

Review of the Student Learning Experience in Physics

Review Questionnaire for students

Preliminary Data

Please complete the details below. **No identification of individual departments, or students, will be made in any report derived from this questionnaire.**

1. University _____
2. Name of Department _____
3. Name of Degree Scheme (e.g. Physics, Physics with Astronomy, Physics with Business Studies) _____
4. Are you studying for: BSc MPhys/MSci
5. The year of course you are in: First Second Third Fourth Fifth
6. Are you: male female
7. What grade did you get in the highest qualification you gained at school/college before beginning your university course for:

physics?	_____
mathematics?	_____

Please answer for *this* academic year unless indicated otherwise. Leave any question blank if you are not able to answer it.

There is space at the end for you to write any further comment if you wish.

Section 1 Major Theme – Teaching and Assessment

1.1 Workload

8. How much formal teaching (including lab work) do you have timetabled each week in this semester?
_____ hours
9. How many hours do you spend on average each week during the Semester on:

	Hours
a. coursework (e.g. examples sheets) <i>[do NOT include timetabled lectures, labs, tutorials or organised workshops and classes]</i>	_____
b. private study? (e.g. reading your lecture notes, further reading, trying additional examples)	_____
c. paid work?	_____
d. other activities which might enhance your CV? (e.g. voluntary work)	_____
10. Roughly how many days (i.e. equivalent of 7 hours' work) do you spend on *academic* work during:

	Days
a. the summer vacation	_____
b. the Christmas break?	_____
c. the Easter break?	_____
11. If you choose to miss part of the teaching programme, which part would it usually be?

<input type="checkbox"/> lectures	<input type="checkbox"/> tutorials	<input type="checkbox"/> workshops	<input type="checkbox"/> lab work	<input type="checkbox"/> none of these
other (please specify) _____				
12. Do you miss lectures/classes/tutorials because of part-time paid work?

<input type="checkbox"/> never	<input type="checkbox"/> occasionally [e.g. one hour per week]	<input type="checkbox"/> often [more than two hours per week]
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13. Do you find the overall work load (teaching and independent study)

<input type="checkbox"/> too light	<input type="checkbox"/> too heavy	<input type="checkbox"/> about right
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1.2 Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are short statements to indicate what students should be able to do on completing module, or section of a module, of study or experimental work.

14. Are learning outcomes provided for:

<input type="checkbox"/> all your course modules	<input type="checkbox"/> the majority of course modules	<input type="checkbox"/> a few course modules
<input type="checkbox"/> rarely or not provided	<input type="checkbox"/> don't know	
15. Do you use given learning outcomes to find out what you are expected to know and understand from each component of the teaching programme?

<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> sometimes
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16. Do you think it is worthwhile providing learning outcomes for every module of the teaching programme?
 yes no
17. If more learning outcomes were provided would you use them more regularly?
 yes no already provided for all modules
18. Are you aware of which learning outcomes are being assessed?
 yes no sometimes

1.3 Types of teaching

Tutorials - a small group of students (about 2-6) directed by a tutor specific to that group.

Workshops - an activity that is the primary way of teaching particular skills – e.g. IT or communication skills, with a mid to large sized group where students work under the supervision of one or more staff members, post-docs or PhD students.

Problem classes - a mid to large sized group where students work on problems under the supervision of one or more staff members, post-docs or PhD students.

E-learning - any part of the course where you have to learn by interacting with a stand-alone or networked computer

19. In general, how *effective* at helping you learn do you find the following teaching methods?

	very effective	fairly effective	not very effective	ineffective	not applicable
a. lectures	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. tutorials	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. lab work	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. problem classes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. group projects	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. individual projects	<input type="checkbox"/>				
h. e-learning	<input type="checkbox"/>				

20. In general, how *enjoyable* do you find the following teaching methods?

	very enjoyable	fairly enjoyable	not very enjoyable	not enjoyable at all	not applicable
a. lectures	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. tutorials	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. lab work	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. problem classes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. group projects	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. individual projects	<input type="checkbox"/>				
h. e-learning	<input type="checkbox"/>				

1.3.1 Lectures

21. Roughly what fraction of all scheduled lectures do you attend?
 all most some few none
22. Do you prefer:
 to make your own lecture notes to have skeleton notes provided
 to have full lecture notes provided
23. If lecture notes are provided, do you prefer them:
 before lectures after lectures during lectures not usually provided
24. Do you prefer lecture notes:
 posted on a Website, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or Intranet
 available in hard copy both
25. Do you follow up additional study material provided or referred to in lectures?
 usually sometimes not often never
26. Do you think that attending a lecture is time well spent?
 usually sometimes not often never

