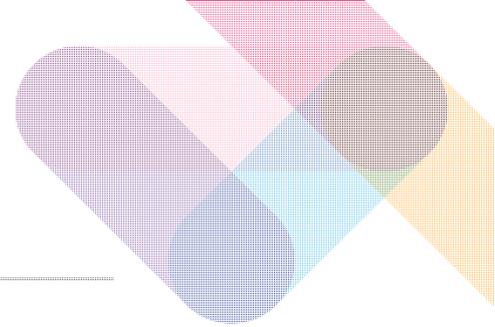


STUDENT-STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT



The SSLC Annual Report is used in a variety of ways including:

- Helping the incoming SSLC as a handover document
- Informing the SU & University on how to improve Academic Reps as a whole (findings are published in August and available on the SU Website)
- Helping develop new resources & solutions to better support Course Reps
- Informing the SU & University on how better to raise non-departmental issues to the right places
- Finding similar issues that are being raised across departments and working with the University to develop solutions (findings are published in August and available on the SU Website)
- Promoting the successes within SSLCs during Term 1 and including examples in the SSLC Handbooks to help the next generation of Course Reps

It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that a SSLC Annual Report is completed, in consultation with student and staff members of the Committee by the deadline, even if the Committee has not had its last meeting of the year by that date.

Please send this report to sslc@warwicksu.com

Submission Deadline for 2020/2021: 12th July – 1pm

1. Your Student-Staff Liaison Committee

| | |
|---|--|
| What is the name of your SSLC? (i.e. Chemistry) | Department of Economics (Postgraduate Taught) |
| Which courses are covered by this SSLC? (please include course codes which can be obtained by your Academic Convenor) | MSc Economics MSc Economics and International Financial Economics MSc Behavioural and Economic Science (Economics Track) |

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| Which levels are represented by your SSLC? <i>(Delete as applicable)</i> |
| Postgraduate Taught |

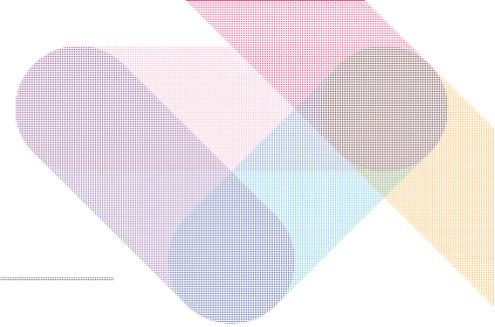
2. Membership 2020/2021

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|-------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | Name | |
| Chair | James Clarke | <i>n.b. the Chair <u>must</u> be a student</i> |
| Secretary | Arushi Nautiyal | <i>n.b. the Secretary <u>must</u> be a student</i> |
| Academic Convenor | Alexander Karalis Isaac | |

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| Number of staff members | 7 |
| Number of student members | 7 |

Please indicate who, out of the following, attended SSLC meetings this year:

| | Invited to attend? <i>(Delete as applicable)</i> | Attended at least one SSLC? |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| SU representative | Yes | Yes |
| Subject Librarian | Yes | Yes |
| Careers Advisor | Yes | Yes |
| Technical and Learning Support | Yes | Yes |
| <i>Please indicate here if there were any other attendees:</i> | Yes. | |
| <i>Additional comments:</i> | Additional attendees were: Jeremy Smith (Head of Department) Jennifer Smith (Director of Studies) Lory Barile (Director of Graduate Studies for Taught Economics Degrees) | |



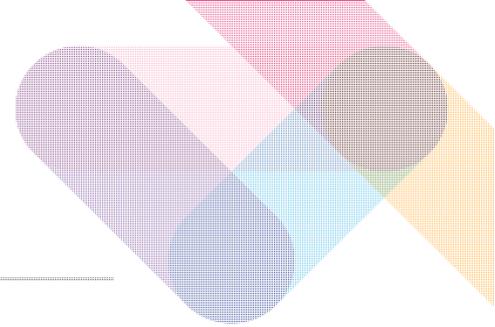
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| | <p>Lucia Ashley (Student Engagement and Experience Coordinator for Postgraduate Economics)</p> <p>Sushil Mathews (Econ Course Rep)</p> <p>Kashish Kaur (Econ Course Rep)</p> <p>Ziyan Ma (EIFE Course Rep)</p> <p>Ethan McQuaid (BES - Economics Track Course Rep)</p> |
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3. Meetings

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| How many times has the SSLC met during this academic year? <i>(If there were fewer than four, please indicate why)</i> | 5 meetings were held. Dates in format DD/MM/YY: 04/11/20, 02/12/20, 20/01/21, 16/03/21, 05/05/21. |
| Did the meetings feel student-led? If no, please indicate why | Yes. |
| Were all minutes from meetings submitted to all members? If not, why? | Yes. |

