

MSc Staff Student Liaison Committee Meeting

2pm-3pm, Wednesday 21st November

Appleton Tower, 7.14

Present: B. Franke (MSc Year Organiser), S. Stewart (MSc Administrator), R. Finlayson (MSc Teaching Secretary), M. Rizkalla (MSc Rep)

1. Introduction and overview of SSLC

The meeting opened with a brief introduction on the purpose of the meeting, mainly to gain feedback to help enhance student's experience and to offer student representatives a chance to talk to the Year Organiser directly.

2. Comments on MSc Courses

ANLP

No complaints reported regarding this course

CDI1

No complaints reported regarding this course.

CDI2

No complaints reported regarding this course

CCN

No complaints reported regarding this course

IVC

There were some complaints about the project, of which there were three main components (including a report and a presentation). The turnaround from announcement to submission was only two weeks, which was considered too short for all of this (especially with other coursework deadlines).

The reversed classroom meant that students weren't always inclined to watch the videos. The Learn page was also said to be too vague.

IRR

There were questions about why the draft submission is Tier 4 engagement point. There has been some conflict because some non-Tier 4 students are saying they won't submit. There were also questions about who will be marking these drafts

B.Franke: Discussions were had with S.Anderson (Director of Learning and Teaching) and N.Heatley (Head of Informatics Student Services) about this course. Students in previous years weren't engaging and then there would be a panicked submission around Christmas. Making this a mandatory submission means students have feedback to work with for their final submission. They will be marked by the group tutor and B.Franke will be moderating the marking, looking at random selections and the mark averages from group tutors.

IJP

No complaints regarding this course

IRDS

No complaints regarding this course

IAML

The student rep had had more than five long emails complaining about the course structure. Assignment 1 was delayed and the feedback was two to three weeks delayed while some received no feedback at all. Also, the skeleton code provided was buggy.

There is no help from staff on Piazza. The staff are few and the students are not convinced by the reason for this; the appropriate amount of staff should have been found before the course started.

There were also issues brought up with regards to the quality of the videos, both in terms of the audio/visual quality and the content. The lecturers are pointing at things during the lectures and the students get lost. One Distance Learning (DL) student said that the course was not designed for DL, and that they had wasted their money on the course, what with the poor visuals, materials, and engagements from staff on Piazza.

There were no specific complaints about the simplicity of the course, but only rather that it was buggy and there was no feedback.

B.Franke: Students should receive useful and verbose feedback. Other courses like MLP have a Moderator on their Piazza, helping with engagement.

ACTION: B.Franke to speak to S.Anderson (Director of Learning and Teaching) and N.Goddard (course organiser) emphasizing the issues so they are sorted for next year – ACTIONED

ACTION: B. Franke to ask S.Anderson (Director of Learning and Teaching) to send out clarification of the Common Marking Scheme to markers. ACTIONED

PERP

No complaints regarding this course

RSS

No complaints regarding this course

3. Comments on Other Courses

EXC

This is a new course for the Course Organiser P.Bhatotia; he intends to change the style of the exam, so there are no past exam papers for students to study. As a lecture-only course, it is hard for students to know what to study. Only conference papers are referred to, and the course itself feels vague. Some examples to prepare for the exam would be great.

ACTION: B.Franke and ITO to ask P.Bhatotia to set a mock exam as example of how the exam will be formatted – ACTIONED

B.Franke comments that students should still use existing past papers, as they will be useful in some regards.

Response from P. Bhatotia:

I have gone through the exam format in detail in the revision lecture. In particular, I have covered in detail the kind of questions to expect in the exam.

I am not sure about the mock exam. In general, I don't think we are supposed to coach students for the exam.

4. General Issues about the Year and Specific Courses

No complaints regarding this issue

5. Comments on Computer Facilities

There has been an issues with students reserving computers, but using their own laptop and the desk space

ACTION: ITO to get A. Downie (Head of Computing User Support Unit) to send an email about lab etiquette to remind students of how to use the space and computers considerately. ACTIONED

6. Comments on labs, study spaces and social spaces

None to report

7. Comments on Computing Support

Computing Support are doing a good job. There was disk failures a couple of weeks ago, but they dealt with them quickly.

8. Comments on ITO Support

One student brought up the issue about Special Circumstances (SC). They had been ill for two months and were unsure about whether the Board of Examiners would consider this and thus was hesitant about filling out SC forms.

B.Franke advised the student should get in touch with the Student Support Team again. Their SC form will be considered, but what help is given depends on the circumstances. There are a range of options though, and the SST will help coordinate the best ones. SC is never a waste of time though.

9. AOB

No other business

Meeting adjourned.