Atoms: (i) the projected slides can be difficult to read from some seats, due to the size of the font; (ii) some questions in the assessed quizzes are marked as all-or-nothing (ie, there are no marks for working).
*(i) We will pass this on to the lecturer (we are assuming that this refers to the first lecturer as the second had barely started at the time of the meeting).
ii) Computer quizzes do require correct answers and it is not possible to award marks for method. Computer tests are an essential ingredient of the modern world (particularly after university). However, they are only a small component of the assessment. We feel that the advantages of computer tests outweigh the disadvantages.*

Fourth year matters

- PX430 Gauge Theories: the pace is rather fast.
We will pass this on to the lecturer.
- PX402 Project: why are there ‘dead’ pages at <https://moodle.warwick.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=51818> and <https://moodle.warwick.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=51164> ?
We agree that these seem pointless, and will suggest to the convenor that they are not used next year.

- Positive feedback was received for PX435 and PX446 (AR).
We are always pleased to receive positive feedback, and will pass this back to the lecturers concerned.
- The Friday timetable contains two hours of PX446 and two hours of PX408 (weeks 1-5) or PX435 (weeks 6-10) in an ABAB pattern.
Experience suggests that lecturers and students do not like two-hour back-to-back lectures. Mondays and Thursdays are for the most part not available for lectures, because they are reserved for the Project – even if some students are not doing lab-based projects some are and we cannot make modules inaccessible to students doing lab-based projects. Tuesday afternoons (HPC) and Wednesday afternoons (extra-curricular activities) are also ruled out. If you have a better solution, do let us know!