1.3.2 Tutorials, Workshops, Problem classes

27. What size is your group for:

_____ tutorials _____ workshops _____ problem classes

28. Roughly what fraction of these timetabled events do you attend?

- | | <i>all</i> | <i>most</i> | <i>some</i> | <i>few</i> | <i>none</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Tutorials | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Problem classes | <input type="checkbox"/> |

29. Are you set specific work prior to these events?

- | | <i>usually</i> | <i>sometimes</i> | <i>never</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Tutorials | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Problem classes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

30. For **tutorials**, if set, does the set work consist of:

- exercises (looking up material, essays, standard calculations)
- problems (more open ended investigations that may not lead to definite answers)
- both but mainly exercises
- both but mainly problems
- both – about equally

1.3.3 Lab work

31. How much laboratory time do you have allocated each week?

_____ hours

If you have no laboratory work this year put 0 hours, and only answer the other questions in this section (1.3.3) if you want to, based on your previous experience.

32. Roughly what fraction of all scheduled labs do you attend?

- all most some few none

33. For your own degree studies in physics, do you think that doing lab work is:

- essential important not very important unimportant

34. In understanding theoretical concepts, do you find that your lab work is:

- extremely useful useful not very useful not at all useful

35. When you come to getting a job, do you think proficiency in the lab will be considered as:

- essential important not very important unimportant

36. How much time would you expect to spend each week outside the laboratory completing tasks associated with laboratory work (e.g. writing up, checking results)?

_____ hours

37. How is laboratory work taught? (*Please tick all that apply*)

- through a manual or text book
- by direct instruction/demonstration
- using an IT presentation

38. Would you prefer to have laboratory classes?

- at fixed times open over a period open at a choice of times

39. Are experiments:

- allocated by staff selected by students some of both

40. Do you think that time in the laboratory is:

- well-spent
- too long for the learning achieved
- not long enough to become a competent practical worker

41. Is it easy to have a query in the lab answered to your satisfaction?

- always usually sometimes no

42. What is your *most preferred* type of labwork?
- experiments where the expected outcome is known
 - experiments where you do not know the expected outcome, but the procedures are well known (e.g. instrumental analysis)
 - experiments where you do not know the outcome and procedures have to be devised (e.g. projects)

43. How is lab work assessed? (*please tick all that apply*)
- observation in lab marking of lab book separate written report
 - interview questions related to the experimental work
- other (*please specify*) _____

44. Do you think that the scores you achieve in the lab accurately reflect your skill as a laboratory worker?
- yes no

45. How much do you think that lab work assessments should contribute to degree classification?

- quite a lot (15-20%) some (10%) a little (5%) not at all

1.3.4 Group work

46. Do you find working in groups is:

- | | yes | no | not applicable |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. good for learning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. stimulating | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. fairly assessed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

47. How much time would you prefer to spend working in groups

- more time less time about the same amount of time as I do now

1.4 Assessment

Formative assessment - scores given, but not included in any overall assessment that influences or contributes to semester or year grades, or degree classification; for teaching or student self-assessment purposes only.

Summative assessment - scores that contribute to formal assessment programmes, including degree classification.

48. Considering the formal assessment on your course [i.e. examinations, tests, continuous assessment], do you think there is:

- too much not enough about the right amount

49. Do you think your assessments have been appropriate to the teaching you have received?

- yes no don't know

50. Do you think that overall, the methods of assessment used are accurately able to reflect your level of ability?

- yes no don't know

51. How would you prefer to see the balance between formal examinations and continuous assessment in your overall assessment?

- more weight on exams
- more weight on continuous assessment
- the present system has about the right balance

52. Do you experience both formative and summative assessment? (see above for definitions)

- yes no

53. Are your formative exercises and tests set in the same style as your summative assessments (e.g. dummy examination papers) so that you have a chance to practice?

- yes no don't know

54. Roughly how much of the coursework you do (*formative and summative*) is marked?

- all most some little none

55. How likely would you be to do coursework that is set but not assessed?

- I would usually do it I might do it sometimes I would probably not do it

56. Would you agree with the statement "I tend to ignore particular subjects that are covered in lectures but are not likely to come up in examinations"?

