

School of Physics and Astronomy Staff Student Liaison Committee (Online)

Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 9th April 2020 (3 hours)

Staff members present:

David Mulryne (DM)	Chair
Harvey Abraham-Green (HAG)	Secretary (Student Support Officer)
Jon Hays (JH)	Director of Education
Leonie Dos Santos (LDS)	Teaching Support Officer

Student members present:

2 nd Year rep (Physics)
2 nd Year rep (Physics)
3 rd year rep (Physics)
3 rd Year rep (Physics)
BME Student rep
1 st Year rep (Astrophysics)
1 st Year rep (Physics)
4 th Year Level 7 rep (Physics)
MSc Astrophysics rep
MSc Physics rep

Apologies for absence:

Sara Zangana	3 rd Year (Physics)
Aadi Konidena	1 st Year rep (Astrophysics)
Zuzanna Kocjan	2 nd Year rep (Astrophysics)
Steve Thomas	Senior Tutor

Part 1 – Preliminary Items				
1(a)	Welcome and introduction for new members			
2018.001	Students and staff were welcomed and thanked for their time and input.			
1(b)	Apologies for Absence			
2018.002	The meeting noted the apologies from members as recorded above.			
1(c)	Minutes of the previous meeting			
2018.003	The committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 13/03/2019.			
1(d)	Report on matters arising and actions taken			
2018.004	The committee received a report on matters arising and updates have been noted on the Action Sheets attached to this document.			
1(e)	Terms of reference and membership			
2018.005	The committee noted the terms and reference and membership of the Student Staff Liaison Committee			
1(f)	Admissions, induction and enrolment			



Note	Year	Comment	Action			
Staff		DM to introduce SSLC and talk about revised scope for this meeting. Brief summary from last semester's SSLC and action points that have been completed. The main focus of this meeting is likely to be addressing students concerns about alternative assessments and changes in regulations.				
Staff		Discussing the completion of previous action point course reps. Most feedback given from SSLC previous will be difficult to ascertain whether those change semester A next year.	ously has now been completed. It			
First Year F	Reports	,				
2020.1.1	EOC	Switch to online has been very successful, MT2 has been very well adapted. Modern Physics lectures have been adapted to use online and make it helpful to go through the content.	Report positive feedback to MOs			
2020.1.2	EOC	There was some confusion initially when the alternative assessment period information was distributed. This was mainly surrounding the time period of 48 hours and whether this became limited by 3 hours once the exam started. This was subsequently cleared up in future communications to the students.	HAG clarified 48 hour period for exams and not limited to 3 after downloading the paper.			
2020.1.3	EOC	Overall the semester has been really good. Our Universe was taught especially well.				
2020.1.4	AFW	Transition to online teaching worked very well. Recordings allow students to catch up at a convenient time if they miss the regular slot. Helpful for international students. First year's think it's been handled well and the proposed changes to progression are very welcome. There have not been many complaints about the transition and general changes to alternative assessments from first years.				
2020.1.5	JH	Clarification on timeline for confirmation of alterninvolvement of student voice. There was some initial confusion at the beginning university and national level and that's why there could be vetted and finalised. There were a lot of the proposal had been finalised. We needed to tak regulatory bodies including OFS and IoP with a view across all UK universities, particularly with finalists cycles. QM Student Union were included in decision levels. The delay in getting confirmation to studen and understandably it took time to come to an agriculture.	because the decision was taken at was a delay before the proposal rumours circulating around before the into account a range of other with to having a consistent approach and the impact of recruitment on making process at the highest ts was due to all of these reasons			