4. Your year as representatives

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| <p>Please list your SSLC's achievements and other positives that have come out from this academic year</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussions about module and course aims with students and staff. 2. The SSLC created a WhatsApp group and a WeChat group to encourage communications between the SSLC and students. This allowed the SSLC to engage with fellow students in an informal way which proved to be an effective method of collecting feedback. 3. The SSLC discussed how students generally prefer to be taught during the pandemic. We found that students on campus generally prefer face-to-face teaching while those studying away from campus prefer online teaching. 4. We facilitated additional career talks that were well relevant to the Economics discipline. These focused on a variety of careers from consulting to PhDs. 5. Extra-curricular engagement activities that brought together staff and students online. These were particularly important this year as meeting peers on the course has been more difficult due to the pandemic. The activities included a virtual escape room, a virtual concert event and online quizzes with randomly allocated teams involving both staff and students. 6. Frequent reminders to events were sent out to encourage attendance. 7. Re-weighting of modules was discussed as to line up with the harmonisation of the CAT system within the university. Proposed weighting for the dissertation module will reduce the weight of the proposal, favouring the final thesis. 8. Economic Analysis AB and BA are likely to be removed in future years as very few students took these options. |
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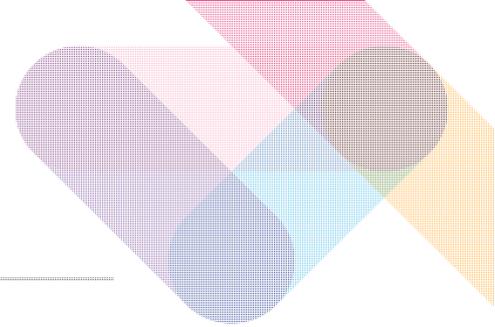
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| <p>Are there any unresolved issues or ongoing matters discussed this year in need of follow up or continuation into the next year's SSLC? What steps are being taken to ensure this? (A copy of this report, containing detail of unresolved issues, will be made available to the SSLC next year, so please do ensure you include all detail of unresolved issues so that they can be followed-up)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SSLC requested mock timed exams on AEP. These could potentially be exam papers from previous years. This would allow students to practice in exam conditions as well as adjust their technical skills on the same footing. 2. Next years' SSLC should be aware that students studying on campus generally prefer face-to-face teaching. The feasibility of this depends on the ongoing conditions of the pandemic. 3. Study groups were largely ineffective in our cohort. We believe this to be the case since they were made around February so students had already made friends on the course who they might study with. Next year's SSLC should try to implement study groups at the start of term. |
| <p>Are there things that fall outside of the departments control which were discussed as issues at SSLC?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor internet connections featured as an issue which occasionally made seminars less effective. |

5. Communication

Which of the following methods have been used to gather material for meetings? If used, please can you rate them according to effectiveness from 1 to 5 (5 being very effective, 1 being not effective at all).

| Please delete as applicable: | | Score |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| SSLC notice board | No | - |
| Social media | Yes | 5 |
| Surveys | No | - |
| Moodle | Yes | 3 |

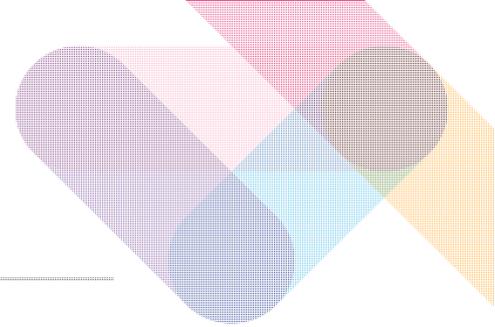
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| <p>What methods of communication did you find to be the most effective? What didn't work?</p> | <p>The Whatsapp and WeChat groups proved very effective. We made frequent announcements and asked for feedback using these channels. Students would message us directly or in these group chats when giving feedback.</p> <p>Word of mouth was also very effective.</p> <p>Sometimes informal emails were sent out when seeking feedback. These were limited in effectiveness because we were not able to send emails to the entire cohort.</p> |
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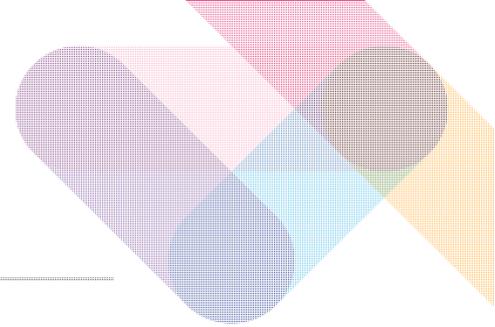
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| | The least effective method of communication was the MS Teams Virtual Common room. Despite pushing for more people to join it, very few did. |
| What other ways did you effectively communicate with students? | <p>Because we were unable to send blanket emails to the entire cohort, we would occasionally ask the departmental postgraduate office to send out emails to the entire cohort.</p> <p>We used lectures near the start of the year to introduce ourselves and let all students know what our role is. This was effective, particularly in core modules as the message would be seen by all.</p> <p>In the future, SSLCs could use anonymous surveys to get feedback.</p> |
| Were you provided access to your department's communication channels? (i.e. having emails send out, departmental noticeboards) | <p>No departmental noticeboard exists to our knowledge. In future years, a virtual noticeboard could be helpful.</p> <p>A shared SSLC-wide email account would have been advantageous. Furthermore, the ability to send out blanket emails would improve efficiency instead of having to ask the postgraduate office.</p> <p>A course-wide Moodle notice board would be a good feature to have online only since all students would be able to access it at any time.</p> |
| How did you feedback the successes of the SSLC to your cohort? | WhatsApp and WeChat, word of mouth and during departmental events. |
| How well do you feel students engaged with your work as course representatives? | Lots of queries were raised. Particularly during term one and during the exam season. |
| What, if any, communications support from the SU would have helped you better represent your peers? | - |