- completely partially not at all

57. Do you find that assessment at University is quite different from the types of assessment you experienced at school?

- yes no

58. If you have experience of 'peer assessment,' do you think it is:

- | | yes | no | don't know |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. fair | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. accurate | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1.5 Feedback

59. What type of feedback do you appreciate *more*? (Please select one from each set)

- a. written feedback oral feedback
- b. detailed individual feedback overview of group performance
- c. during the course (module) at the end of the course (module)
- d. other forms of feedback (please specify) _____

60. Do you receive regular feedback from the staff teaching the modules you are studying?

- all modules some modules only few modules no modules

61. Do you find the feedback you receive helps you to learn better?

- yes no don't know

62. Is coursework marked and returned to you promptly enough to be useful?

- always usually sometimes hardly ever

Section 2 Major theme – The Secondary-Tertiary transition

This section is about your experiences when you entered University. Unlike the other sections, it does not relate to your experience only in this academic year.

63. Did you take any tests in the department on entry to your course? [e.g. a mathematics test]

- yes no don't know

a. If **yes**, did you receive any feedback?

- yes no don't know

b. If you **did receive feedback**, has this helped you in your subsequent studies?

- yes no

64. When you began your course, how well did you feel that the *physics syllabus* you had studied at school/college had prepared you for university physics?

- very well not particularly well not really well enough

65. When you began your course, how well did you feel that the *mathematics syllabus* you had studied at school/college had prepared you for university physics?

- very well not particularly well not really well enough

66. THIS YEAR, do you believe that you are being sufficiently challenged in your course?

- yes in some modules no don't know

67. IN PREVIOUS YEARS, do you believe that you have been sufficiently challenged in your course?

- yes in some modules no don't know this is my first year

68. When you entered University do you think you would have performed better if you had

- | | much more | some more | a little more | I had sufficient |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. familiarity with solving problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. experience of practical work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. experience of IT/computing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. experience of project work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. better mathematical skills | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. command of English | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

69. If you have been assigned to a particular member of staff in your Department as a Personal Tutor, have you found this system helpful?

- yes no no system

70. If you have you been attached to a student from a later year of the course as a Mentor have you found this system helpful?

- yes no no system

71. Do you feel that in your first year you are/were sufficiently well supported in your studies?

- yes no don't know

Section 3 Major Theme – Learning and skills

3.1 Independent learning and study skills

72. Do you think you have:

- too much teaching and not enough independent study?
 too much independent study and not enough teaching?
 about the correct balance between teaching and independent study?

73. For coursework (e.g. examples sheets) do you prefer to

- work on your own work with other students

74. If you could choose, how much project work would you like to see in your course?

- more than at present less than at present about the same amount

75. During your university course, have you been provided with advice or training on how to develop your study skills?

- yes no

76. Do you think you are given sufficient exposure within your course to the transferable skills listed below to meet your needs?

- | | yes | no |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. communication | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. presentation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. IT skills | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. 'learning how to learn' | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. information handling | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

77. Is skills teaching:

- embedded in the science modules taught separately both

78. Do you think that the inclusion of skills teaching has enhanced your learning experience?

- yes to some extent not really at all

79. Do you feel that you have developed your study skills enough:

- a. to help you do well in your degree course? yes no don't know
b. to continue learning as necessary during your future professional life? yes no don't know

3.2 Non-physics modules

80. Are you studying subject module(s) outside physics and mathematics in this year of your course? [e.g. a language, humanities, business, biology]

- yes no

a. If you do study non-physics modules, when you began the year did you have:

- a free choice free choice but recommendations
 some choice, some compulsory no choice

b. Which subjects were set/did you choose? (*please include all*)?

c. Do you think studying these modules has been:

- very valuable useful a waste of time not what I wanted to do

81. Would you have liked more opportunity to study subject modules outside physics?

- yes no

Section 4 Major theme – Curriculum

4.1 The honours level physics courses

82. Were you offered a choice of BSc or MSci/MPhys?

- yes no

83. Do you personally think there is an advantage in taking a four-year 'M' course rather than a BSc?

- yes no

a. If **yes**, why do you think so?

- leaves you better prepared for employment better prepared for research degrees
 value for money more prestigious qualification
 other (please specify) _____

b. If **no**, why don't you think so:

- longer time before working and earning increased cost and debt
 enough knowledge and skills can be learned for in three years not intending to go into a physics based employment
 other (please specify) _____

84. Were you offered a choice of BSc or MSci/MPhys **with an industrial placement scheme**?

- yes no

If **no**, would this have been attractive to you?