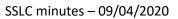
2020.1.6		Timing of exams
		48 hours for SPA was to allow students flexibility to complete the exam and take into account potential technological issues. The design will be for an open book exam and this is compatible with all IoP regulations. We can't stop students accessing the internet during their exams. There is not enough time to come up with a new exam format (and practice papers for this new format) that would allow students the chance to attempt a different style. The existing exam papers had already gone through a stringent vetting process and there is only the capability at this stage to make some modest changes to section B of the usual exam structure.
2020.1.7	JH	'No Detriment' policy for non-finalists Explains 'No Detriment' policy with regards to non-finalists and the calculation of your year mark. There seems to be some confusion about whether its best 90/120 credits or whether the year could be omitted. JH explains your year grade will have the 30 worst credits excluded, no matter what. Your final degree will either include this year or not, depending on whether it improves your overall classification. However, there is an important credit factor of this.
2020.1.8	HAG	"Do I have to sit all my exams if the lowest 30 are discounted" HAG Explains that it is very important students should (where possible) sit all their exams, despite any plans to discount the worst 30. Sitting all your exams gives you the best chance to pass your exams and get the sufficient amount of credits. Credit requirements will still remain each year so even though everyone progresses you could still have difficulty achieving the credits necessary for a degree. It is not advisable to actively choose not to do exams because due to the discounting of the worst 30 you are effectively in a win-win situation, even if you sat the exam and performed poorly. You could end up performing strongly in a module that you did not expect.
2020.1.9	LH	Structure of alternative assessments Asked about structure of exam and whether they will be in the form of QMplus quizzes. JH says the system is not sufficient to handle that amount of students completing an exam online and it would be time consuming to create the quizzes. They also do not allow the creation of more enhanced equations and questions. Students instead with be sent the exam as PDF and then they can scan or take a photo to help upload the exam paper. The upload of the paper must be within the submission deadline and any late submissions will receive a mark of zero. There will be the use of common sense when applying this policy for deadlines that are submitting just after the deadline due to technical delays.
2020.1.10	JH	Level 7 exams Not consistent across all modules at the start. Differences in MSc exams between Astro and other streams. The school is currently looking at adapting the paper and the questions to ensure they are more like the accepted section B style questions. Section A questions will likely be replaced/adapted into section B style questions due to the academic level required for level 7. Details will be finalised soon and then passed onto students.
Second Ye	ar Repo	orts
2020.1.11	AM	Surveyed students from second year about changes to online teaching and alternative assessments.



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2020.1.12	AM	SPA5222 EWO and SPA5228 CMA have had no additional online exercise classes and lectures and students have felt like they are teaching themselves for the rest of the course. No form of interaction with demonstrators or MOs and correspondence from MO's have been really slow.	JH to investigate provision of materials and online teaching in SPA5222 and SPA5228
2020.1.13	AM	CMA online lectures that students have been directed to are not suitable and not sufficient enough to follow the information.	
2020.1.14	AM	Lab feedback has been very good and there has been good feedback from students. But there is some issues with what experiments are being assessed, some students did not perform strongly in the early experiments. Some students scored highly in the experiments during the strike week and are unhappy that this is not being included.	HAG to circulate response from P Bull with regards to the marking of these experiments and the incorporation of them into the lab book.
2020.1.15	AM	SPA5228 CMA First mid-term test (28/2) - students have not received their marks/feedback and they also have not received clarification on whether it will count as 6% or 12% of the module. Lecture notes and lecture QR videos are not helpful at all, camera does not cover the board sufficiently. GO Jones lectures were the worst.	JH/DM agree that marks should have been returned by this stage and will investigate.
2020.1.16	AM	Notes in SPA5222 EWO have had mistakes in them and this has made the end of the semester quite difficult. There doesn't seem to have been any continuation of EWO online.	JH to investigate lecture note mistakes
2020.1.17		SPA5228 CMA lectures notes have not been sufficient at all. He seems to be utilising Martin Doves lecture notes and after a few years these do not really seem to overlap with the lectures/current course content and terminology used is out of sync.	DM/JH to review lecture notes in SPA5228.
2020.1.18	LH	SPA5222 EWO lectures are difficult to sit through. The turnout in lectures is very low. The notes are very comprehensive and the exercise classes were actually more engaging. The tutorials allowed students the chance to ask further questions which was appreciated.	
2020.1.19	LH	SPA5304 PD - really well taught module, and great transition onto online teaching. Online exercise classes with Alice are very helpful and engaging.	Report positive feedback to MO
2020.1.20	LH	SPA5666 Issues with students needing to continue lab work without the help of demonstrators. Which could put them at a disadvantage.	DM/JH to ensure students have support from MO.



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		the habit of using external resources could be highlighted and supported more in PSS.	
2020.1.31	DP	SPA6305 PoG - teaching completely ceased after week 9 and students were left with a small revision list and the existing lecture notes.	Whilst MO did not host any live lectures online he did send comprehensive information to students included access to recorded lectures, mitigation for missed HWs and invitation to email him with any query, small or large.
2020.1.34	DP	SPA6403 Statistical physics physical teaching was very good but online notes can be difficult to follow. Lectures and answering questions were really good but the structure in lecture notes is not easy to follow and there is a tendency to skip steps in derivations. Normally the lectures would allow the chance to ask questions and for RR to reply to questions but harder now.	DM to report back to MO
2020.1.35	LK/DP	Students would appreciate typed up notes for the SPA6403 Statistical Physics because handwritten can be difficult to follow at times.	
Fourth Yea	r/PGT	reports	
2020.1.36	KF	FMQFT structure in semester A was challenging without AQFT content that is taught in semester B. Students feel as though the content covered in AQFT would be hugely beneficial in their understanding of FMQFT.	JH to speak with MO and discuss the structure of the modules for the upcoming academic year.
2020.1.37	KF	Some issues reported about not being informed about exams but this has now been completed.	
2020.1.38	VP	Students reported that String Theory and Super symmetric methods were not Qreviewed, and students wanted to know why this was the case.	LDS - Explains that unfortunately not all rooms have the capacity to record lectures. String theory module was late to be approved and scheduled and the only available room at short notice was in GO Jones without the capacity to record.
2020.1.39	VP	Advanced Cosmology not enough material to revise for the exam. No solutions provided for any of the assignments (non-assessed)	DM to investigate.





