

**Meeting of the Student Staff Liaison Committee
on Monday 28th October 2024**

First year matters

- Some students think the lighting could be improved in PX154 Foundations.
The lecturer has experimented with the different lighting modes, and found a better option that should keep good contrast on the projection screen but also provide sufficient light so that everyone can see what they are doing. He would welcome any further feedback.
- There is enthusiasm for increased use of the blackboard in PX153 Mathematics for Physicists.
The lecturer is keen to experiment with exclusive use of the blackboard, and may do so towards the end of term. The Audio Visual team would need to change the configuration of the recording such that the blackboard is captured instead of the visualiser. Capturing a blackboard clearly is not as easy as capturing what is written on a visualiser.
- The AI helper in MasteringPhysics (PX160/161 Tutorial) is a bit needy.
According to [Pearson](#), in a 2023 beta test, 75% of (tens of thousands) of students reported that they found the tool 'helpful' or 'very helpful'. Students can contact Pearson with feedback through <https://support.pearson.com/getsupport/s/contactsupport>.

Second year matters

- The PX275 Mathematical Methods for Physicists lectures are well received.
We have passed this feedback to the lecturer.
- Second year lab: (i) the instructions/advice offered to different project groups has been perceived as inconsistent; (ii) can students pick their own groups for the project?; (iii) there are not enough demonstrators in the electronics lab.
(i) If you have any uncertainties about what is expected for the project, the module convenor will be happy to discuss this directly with you in person or by email; (ii) he prefers to allocate groups, so that students are facilitated to form new working relationships across the cohort; (iii) there are the same number of demonstrators in the electronics laboratory as in previous years, although some are newly-trained, and so we will continue to monitor the situation.
- Some students think there are too many assessments in year 1 and too few in year 2.
We believe that the amount of support associated with lecture modules should decrease with the years to encourage students to take more responsibility for their learning. We know that this can be challenging for some students and this is why the core lecture modules have assessed tests and worksheets. In later years, we dedicate most close support to (mainly core) skills training like programming, laboratories, communicating science, and final year projects for BSc students as well as MPhys students.
- The PX262 Quantum Mechanics typed notes are not in the Queen's English.

All lecturers welcome suggestions and corrections in relation to their notes. Please feel free to let lecturers know about any worries.

Third year matters

- PX3A3 Electrodynamics makes use of some mathematics (eg tensors), which has not been explained elsewhere, or clearly within the module itself. There are no typed notes.

The lecturer is aware that tensors have not been taught in core modules and is assuming that many students are unfamiliar with their use. He is happy to hear from students who feel that things are not clear. If you have worries please speak to him directly or email him and he can post answers in the forum.

- It can be difficult to clearly see the projection from the visualiser in flat rooms.
Physics only make requests for timeslots for each module, not for particular rooms. However there is the facility to request rooms with specific features, and we can consider this in future. However the larger lecture rooms are heavily sought after, and we cannot make any guarantees.
- It should be possible to review one's answers to each PX3A2 Quantum Physics of Atoms online quiz from within the quiz itself, rather than through a separate copy of the quiz. Could the typed notes be combined into a single file?
Students could make a note by hand of their answers, and then re-enter them into the duplicate quiz, if they wish to see feedback. It is possible to set up Moodle to release feedback after the quiz is closed, whilst in parallel allowing students to practice and revise on a copy of the quiz. We will discuss this with the lecturer before subsequent presentations of the module.
We will pass the comment about the lecture notes on to him. There are numerous free web-based tools for combining multiple files into a single pdf. A complete set of notes with filled-in boxes will not be provided, as the expectation is that you will fill in the boxes yourself during the lectures.

Fourth year matters

- Some students have no breaks on Fridays between 10am and 5pm.
The F303 timetable uses essentially every slot between 10 and 5 every day (10 and 2 on Wednesday), not just Friday. The run of activities on Friday involves 60 credits of modules. A student taking all these modules would need only 15 credits in term 2 (after taking account of the Project) to reach the normal load. We allow students to choose their modules but we plan based on students opting for an even balance between the two terms.
- Positive feedback received for PX436 General Relativity, PX446 CMP II (Superconductivity - good notes), and PX455 Frontiers of Particle Physics (Neutrino Physics - good slides).
We have passed this back to the lecturers.

Mathematics matters

- There are clashes between optional MA modules and core physics modules for second year students.
We work to optimise the timetabling of the modules listed in the course specifications. These are the modules recommended by Maths for the course and which significant

numbers of students have taken in the past. We cannot avoid clashes with other modules. To see why avoiding clashes with other modules is not possible, please see the attached timetables for the Maths course.

- MA147 Mathematical Methods and Modelling I: the lecturer's explanations can be confusing at times. The lecture notes contain plenty of examples but are lacking in explanations of the theory.

We have passed this on to the Director of Studies in Mathematics. Please do provide constructive feedback through the end-of-module questionnaire.

- The Moodle page for MA268 Algebra III is not accessible.

This module is not available to students outside of Maths.

- MA271 Mathematical Analysis III: only the first two boards are recorded, the third is cut off.

We have passed this on to the Director of Studies in Mathematics.