



Student Staff Liaison Committee Meeting

Wednesday 28th February 2024

G.13, Fry Building, 13.00 – 14.30

1 - Welcome

Ryan began with welcome

2 - The Action Points from last meeting were reviewed. Outstanding action points were addressed by Arne.

- Students prefer digital lecture notes as one large document - Arne will raise at STLAC and then student admin team to forward to unit directors.
- MATH20006 – inconsistencies with marking of assessed coursework had previously been raised with the unit organiser but is still waiting on further details from students. Ryan had no updates and considered the item resolved.
- MATH20017 – follow up on exam error and share feedback with the Unit Organiser. This was followed up with the lecturer and they were aware, so allowances have been made in the marking. Because of the 50/50 split between coursework and exam, the exam board believes high marks were still achieved and not greatly affected. Feedback from the students is that it is still possible to solve problems with ChatGPT on coursework, so the exam has greater importance in Data Science. It was noted that there are ongoing discussions in Data Science and the current plan is for the exam to have a higher weighting than coursework to assess overall learning more accurately.
- Maths and Philosophy students to discuss units available with Arne Kovac and Kentaro Fujimoto – although this item is considered completed, it was confirmed that the difficulty in providing a larger range of Philosophy units to combined students lies in the number of mandatory Mathematics units and the uncertainty of the structure of Philosophy programme, combined with unit choice deadlines.
- MATH10010 exam error. Marking was considered by the School Exam Board as it was confirmed that the exam was marked in 2 different ways. Upon review, the higher marks were given and the moderation form is online.

3 - Feedback on Year 2 lecture courses

- MATH20016 - Data Science students raised concern that a 25% weighted coursework has been given 7 days in advance and it clashes with another assessed homework. Arne stated that Deadlines are available on BB. Ryan asked if an email informing students about deadlines had been sent. Witek asked how many hours would be required for this project,

students assume a larger amount due to weighting. Arne confirmed that he would feed back to the lecturer.

- Feedback that students enjoy Probability lectures, classes are always full, and the lecturer is always enthusiastic, enabling easy learning in a hard subject area.
- Year 2 Maths rep requested an alternative to the check in app where an old phone doesn't support the app. Staff confirmed that either a laptop or the website from the phone rather than the app can be used.
- MATH20016 Feedback that lectures seem to focus on the proof which makes students feel left behind as it assumes a base level of learning which isn't true of all students.
- MATH20017 Feedback that some students do not have a proficient level of knowledge from this unit to build on.

4 - Feedback on Year 3 lecture courses

- Feedback that Statistical Machine Learning students find the unit difficult as the exercises don't have solutions so they can't be sure if they are applying their learning correctly. Arne was not aware of this and agreed to follow up.

5 - Feedback on Year 4 and PGT lecture courses

- Ryan was the only attendee for this cohort and didn't have any feedback.

6 - Feedback on Year 1 lecture courses

- Feedback that Mathematics and Computer Science predominantly have Maths units in first year so would like to be involved in Year Group meetings and full SSLC. Arne Kovac agreed to this.
- Feedback that Check in app use/compliance is tapering and students are forgetting, so asked if lecturers can continue to remind students – Arne confirmed that the student admin team have already requested this. Racheal agreed to send out another reminder to MATH10009 Workshop staff specifically.
- MATH10013 Feedback - Students have stopped attending and engaging – the lecturer is reading from notes which they don't find engaging, so some students are opting to read the notes independently. Data Science Reps also noted that old material is also contained in the notes not covered in current exams. It was suggested that an email could be sent to students confirming non examinable content. Arne Kovac agreed to discuss the method of teaching for this unit with the Lecturer.
- Feedback from other courses is good.
- The Data Science Reps emailed before the meeting highlighting questions and concerns following on from the last SSLC and their meeting with the Course Organiser, and these notes were shared with Arne Kovac and Florian Bouyer.

1. Feedback that the teaching of MAT10013, namely rewriting and reading lecture notes which are already available to students is disengaging. Arne Kovac to discuss with Lecturer.
2. Feedback that tables of the Probability Mass Function and Moment Generating Function could be provided in exams for Statistics as the students are not expected to remember the formulae so time could be better spent.
3. Feedback on MATH10024 – students find the new teaching structure far better. The introduction of drop in feedback sessions is really helpful as well as the format, with lectures at the beginning of the week and the tutorial following, and the content of the unit. It was noted that this model is an experiment and may assist with unit structure creation in the future.
4. Feedback that there are issues with recordings of lectures for MATH10024 being available on Re-Play or Blackboard. Action point for timetabling – timetable it as a lecture even if a problem class.
5. Suggestion that summaries containing learning outcomes could be provided ahead of each set of lecture notes in order to aid students study and revision process. Skevi suggested short summaries were a possibility.

7 - What do students think about closed book exams? Do they promote deep learning or not?

- Jonathan invited students to share their thoughts and described the background of how open book exams came about. He explained that the general staff opinion is that effort would be better spent on revision.
- In a vote, 7 students were in favour of 1 page of notes and 3 were in favour of zero notes in exams.
- Various students and academic staff spoke with a largely agreed point that notes provide comfort. Formula/theorem booklets were suggested as a provision with the exam paper to save students time on memorising formulae/theorem that shouldn't really be committed to memory or could easily be forgotten under pressure. This was agreed to be particularly beneficial in Statistics and ODE's where theorems are complicated and detailed. It was agreed that it can be tempting to spend too much time on the notes.
- Jonathan raised the idea of implementing a non-uniform policy re notes, but it was felt that this could encourage lecturers to steer towards zero notes which is not favoured by the students.

8 - Course reps supporting Unit Choice process

Lucy requested that students check and update student summaries by 4th March as it is so useful to other students and asked for a response to her email from the course reps that day.

9 - Education Action Plan

Arne requested that this remains as a standing item, but the meeting had run out of time to discuss, at this installment of the SSLC.

10 – AOB

- Racheal and Skevi requested that before year group meetings, could reps please get some homework feedback regarding access, how useful are the comments, how often students go back and look at it and what preferences are.
- Request to Rohanna in Student Admin Team for all moderation forms for all units to be made available.
- Arne asked if lecturers not using a microphone is causing problems with recordings. Ruby noted that background noise is amplified when the microphone isn't used but she hasn't had any specific feedback. Arne will assist Witek in using a microphone.

SSLC dates

Date of next meetings:

- Faculty SSLC meeting – Week 21 – 21st March
- Year group meetings in week 20 (Year 1, Year 3 & 4 – 12th March, Year 2 – 15th March)
- Next full School SSLC meeting in week 23 (24th April)