Action Sheet: Student-Staff Liaison Committee

Ongoing Action points from previous meetings 2016

2016:030	AJM to report to TLC that Qreview is not fit for purpose and that the focus should be on improving	Ongoing	DM & JH	At the next TLC
	sound quality as a minimum. 22/11/2017 – DM to report to JH at the next TLC. Issues have been			
	and will continue to be reported to Timetabling and ITS.			
	5/12/2018 - New faculty level focus group with teaching staff and Elearning team to look for			
	improvements. Student course reps have heard the same answer since they started.			
	Over last year they have upgraded all the cameras (4x as many pixels), better video software and			
	increase in rooms that are covered. Some trial improvements have been ongoing, such as Fogg			
	Building pressure pads and lanyard tracking equipment.			
	Course reps would like more use of the document projector or possible self-recording lectures but			
	media rights and legality problems. JH to speak to lecturers to gauge opinion about students			
	recording			

Ongoing action points from a meeting held on 22nd November 2018

2018.007	JH to Look into how we can better prepare students for their first time in the SPA4103 scientific measurement module.	Superseded by 2019.2.4	DM/JH	By the start of 19/20
2018.008	SPA4103 – JH to investigate consistency across the marking in lab book and assignments	Superseded by 2019.2.4	DM/JH	By the start of 19/20
2018.009	SPA4103 – Ensure timely and consistent return of marked lab books. 12/19 JH updated that improvements have been made but need to improve consistency. More improvements needed.	Superseded by 2019.2.4	JH/DM	By the start of 19/20
2018.010	SPA4103 – Questions not encouraged in some SCM lectures. JH to investigate standard of teaching in SPA4103 lectures. Lectures will be structured differently from 19/20.	Superseded by 2019.2.4	JH	By the start of 19/20
2018.014	JH to investigate and try and migrate IT resources to ITS away from Alex Owen. 12/19 JH to update and now closed.	Closed	DM	As soon as possible





2018.015	Investigate difficulty and ensure that students understand the concept of the module and the origins of the questions. 12/19 MO continuing to improve and develop module.	Ongoing	JH/DM	As soon as possible
2018.037	DM To ask for online lecture notes to link to lectures more closely and believe notes are less useful than content covered in lectures. DM reported he had spoken with MO to look at improvements.	Close	DM	As soon as possible
2018.038	JH/ST to pass on feedback that lecture and lecture notes do not cover core content and students are relying on tutorials. JH and Senior Tutor discussed with MO, remain as ongoing to monitor improvements.	Closed – New action 2019.2.19	JH/ST	As soon as possible
2018.045	Investigate how is Hive space utilised for Physics students? Feedback to ITS to ensure computers are updated with relevant software and all stations are functional. DM awaiting full software list as he has investigated and been told that IT regularly request software update from schools.	Ongoing	JH/HAG	As soon as possible

Ongoing actions points from 13 March 2019

2019.01	MTO teaching and content: MB/JH/DM to investigate how the lecture and tests link together. Capacity for the time to be extended. Closed and merged into 2018.014.	Closed and merged	MB/JH/DM	By the start of 19/20
2019.02	Delays in email notification to students from QMPLus. JH to investigate with E-Learning team as a matter of priority to ensure timely cancellation of lectures. Technical issues with hosting service, ongoing investigation.	Ongoing	JH	By the start of 19/20
2019.22	MTO appears on transcripts with a grade when students believed the module was pass/fail.	Clsoed – module is pass/fail	JH to investigate this	By the start of 19/20
2019.23	Students believe the marking in SPA4103 SCM is very inconsistent and students are being given mixed messages about best practice and lab book structure.	Ongoing	JH to investigate	By the start of 19/20
2019.25	Lack of BAME Physics resources for students who want to further research these topics on diversity in Physics. Students would like to see an increase in books, external speakers, resources in library.	Ongoing	EDI committee to explore.	Ongoing





