

School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences

Psychology Student-Staff Liaison Committee

Wednesday 14 February 2018 at 12.30pm
Room S38, 7 George Square

MINUTES

Present: Dr Alexa Morcom (Chair), Dr Kasia Banas (Teaching Coordinator), Rue Chaladauskaite (Year 2 Rep), Dr Dave Carmel (Year 4 Course Organiser), Dr Martin Corley (Head of Psychology), Kristina Gray (Co-Chair and Year 4 Rep), Jenni Kahkonen (Year 4 Rep), Dr Adam Moore (Year 1 Course Organiser), Dr Eva Murzyn (Teaching Coordinator), Kayleigh Smith (Year 1 Rep), Johanna Stoye (Year 2 Rep), Griffith Tai (Year 3 Rep), Prof Caroline Watt (Year 2 Course Organiser)

Apologies: Dr Michelle Luciano (Year 3 Course Organiser)

In attendance: Sarah Larios (Student Support Officer), Catherine Renton (Course Administrator)

1. Welcome from SSLC Convener, News

News: Bookings for the Dissertation Dinner are now open.

2. Updates from Previous Actions

Average Grades: These have now been calculated for each course, and will shortly be released to students who took each course.

Consultation on lecture recording: Academic staff are compiling and sending in a response to the consultation on the proposed policy on lecture recording. Class Reps were asked to encourage students to also feedback through the student consultation process. Students were reminded that lectures can already be recorded for personal use, but recordings cannot be shared through Facebook, social media, etc.

Dr Morcom handed over the Chair to Kristina Gray, as fourth year co-chair.

3. Year 4 Reports and Feedback

BPS Conference

There was a request from students to have a mini-conference where they could present their dissertation results. Students were polled on whether they would want to attend this, and while there was interest from students, no one was able to take on organising it. A number of students are presenting at the BPS conference. Buses are being arranged for students going to the conference, although priority will be given to students who are presenting.

Action: Dr Carmel to email fourth years to remind them that students who are presenting at the BPS conference are eligible for a two-day extension on their dissertations, but they must apply for the extension through the normal extension request form.

Issues with feedback from Tutorial Course

There was an issue with the feedback from Dr Morcom's tutorial group not being returned in Learn. This was a technical mistake in Learn, which resulted in the marks being released without the feedback, and has since been corrected.

Dr Morcom reminded the Reps that if students contact them about issues with not receiving feedback, they should let the Course Organiser know as soon as possible so that it can be resolved quickly.

There were some issues with inconsistent feedback, and students were reminded that they if they would like clarification on their feedback they can contact the marker to discuss.

Feedback on poll about multiple assessments

Students have raised concerns about courses that have one item of assessment, either coursework or exam, worth 100% of the overall mark. Students were polled on having multiple assessments per course. 48 students responded, and 36 students preferred split assessments with multiple pieces of coursework, no exam. Students also responded that they would prefer having mini-quizzes, as in RMS and Critical Analysis.

Dr Morcom noted that it is difficult to use quizzes for the types of material covered in fourth year. As part of the change to 20 credits, courses will incorporate more types of assessment, as they will have a full semester instead of a single block. Dr Corley would be happy to arrange a consultation session with students to discuss how they can improve assessments.

The General Paper

Students are concerned about the General Paper, particularly students who were on Year Abroad last year. Out of 49 survey responses, 47 students said that they don't feel prepared for the General Paper, with only 2 students saying that they are glad to have the chance to test their knowledge from all four years. 30 students said they were interested in weekly study groups.

Dr Corley encouraged students to get together in groups, and would be willing to attend the first meeting to talk through the General Paper. Dr Moore encouraged students to look at past papers and brainstorm together about what would make an interesting answer. As in other exams, students are not expected to provide exact references.

Action: Fourth years to organise a General Paper study session and let Dr Corley and Dr Moore know so they can attend.

4. Year 3 Reports and Feedback

Human Personality Exam

Students were concerned that the marks for this course were particularly low. Average marks will shortly be released to students, but Dr Morcom noted that this course did have the

lowest average mark from Semester 1. This has been referred to the June Board of Examiners, to compare the range of marks for this course against those from other courses in both Semester 1 and Semester 2.

Deadlines in Semester 1

Students have raised concerns about having deadlines clustered close together. It was noted that other Subject Areas have a single deadline for all mid-term or end of term coursework, which is the same across all courses. Students are informed of this deadline well in advance and are expected to manage their time accordingly.

Action: Year 3 and Year 2 Class Reps were asked to survey students about having a single deadline for coursework, across all courses, and feedback to the next meeting.

Programming Skills in Mini-Dissertation and Beyond

Some Mini-Dissertation groups are learning MATLAB or other packages, while in other groups the supervisors are doing the programming. Students are worried that they won't have a level playing field when working on their dissertation in Year 4.

Dr Corley pointed out that for both the dissertation and the mini dissertation, the aim is to balance the overall amount of work. Some projects may require less programming, because they require additional work in other aspects.

Dr Morcom suggested that workshops on particular programming languages or packages could be arranged if there is sufficient interest. Students were asked to contact Dr Morcom or Dr Corley if they are interested in arranging this.

5. Year 2 Reports and Feedback

Semester 2 Summary feedback so far

The Year 2 reps reported on the results of their feedback survey on Psychology 2B so far, which had 36 responses. Students felt there was repetition with material covered in first year, and wanted more coordination between first and second year lecturers. Students also wanted more clarity on what reading is essential, and were concerned about the word limit for tutorial and lab reports. The fourth year reps felt that trimming to word limits is really good practice, and a useful skill for students to learn.

Action: Dr Murzyn to ask tutors to communicate to groups about the rationale for the word limit. Dr Watt will speak with lecturers about overlapping material.

Combined Honours Student Support

Students have raised concerns about the lack of integration between Joint Honours degrees. Students on Psychology and Business are unsure about who to communicate with in the Business School.

Dr Morcom noted that there are plans to organise consultation sessions for students on Joint degrees with other Schools. Class reps were asked to coordinate feedback from Joint degree students. In the meantime, students were reminded that if there are any issues or queries about who to contact in other Schools, students can contact the PPLS Student

Support Office in the first instance, who will help make sure students are put in contact with the correct person.

Summary of EVASYS feedback for Psychology 2A

Dr Watt summarised the results of the EVASYS feedback survey for Psychology 2A. There were 61 responses, which is a response rate of around 31%. Satisfaction with the course was between 4 and 4.3 on all categories.

Dr Corley noted that they are currently looking into ways to share the results of the EVASYS surveys for third and fourth year courses.

6. Year 1 Reports and Feedback

The first year Rep reported that it's been difficult getting feedback from students on Psychology 1B, but that most students are happy with the course. Attendance at labs has been very low.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 22 March 2018, 12.30-2.00pm, Room G32, 7 George Square