UG4 Staff-Student Liaison Committee 2017-18

Semester 1 meeting, 30th November 2017

Present: Mary Cryan (UG4 Year Organiser)

                                    Nikita Samarin (UG4 Student Representative)

                                    Hanne Carlsson (UG4 Student Representative)

In attendance: Gregor Hall (UG4 Administrator)

Apologies: DK Arvind

The Year Organiser welcomed the Committee and proceeded to go through the list of courses for discussion. The reps brought up and issues and comments from their own experiences or those relayed to them by class members.

BDL: Organisation was not the best. The course initially lacked a home page (although it did acquire one later) and lecture recordings were affected by the server being down – this wasn't communicated well. The Piazza page was created late in the day.
ACTION: Course pages should be chased before term starts.

CG: This course has 2 lecturers and the difference in the quality of lecturing was considerable. The lecturers needed to liaise with each other more.

EXC: technical issues with the cluster could cause problems delays, but they were normally well communicated to the students – however, not to ITO. The issue of providing more computing resource was raised. The lecturers approach was different, with Volker Seeker covering the basics well and Kenneth Heafield enthusiastically delivering the "big picture" content.

HCI: The course was well organised, with good lectures, coursework, and the re-marking of the coursework was appreciated by the class.

IAR: the reps had heard good things about this course; the class seemed to enjoy it and the reps had heard no complaints.

IMC: the reps heard no complaints about this course. Last year's grade was low – catch you out?
ACTION: Tutorial for May!

MLPR: Good reports on this course overall – quality lecturing, helpful notes, hard to find anything to criticise.

MLP: the main issue with this course was that leading up to the deadline students would leave lab DICE machines logged in for hours at a time. In the future, students should be made aware of the available server facilities in the course webpage, and the lecturer should make a point of bringing this to the attention of the students. The second issue was the variation in feedback – some students got a few sentences, some get several paragraphs. It may be the case that more markers are required.

PM: no comments.

PDIoT: the reps received no feedback on this course.

STN: this course was considered to be difficult but there was no negative feedback.

TTDS: There was confusion over deadlines – there was no official coursework document. The deadlines were set too late.

TSPL: the release of coursework was delayed but the deadline was not moved.

The Representatives were then asked for general comments. The continuing building work in Appleton Tower was mentioned as causing discontent, the single working lift in Semester 1 being a common complaint. The available cluster computing facilities were criticised as being inadequate for the large MLP and EXC classes. The reps were looking forward to using the Level 9 UG4 study area. The lack of consistency in the course webpages was another general complaint – for example, students didn't know whether or not a Piazza page is available. A "quick start" guide for new lectures might prevent these sort of issues. ITO should check the cw deadlines.