- yes no

4.2 Curriculum content

85. How would you describe the curriculum/syllabus you are offered?

- too academic too applied well-balanced

86. Do you find the mathematics content of your courses:

- too challenging about right very straightforward

87. Would you say that the mathematics you have learned (or tried to learn!) has been:

- very useful useful not very useful

88. Would you like to have:

- more maths modules fewer maths modules current balance is about right

89. Do you think that your course covers enough areas of modern research?

- yes no don't know

90. Do you think that your course gives enough emphasis to applying basic physics to more general areas and problems?

- yes no don't know

4.3 Curriculum review

91. Does your year have student representation on a department courses/teaching committee?

- yes no don't know

92. Are students involved in course or module development?

- yes no don't know

93. Do you feel that your Department/School/University takes notice of the comments you make on teachers and teaching methods via questionnaires, staff/student panels etc.?

- yes no don't know

4.4 Career intentions

94. If you hope to move from a first degree to do an MSc and/or PhD, would it be:

- in physics (or a physics related subject) outside physics
 not sure have no intention of studying past first degree

95. Do you intend to follow:

- a career directly using physics knowledge and skills (e.g. in industry, teaching)
 a career not directly using physics knowledge or skills (e.g. finance, commerce)
 career plans not yet decided

96. Do you think your course is providing you with knowledge and skills that will be useful in your expected career?

- yes no don't know

Section 5 Major Theme – Incorporating modern practice into teaching

5.1 Teaching

97. In your experience, what priority do you think *most* of your lecturers/professors give to teaching?

- high priority some priority little priority no priority

98. Do you know which of your lecturers/professors are active researchers?

- yes no

99. Do you think that research work in your Department has directly enhanced the teaching and learning you have experienced?

- yes no don't know

100. If you are having a problem understanding a particular topic, indicate which of the following you would consult *first*: (*tick only one*)

- the WEB a textbook my student friends a lecturer or tutor
other (please specify) _____

101. Summarising your experience, would you say the majority of teaching on your course has been:

- excellent good satisfactory poor

5.2 Educational technology

102. Please indicate how helpful you have found the following in your learning:

	very helpful	helpful	not particularly helpful	definitely NOT helpful	no experience
a. Presentational Software <i>in</i> lectures e.g. Powerpoint	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Computer simulations/videos in lectures	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Experimental demonstrations in lectures	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. Interactive educational software	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. Computer simulations on the WEB	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. VLE/Intranet teaching material	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. On-line library access	<input type="checkbox"/>				
h. External Internet resources	<input type="checkbox"/>				
i. Blogs or wikis (from department or outside)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 6 Major theme – Employability

6.1 Preparing for employment

103. Did you choose your course principally for its employment prospects?

- yes no

104. Would you consider that a particular effort is made within your course to prepare you for employment?

- yes no

105. Are you expected to keep a personal development plan, academic portfolio, or personal log?

- yes no

106. *This year* are you given help with:

- writing a job application preparing a *curriculum vitae*

- attending an interview none of these

107. Are you made aware of health and safety regulation?

- no yes, but only for working in the department yes, with wider application

108. Are any of the following courses available for you to study?

- taught elements of business studies aspects of industrial physics
 patents and intellectual property rights entrepreneurship nothing of this type
 other (please specify) _____

a. If these courses are provided, are the lecturers/tutors:

- from the physics department from other university departments
 from both inside and outside the physics department

b. Do you consider the lecturers who give these courses to be experts in these fields?

- yes no don't know

109. Are you given opportunities to see what things are like by visiting:

- departmental research laboratories local physics-based companies
 companies linked to departmental research other employers none of these

6.2 Work placement and student exchange (e.g. ERASMUS) schemes

	Work Placement			Student Exchange		
	yes	no	don't know	yes	no	don't know
a. Is either scheme running in your department?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b. Do you intend to take up (or have you already taken up) either (or both) work placement and/or student exchange?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c. Are you automatically provided with all the necessary information about it?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d. Is adequate course credit given for work placement or work completed on exchange?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e. If your department does not currently have schemes, would you like to have had the opportunity to take part?	<input type="checkbox"/>					

111. Are placements arranged by:

- the department individual students either or both don't know

112. Are you offered a choice of work placements?

- only in the UK in the UK and Europe worldwide not offered work placement

113. Do you think that work placement is a good way to prepare for employment?

- yes no don't know

6.3 Employers

114. Are there links between the department and employers of physics graduates?

- yes no don't know

115. Have recent graduates ever returned to the department to talk to undergraduates about the jobs they are doing?

- yes no don't know

116. Do employers visit the department to give guest lectures or provide information directly to the students about their companies?

- yes no don't know

117. Do you ever have an opportunity to meet with employers who are linked with departmental research (apart from careers fairs)?

- yes no don't know

118. Do you think that employers are satisfied with:

	yes	no	don't know
a. graduates from your physics department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. graduate physicists in general	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 7 Further comments

Please write any further comments you may have in the space below.

Many thanks for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire.

Please return to:
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