5. Students' Union

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| Do you feel that the SU has effectively communicated with your Course Rep? | We had a good consistent stream of emails with events or training for SSLC members. |
| How could the SU improve the communication with Course Reps? | <p>Moodle training proved a useful introduction to the role.</p> <p>We think that if a member of the SU could join a meeting near the beginning of the year. This would enable the SU representatives to introduce themselves, starting a two-way communications chain. Additionally, this would enable the SU representatives to give feedback on whether the meetings are achieving their target purpose and how to improve the meetings.</p> |
| What events/activities would you like the SU to put on for Course Reps? | The training session was sufficient. |



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| How do you think the SU can help better raise issues that cannot be solved in SSLCs? | Formal introductions from the start of the year would let SSLCs know the key contact points. |
| Did all of your Course Reps attend SU Training this year? | The SSLC members who joined the committee at the start of the year attended training and shared important notes with those who joined later. |
| Are there any skills that you needed that was not covered in training? | No. |
| How do you feel about the new Course Rep Moodle? Explain your answer | The Moodle page proved good as a reference guide. However, some members of the SSLC were not granted access to the Moodle. |
| Do you feel supported as an SSLC by the SU Education Team (Academic Voice Policy Consultant/Supervisor & Academic Voice Coordinator)? Explain your answer. | Very little communication occurred with the SU Education Team. Some emails were sent out, but no formal introductions were made. We believe formal introductions would help communications throughout the academic year in the coming years. |
| Do you feel connected to wider SU Representatives? (e.g. Faculty Reps, Education Officer, Postgraduate Officer) Explain your answer. | The faculty representatives held frequent drop-in sessions which were useful as they gave a better idea of common problems throughout the faculty. Very little communication occurred with the education and postgraduate officers. However, we felt that we didn't need to contact them. |
| Any other comments about the SU | No. |
| 6. The Future of Blended Learning (The opinions of the whole SSLC) | |
| When full physical teaching resumes, would you restart physical SSLCs completely, take a blended approach, or have them all online? Why? | If possible, physical SSLCs would be better. Particularly at the start of the academic year as this would make it easier to build rapport with the other members. |
| What areas/things/projects/initiatives would you like to keep from digital learning after physical teaching fully resumes? | The feedback on the lecture capture feature was very positive. There exist mixed opinions on preferences of synchronous vs asynchronous lectures. Having all modules available on Moodle makes them incredibly easy to access. |
| What areas/things/projects/initiatives would you like to keep from digital assessments after physical teaching fully resumes? | The stressed time constraints mean that notes are only glanced at during exams. Moreover, professors should ensure questions are not reproducible from a book, but the difficulty cannot be out of scope given the time limit. Online MCQ tests throughout the first term were appreciated as they allowed us to consolidate theories throughout the term instead of work piling up towards the January exam season. The 45 minutes of time to upload answers to a document does not give equal footing to all students. This feeling of unfairness can be explained through the following example: students with iPads could use the 45 minutes to answer, compared to others who don't have one, and they were struggling to take pictures on their phones in this time instead. |



| | |
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| <p>What areas/things/projects/initiatives would you like to see improved by digital technology that wasn't done well or at all during 2020/21</p> | <p>In the future, a Moodle page with a notice board could be used to advertise upcoming departmental events and give course-wide announcements. In this feature, we propose that SSLC members would be able edit and send announcements as well as members of staff. Additionally, the cohort could post their questions. There could be a Monthly update on the notice board, similar to the weekly communications we all receive from the postgraduate office.</p> <p>Not a lot of consistency across optional modules.</p> |
| 7. Follow-up from last year's SSLC Annual Report | |
| <p>Were you able to obtain a copy of the previous year's SSLC annual report?</p> | <p>Yes</p> |
| <p>Did you manage to address any of your predecessor's unresolved issues?</p> | <p>Yes</p> |
| <p>Are there any continuing issues from last year that still need resolving?</p> | <p>Yes. The frequency of face-to-face teaching in the academic year of 2021/2022 depends largely on the circumstances surrounding the pandemic.</p> |

8. Data Presented to SSLC by Academic Convenor

Did the SSLC receive the External Examiners' report for the course(s) represented by the SSLC? Yes

If no, why not?

Did the SSLC receive NSS Scores and/or module feedback data for the course(s) represented by the SSLC? Yes

If no, why not?