2019.28	Students feel as though their emails to lecturers are not always responded to in a timely manner or even at all sometimes. JH to liaise with DA to confirm policy for email responses and expectations of staff. CSfP encouraging more advisor/advisee meetings. Advisors can be	Closed and merged	JH/DM	By the start of 19/20
	difficult to track down, potential to advertise staff trips (when absent) and suggestion for more office hours in lunchtimes. Closed and merge into 2019.63			
2019.32	Homework for Stars is in very small font and difficult to read in its source. Students would like more legible notes and homework. JH/DM to feedback. SSO to check online notes. Some notes have now been amended but still ongoing.	Ongoing	JH/DM/HAG	By the start of 19/20
2019.41	CMA - Demonstrator for first 2 weeks was highly sought after and all students benefited from his teaching method. SSO to investigate and feedback	Ongoing	HAG	By the start of 19/20
2019.63	Third year students would like to have more adviser-student time to be scheduled as they think it would benefit students. DM to speak with all MOs with regards to their general availability. Better advertisement of office hours and provision of academic support for students who are struggling.	Ongoing	HAG/DM/JH	By the start of 19/20
	Better reporting of MOs who are not helping their students to the level expected.			

Action points from SSLC Meeting 12th December 2019

	MT1 notes from last year are very good and students have been using and distributing them.	Ongoing	DM	By start of 20/21
2019.2.1	MT1 MO is teaching for first time and doesn't have finalised notes yet.			
	Investigate standard of CP lecture notes – hand-written and difficult to read at times.			6.0.(0.)
2019.2.2	Proposal to switch SPA4601 to semester B for even split of lab based modules in first year. Provisionally move PSS to semester B in 20/21. No impact on careers assignment.	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21
2019.2.3	Ensure that there is a proper break during the lectures for SPA4121 and SPA4401. Reported and closed by DM.	Closed	DM	By start of 20/21





2019.2.4	SPA4103 - Report back to MO student unhappy with inconsistencies in lab book marking. Previous action points have now been incorporated into this action point (2018.007-2018.01, 2019.023) to reflect some improvements that have been made. Still seeking more consistency in marking and JH continue to work with MO.	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21
2019.2.5	Long return time for lab reports across SPA4103 and SPA6315. JH to ensure marked work returned in timely and consistent manner.	Closed	JH/DM	By start of 20/21
2019.2.7	To ensure students are aware about the impact of an unbalanced module diet in 2/3 year but that it is possible with advisor permission. More clarity during module options event in Sem B.	Ongoing	HAG	Before Module selections
2019.2.8	Investigate into marking issues and general provision of feedback in SPA5219 Thermodynamics. Reported instances of mistakes in marked HWs.	Ongoing	DM/JH	As soon as possible
2019.2.9	Investigate mistakes in lecture notes for SPA5219, mainly in derivations. Merge into previous action and JH to raise at academic review.	Closed and merged into 2019.2.8	JH	As soon as possible
2019.2.10	DM/HAG to check viability of ordering mousepads for second floor labs.	Closed	HAG/DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.11	SPA5307 investigate the legibility of Stars handwritten notes. Combined into 2019.32	Closed and merged	JH	By start of 20/21
2019.2.13	Continue to ensure advisors are communicating with their advisees for the essay planning and ensure clear links between tutorials and lectures. Closed as DM is MO and taken feedback on board.	Closed	DM	By start of 20/21
2019.2.14	Feedback to MO positive feedback from SPA5319	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.15	Feedback to MO overall positive feedback for SPA5218.	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.16	Investigate issues with lack of feedback from SPA5218 QMPlus quizzes and problems with students queuing for feedback in tutorials. All feedback reported and issue with quizzes, MO acknowledged.	Closed	JH	By start of 20/21
2019.2.19	Investigate the teaching of SPA6306 EPP. Difficulties in finding replacements for the unexpected departures from PPRC. Therefore when UB took over EPP she had limited time to make any improvements and inherited a course with problems.	Closed and merged with 2019.2.21	JH	By start of 20/21





