

**Meeting of the Student Staff Liaison
Committee on 2nd March 2026**

First year matters

- Pre-finalised PX1531 marks were released by mistake. Finalised marks were then not released for a further two weeks.
A miscommunication led to the pre-finalised marks being released, for which we apologise. Each exam is checked by an academic other than the original marker, and this process took two weeks. (We will try to speed up this process next year.)
- PX161: Some students reported confusion about the deadline for the Fourier worksheet.
The assignment schedule is published at the beginning of each academic year on the PX161 Moodle page. We apologise that the deadline for the Fourier worksheet did not also appear within the assignment itself, as for the others. Tutors were advised to be lenient with the submission deadline for this worksheet in consequence.
- Some students thought the lab script for the capacitance experiment could be clearer.
This is a new experiment and will be reviewed in advance of next year with the demonstrators. If you have specific comments, please make them via the online SSLC form or to the module convenor directly.
- An error in the standing waves lab script was received via the online SSLC form.
Thank you for this detailed comment. The script has now been corrected.
- A request was received for more information on examinations and what material is examinable.
Unless a module leader indicates otherwise, you should assume that all the material presented in lectures is examinable. However the exams are designed to be a test of understanding, not of memory. We publish the most recent five exam papers for each module at <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/exampapers/>. We recommend that you attempt as many of these as you have time for. Physics is probably the only department to also release full worked solutions and examiner reports via this database.

Second year matters

- PX282: Could the term 1 lecture notes and slides be compiled into fewer files for ease of navigation?
We have passed this comment to the lecturer.
- A request for PX280 typed notes was again made.
The material in the first term follows rather closely the recommend textbooks, both of which are accessible online [Dessler and Boeker]. We will pass this comment back to both lecturers.
- A student writes that laboratory sessions, particularly in the first year, were often time-pressured, and asks if exemplar lab reports could be made available.
Don't worry unduly if you do not have time to complete each task in the lab script. The length of each experiment increases as you move through the second and third years. When we mark the lab reports, we are assessing how you present and interpret your data, not whether you managed to complete all tasks. A template for the report, along with guidance on what to include in each section, is provided. We feel that to provide exemplar reports would be restrictive; there is always more than one way of telling a story.

Third year matters

- Could the deadline for the final year Project report be shifted to term 3?
The final report is worth approximately 10% of the credit available for the year. A deadline at the end of term 2 allows students time to revise for the term 3 examinations (and allows authorised extensions to run a little into the Easter vacation). Shifting the final report deadline into term 3 would be detrimental to students' exam performance.
- PX442: some students reported feeling ill-prepared for the lab paper assignments. Skills such as paper writing, referencing, and LaTeX typesetting are not taught earlier in the course.
We monitor the marks regularly to see whether Maths/Phys students have been at a disadvantage. There may be a steep learning curve, but the marks show every year that Maths/Phys students do as well, if not better, than Physics students on the papers. We suspect that this is because the Maths department puts so much emphasis on precision in writing and that this skill transfers across to writing in physics.
- PX451: feedback is not always returned to allow sufficient time to help with preparation of the subsequent assignment.
Marking is always returned within the university 20 working day deadline. We endeavour to turn the marking around within two weeks of submission. However, markers have a number of papers to mark and need to devote enough time to making sure the marking is done correctly. The convenor next year will stress the importance of timeliness of feedback to all markers.
- PX428 Ising model simulation: a request to use the university's computational resources for this experiment was received. While students can edit the code to improve the runtime, this is not widely known and does not appear to be expected of students.
The simulation is designed to show that even with modest, present-day readily-available computational resources, students can reliably reproduce the famous 2D Ising phase transition—an achievement that once required Nobel-prize-winning work. The aim of this project is not to push computational limits but to learn how to present clear, well-reasoned scientific results. Enhancing or optimising the code is optional, and students are assessed on the quality of their analysis and communication rather than on producing research-grade output.
- Favourable feedback was received for PX3A5, PX385, and PX3A8 (Medicine lectures).
Thank you, we have passed this on to the lecturers.
- PX3A8 (Physics of Life lectures): the material on the whiteboard is not captured clearly by the recording.
We can try to encourage the lecturer to make use of the visualiser next year!
- PX449: could the lecturer write down more?
This comment was received the day after the previous meeting and it was forwarded to the lecturer then. We believe that he addressed this and emphasised that the typed notes are a complete account of the material.
- PX390: inconsistency in the marking of assignments was reported.
Around 200 submissions are marked by the module convenor, and we are confident that inconsistencies are as minimal as could be expected. The convenor was approached by one student who received 97% on an assignment. Their claim was that another student, who had submitted the same code, had received 100%. The convenor offered to review the marking if the identity of the second student was revealed.

Fourth year matters

- The archive of lecture notes has disappeared.
Apparently IDG removed the Moodle site due to insufficient traffic. We did not ask for, or authorise, this. We have recovered the archived lecture notes, and will make them available shortly via Sitebuilder.
- PX457 feedback is often handed back either after, or shortly before, the deadline for the subsequent assignment. Feedback on assignment 4 was received approximately two weeks after

the assignment 5 deadline.

We have asked the lecturers to review what they do.

- 4th year Physics students have to choose a minimum of 45 CATS credits from List A. 4th year Astro students have to choose a minimum of 60 CATS credits from List A. Can this be reduced to 45?

The specification for the fourth year of Physics with Astrophysics is designed to ensure that the programme retains its distinct flavour: half of the year, weighted by CATS credits, consists of astronomy modules, or GR/Computing (both of which are used extensively in modern astrophysics).

- More mathematical formalism to support quantum mechanics and particle physics was requested. *Mathematical techniques are introduced throughout our programmes to support the physics we teach. Mathematical formalisms are taught by the Mathematics Institute. The formalism of quantum mechanics, for example, is essentially functional analysis. Maths deliver two 15 CATS modules on functional analysis, which build on several first and second year analysis modules.*