

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD: DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

PHYSICS JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MT22-2: 13:00 on Wednesday, Wk 7 MT22
Robert Hooke Meeting Room

ATTENDANCE

• Those Present

- Wendy (Yixuan) Dang (WD) - Chair, PhysPhil Rep
- Om Gupta (OG) - Secretary
- Jack Barker (JaB) - Webmaster
- Jamie-Anne Davey (J-AD) - 1st Year Rep
- Naiqi Zheng (NZ) - 1st Year Rep
- Gareth Hopkins (GH) - 2nd Year Rep
- Thomas Ford (TF) - 2nd Year Rep
- Woon Sing Lau (WSL) - 3rd Year Rep
- Bradley Westwood (BW) - 3rd Year Rep
- Suat Baris Tuncay (SBT) - 4th year Rep, MMathPhys Rep
- Hans Kraus (HK) - Head of Teaching
- Jenny Barnes (JB) - Teaching Laboratories Manager
- Carrie Leonard-McIntyre (CL-M) - Assistant Head of Teaching
- Malcolm John (MJ) - Academic Committee
- Hannah Glanville (HG) - Teaching Faculty Administration Officer

• Apologies From

- Helena Bhattacharya (HB) - 1st year Rep
- Uri Sharell (US) - 4th Year Rep, MMathPhys Rep
- Andrew Okukura (AO) - 4th year Rep, EDI Rep

MINUTES

1. Minutes of last meeting (Wednesday, Wk 2 MT22) (5)
 - (a) No matters arising

2. Committee business (10)

(a) **Chair**

i. Update from practical course committee

- WD started the meeting welcoming the recently elected 1st year reps
- WD asked if it would be possible for physicists and physphilers to do extra practicals once they've completed the necessary days of lab credit in each year
- JB confirmed this was possible and that students should contact Lab Help to arrange the extra practicals they wish to do. JB also recommended the year reps to let their year groups know this was a possibility

(b) **Secretary**

No business

(c) **Webmaster**

No business

3. Year reps' business (30)

(a) **First Year**

i. Creating a shared google docs accessible to all physicists to upload and view solutions to past exam questions.

- J-AD introduced the idea of creating a shared google docs with solutions to past exams - something already done at her college
- WD mentioned that this already happens in higher years and NZ said this could be organised over the year-group chat
- HK pointed out that notes by Toby Adkins are already available on the PJCC website - this google doc could be uploaded in the same space. HK also said it's safer to upload them as pdfs as there is an issue with security with google docs.
- SBT asked whether security would be an issue on the PJCC website since it is public but HK clarified that you need to be on the Oxford network to access the PJCC website

ii. Lecturers wearing microphones or improving the quality of existing ones

- J-AD said that students at the end of a lecture hall often couldn't hear what a lecturer was saying and asked if it would be possible to improve the quality of mics in the lecture halls
- HK said the issue was lecturers often forgot to wear mics and the best course of action is to simply remind them on the spot to wear one. CL-M affirmed this and pointed out that lecture recordings aren't clear either if lecturers don't wear a mic

(b) **Second Year**

i. Possibility of uploading lectures to Panopto at a quicker rate like last year

- Reading the agenda point, CL-M said lectures were uploaded during the pandemic in their lecturing timeslots as lecturers pre-recorded their lectures for them to be released on time

- However, with the resumption of in person lecturers, lecture recordings can no longer be released immediately. This is to enable lecturers to make changes i.e. edit the start or end of lectures in case they overrun and not to mix up lecture material.
- As a result, uploading lecture recordings can take up to 48 hours during the week and can only be uploaded by Monday for lectures taking place on Friday. Hence, uploading lectures at a quicker rate is not in the control of the Teaching Office.

(c) Third Year

- i. Confirming if assessed practicals are chosen randomly
 - WSL asked JB if the practicals that students are assessed on are chosen randomly and whether the mark they attained in a practical plays a part in the choice
 - JB said that the choice is completely random in the 2nd year but students get to choose the assessed practical in the 3rd year. JB further said that the mark a student is given in the assessed practical is a mixture of the quality of the entire logbook and understanding of the chosen practical
- ii. Oxford Physics Undergraduate Newsletter
 - WD talked about the possibility of collaborating with societies like Oxford Physoc and OPGEN for the undergraduate newsletter. WSL asked if societies should be contacted if they want to be featured in the newsletter but the PJCC agreed that the newsletter would get too cluttered as a result
 - WD also talked about content that could be included in the newsletter - departmental events, links to research internships, messages from PJCC meetings

(d) Fourth Year

- i. Progress Reports for MPhys projects
 - SBT mentioned students aren't sure what to include in progress reports for their MPhys projects
 - CL-M said students should talk to their supervisors if they aren't sure what progress reports should look like and the Teaching Office has already talked to supervisors to see if students have any concerns about progress reports

4. PhysPhil business (5)

(a) Mode of Philosophy essay submission in exams

- WD mentioned that the philosophy department has announced that certain philosophy papers will be typed and that the philosophy of physics paper will be written.
- WD further said that students are generally satisfied with this as many derivations and plots are involved in the philosophy of physics papers.
- HK said that the Physics Department was unaware of this announcement but will seek clarification from the Physics and Philosophy joint committee and notify the PJCC.

5. **MMathPhys business** (5)

No business

6. **Physics Forum**

No business

7. **Practical Course business** (5)

No business

8. **Any other business** (15)

(a) **Response to Short Option Survey**

- CL-M mentioned the SO survey taken by the student body earlier this year. It received 183/700 responses which isn't enough for the Teaching Office to infer which short options to keep and which aren't as popular
- HK said that while the Teaching Office tries to offer as many short options as possible, this usually isn't possible because of scheduling conflicts
- TF asked if the survey could be made mandatory but CL-M said this was the case in the past until the proctors told the Teaching Office they couldn't make it mandatory for students to take feedback surveys
- HK and CL-M encouraged the student body to respond in larger numbers to surveys as feedback data can't be used if there isn't enough of it

(b) **Query about examiner reports**

- TF asked the Teaching Office about examiner reports
- CL-M said examiner reports were nearly done but required 2 more updates and should be released when chair of finals approves them

(c) **Recommendation from IOP**

- CL-M mentioned a recommendation from the IOP to include teamwork in the course and hence asked the PJCC to think of activities that could be included in the course
- JaB and SBT mentioned a group project undertaken by engineers in their 3rd/4th years for 3 weeks during which they have no other commitments as a possible source of inspiration
- HK pointed out that students' time commitments are important to consider when thinking of new additions to the course