2019.2.20	Positive feedback to be reported to demonstrator for SPA6306. Reported to MO and demo.	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.21	Request to rewrite module from scratch considering previous difficulties and perception that content covered in EPP is typically level 7. JH to investigate course content. JH will need to investigate further and look at module improvements. Merged with 2019.2.19	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21
2019.2.22	Positive feedback to be reported to MO for SPA6413. Reported to MO.	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.23	Positive feedback to be reported to demonstrators (Ricardo and Manuel) for SPA6413. Reported to MO.	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.24	Positive feedback to be reported to MO for SPA6311, students very happy with the way the module is run. Reported to MO	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.26	Investigate content in SPA6311 to determine appropriate difficulty level. Better signposting from PB to make it clear how content connected between lectures and CW with regards to level of maths expected. Not unreasonable for students to need to research some aspects of CW themselves.	Closed and merged with 2019.2.28	JH	As soon as possible
2019.2.27	Students unhappy at the weighting for the reports in SPA6315 CCMP, first report is 60% and second is 40%. Students told not to include error bars but then marked down because of this. Further investigation needed.	Closed and merged with 2019.2.28	JH	As soon as possible
2019.2.28	Students feel as though first report deadline and second report deadline are too close. Not enough time to use feedback from first report to improve second. JH has spoken to MO who will work to improve these issues.	Closed	JH	As soon as possible
2019.2.29	Report back to MO positive feedback. Students would like clarification on what type of Fortran is being used. Reported to MO	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.30	Positive feedback to be reported to demonstrator/MO for SPA6324 MT4. Reported to MO	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.31	SPA6328 SDA lectures can focus on theory and students then find CW challenging. Overall positive feedback for MO/Demonstrators. Reported to MO and he is looking to make improvements.	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.34	Marking in RWQF is very comprehensive and students appreciate feedback. Reported to MO	Closed	DM	As soon as possible





2019.3.35	Issues with marking and limited feedback for SPA7024. CW are taking disproportionately longer than other modules. Reported to MO	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.3.36	Positive feedback for SPA7024 but also some suggestions for review chapter/lecture at the end of the course to help with revision due to large amount of content. Reported to MO and he is looking to incorpo	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.37	Positive feedback to be reported to MO for SPA7019 R&G. Include points from 2019.2.33. Reported to MO	Closed	DM	As soon as possible
2019.2.39	Intercollegiate board to review - is there a QM equivalent group of modules that could act as a sufficient pre-requisites for Standard Model Physics and Beyond (INK7032).	Ongoing	JH/ST	By start of 20/21
2019.2.40	Students would like QM to deploy similar techniques to UCL where they utilise tablets and digital pens. JH to raise with e-learning unit. JH has looked into this but it will not be possible.	Closed	JH	By start of 20/21
2019.2.41	Consolidation of previous action points (2019.36 – 2019.40) regarding SPA5228 CMA teaching from 18/19. To be reviewed at the end of sem 2 19/20 to assess improvements.	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21

Action points for SSLC 9th April 2020

2020.1.1	Report positive feedback to MOs for online transition in MT2 and MP.	Ongoing	DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.3	Positive feedback for semester B module Our Universe	Ongoing	DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.12	JH to investigate provision of materials and online teaching in SPA5222 and SPA5228	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21
2020.1.14	HAG to circulate response from P Bull with regards to the marking of these experiments and the incorporation of them into the lab book.	Ongoing	HAG	As soon as possible





2020.1.15	JH/DM agree that marks for CMA mid-term should have been returned by this stage and will investigate.	Ongoing	JH/DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.16	JH to investigate lecture note mistakes in SPA5222 EWO	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21
2020.1.17	DM/JH to review lecture notes in SPA5228.	Ongoing	JH/DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.19	Report positive feedback to MO for SPA5204	Ongoing	DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.20	DM/JH to ensure students have support from MO.	Ongoing	JH/DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.21	Report feedback to MO for SPA5241	Ongoing	DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.22	HAG has raised this with Maths teams but this is unlikely to change. J.H to raise at a higher level.	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21
2020.1.25	Students need clarification for revised weighting of the final year project following the cancellation of oral presentations. This was clarified to finalists via email and QMplus on 15 th April.	Closed	HAG	As soon as possible
2020.1.28	JH to chase PH to request that the results are released. Results were promptly released to students in SPA6309.	Closed	JH	By start of 20/21
2020.1.31	Criticism of lack of online teaching for SPA6305 Physics of Galaxies. Response: Whilst MO did not host any live lectures online he did send comprehensive information to students included access to recorded lectures, mitigation for missed HWs and invitation to email him with any query, small or large.	Closed	HAG	By start of 20/21





2020.1.34	DM to report back to MO with positive feedback for teaching but issues with lectures notes and request for typed notes in SPA6403.	Ongoing	DM	By start of 20/21
2020.1.36	JH to speak with MO and discuss the structure of the modules for SPA7024 FMQFT or 7001 AQFT to ensure better overlap for the upcoming academic year.	Ongoing	JH	By start of 20/21
2020.1.39	DM to investigate the provision of Advanced Cosmology notes for the exam.	Ongoing	DM	By start of 20/21