

School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences

Linguistics & English Language

Staff Student Liaison Committee

Tuesday, 11 October 2016 at 1pm

Room S38, 7 George Square

Present

Staff:

J. Fruehwald (SSLC Convener) P. Ackema, C. Cowie

Students:

K. Owens, D. Chen, A. Holtz, M. Wang, J. Strenger, R. Macy

In Attendance:

M. Davidson (Minute Taking)

1. Welcome from SSLC Convenor

P. Ackema welcomed all those present to the first SSLC of the year.

2. Apologies

E. Kouhi, G. Trousdale, M. Ota, B. Los, K. Smith, H. Giegerich

3. Year 1 Reports and Feedback

The class reps have heard from other people in the class that there are functional issues with projectors in classrooms particularly lecture hall 5 in Appleton Tower. The projector moves up and down and cuts off notes at the bottom of the page.

Action: SSO to pass information onto Building and Estates.

The reading list for LEL 1 is too specific and people don't necessarily find that this helps. 'Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction' by William O'Grady et al., covers all the topics in LEL 1 in a lot of detail. The list needs to make clear what is required reading and what the recommended reading is.

In LEL 2D it is marked clearly what is essential and what is recommended. Perhaps that is something that could be organised for LEL 1.

A pdf form is sent to the students on LEL 1, from P. Honeybone you can easily copy from the pdf but from W. Maguire the pdf file is hard to copy and some of the text that was on the screen in the lecture does not show on the pdf file, this needs to be amended.

As there is support for LEL 1 students at the end of the year for essay writing there needs to be something in semester 1 for BIL students because currently they do not receive anything.

Action: If there is support it needs to be in both semesters. Graeme Trousdale to be informed that an essay feedback session for BIL Students needs to be organised.

In Learn to access the lecture notes there are too many clicks. It is possible to have quick links and there is a sidebar on Learn that could list each topic, similar to Psychology.

Action: J. Fruehwald will liaise with S. Fokt to look into trimming down the clicking process on Learn and looking at the quick links on the sidebar.

4. Year 2 Reports and Feedback

Disability Support and Testing Conditions

A student with a disability in LEL 2B felt that the testing conditions were not fitted to their ability. There is already a system in place that will find out what the best testing conditions.

Towards the beginning of the semester – an adjustment schedule is sent to lecturers, with what adjustments need to be in place but doesn't necessarily state what the disability is. Lecturers try to quickly put something in place and in this case it involved a replay of the exam at a later date.

Lecturers try to put things in place as soon as possible to suit the student.

The LEL2B ear training test is difficult as it tests a form of audio-visual processing and it is important to keep doing this as it is outlined in the subject benchmarking system (QAA). If somebody has an audio-visual difficulty, a specialised adjustment would need to be figured out, given enough time.

Assessment Information

On Learn there is information about when an assignment is due but students would find it useful to know when the assignment starts i.e. when the questions will be distributed. When students are choosing their courses for second year it would be useful to know what type of assessment they will receive, perhaps an example essay or question in the handbook.

J. Fruehwald – A sample essay/question might not be possible but a more detailed description may be more plausible. **(Action)**

Some of the issues and uncertainty was a result of not having the handbook online in time and only the old handbook was available. The transfer of information to the online handbooks may have caused a reduction of information.

There is a lot of assessment anxiety with LEL 2B because it is new and the assessment is different. However, because it is new territory, students are given a lot of instruction and the expectations are clearly laid out.

J. Fruehwald has looked at the numbers across the LEL 2 courses and everyone worries about LEL 2B but people do a lot better than they think they do. LEL 2B results were a few points higher than the rest of the LEL 2. The question was asked whether there is any more instruction or help that should

be offered to reassure students. There was a general agreement that the anxiety is natural because of the new content, so there is nothing more that can be done.

5. Honours Reports and Feedback

Students have asked for recordings of all lectures as there are sometimes things that students miss due to taking notes or a book that the lecturer mentions that would be useful.

The LEL Teaching Programme Review (TPR) recommended that LEL try to use more modern technology and the university is looking at Lecture capture as the default.

There should be training for all staff recording lectures and it should be enforced.

Action: J. Fruehwald will ask N. Daniels about getting this into place for next semester.

Fourth years would like help on the application process for PG Study such as an information session.

Action: SSO to contact K. Keltie to organise drop in session on the 7th floor with academic staff. The applications need to be sent in by November, so as soon as possible. J. Fruehwald to mention in LEL staff meeting.

Students found it difficult not having a handbook when choosing courses, this was an issue this year but will be resolved by next year.

The Psycholinguistics textbook is only available on Amazon for £107 which seems a little bit steep.

There is not a good contact between LEL and a European Language, students are not sure about what they need to be taking when abroad. There needs to be more information given to students on these degrees. It would be good to have one person in each school that has a solid understanding of each subject area, in LEL and DELC.

Students on study abroad don't feel that they get much guidance on the long essay and it takes a while for a response. As P. Honeybone is the only contact he gets a lot of emails about this and he cannot answer all the questions in time so it seems as though there should be another contact.

There was not a smooth transition coming back to Edinburgh with regards to getting courses and credits organised.

The TPR review stated that PT's should contact their tutees through skype meetings, therefore this might help with the transition back to Edinburgh and any questions students might have.

7. AOB

J. Fruehwald outlined the TPR recommendations that were relevant to students and that had been discussed in previous SSLC meetings.

Recommendations -

Provide more electronic feedback

When it comes to PG tutoring, strongly encourage all PG students to attend IAD sessions.

Have more contact with Study Abroad students and PT/essay supervisor contact through skype sessions and email.