

BMB Staff Student Liaison Group

Wednesday 10th February 2021

14:00 – 16:00

MS Teams

	Agenda item	Lead	Paper
1.	Welcome & Apologies for Absence	Chair	
2.	Minutes of the last BMB SSLG	Chair	SSLGBMB22021-01
3.	Matters arising	Chair	
4.	BMB Academic Rep Reports		
	5.1 Year 1	Yuki Agarwala Miss Angellica Marta	SSLGBMB22021-02
	5.2 Year 2	Cris Riquelme Vano Nitya Gupta	SSLGBMB22021-03
	5.3 Year 3	Kah Ng Katherine Bethell	SSLGBMB22021-04
5.	BMB Wellbeing Rep Reports	Dominic Haworth-Staines, Zicheng Wang, Cristina Piñel Neparidze	SSLGBMB22021-05
6.	Amendment to BMB Prizes	Alyeisha Joseph	SSLGBMB22021-06
7.	Update from Library Manager and Liaison Librarian	Rebecca Jones	
8.	Any Other Business		
9.	Date of Next Meeting		
	Wednesday 2 nd June 2021		

BSc Medical Biosciences Staff Student Liaison Group
Minutes of Meeting held on 11 November 2020

Present:	Dr Ali Abbara, Prof Ian Adcock, Yuki Agarwala, Dr Toby Athersuch, Fran Bertolini, Katherine Bethell, Trish Brown, Dr Anne Burke-Gaffney, Dr Laura Canevari, Lisa Carrier, Jai Chapman, Dr Peter Clark, Dr Ana Costa-Pereira, Dr Charlotte Dean, Dr Jacqueline Dickson, Dr Kirsty Flower, Dr Luisa Garcia-Haro, Deanna Greenwood (Secretary), Nitya Gupta, Chris Harris, Dominic Haworth-Staines, Dr Chris John, Rebecca Jones, Aleysha Joseph, Dr Hector Keun, Dr Nicholas Kirkby, Rachel Kwok, Dr Harry Leitch, Dr Birgit Leitinger, Angellica Marta, Dr Alison McGregor, Muntaha Naeem, Kah Ng, Cristina Pinel Neparidze, Dorrit Pollard-Davey, Dr Andy Porter, Mabel Prendergast, Cristina Riquelme Vano, Dr Duncan Rogers, Dr Agate Sadza, Rebecca Sie, Elena Torrell, Zicheng Wang
Apologies	Dr Samuel Barnes, Prof. Charlotte Bevan, Josh Blacker, Dr Vania Braga, Dr Letizia Foroni, Dr James Jensen-Martin, Rumi Khanom, Dr Jia Li, Mr Martin Lupton, Vanessa Powell, Dr Brian Robertson, Dr Rebecca Salter, Dr Paul Stratton, Prof Terry Tetley, Natania Varshey, Dr Elizabeth Want, James Wild

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence	
REPORTED	The Chair welcomed members to the first BMB SSLG of the 2020-21 academic year.
2. Updated Terms of Reference	
AGREED	Approved pending minor amendments to be circulated with meeting notes
3. Minutes of the previous BMB SSLG	
AGREED	Minutes from the last meeting were approved as an accurate record
4. Matters Arising	
NOTED	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>4.4 – Dr Kirsty Flowers has been appointed as Head of Academic Tutoring in BMB and resources are being developed. The new programme has started in Year 1 and content provided by tutors including pointing towards centre for academic English for essay writing skills has been provided to other years.</p> <p>4.22 – Dr Nicholas Kirkby appointed as module lead for projects and Dr Ricardo Petraco Da Cunha appointed as module for project recruitment.</p> <p>5.4 – A paper is being submitted following discussion around BMA charter.</p>
5. BMB Welfare Rep Reports	
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-03 - Year 1 Report
NOTED	5.1 Due to the required move to online learning, students feel that they are not meeting enough people from the course and this is causing them to struggle.
	5.2 It was asked whether students were encouraged to keep their cameras on during sessions to promote interaction. Most modules do encourage this but depending on the bandwidth of student studying, this may not be possible. Personal tutors have also raised a concern that students do not have their camera on during one to one meetings.

	5.3	It was suggested that some non-academic activities could be timetabled, perhaps linked with Year 2+3.
ACTION	5.4	Welfare Reps and Welfare Team to discuss potential timetabled social activities
DISCUSSED	5.5	Students have also raised concerns about not being able to get to know the academic team. It was suggested that there could be office hours with bookable slots to allow students to receive feedback, or a "Get to know you" Q&A session. It was noted that being on campus for Lab Pod sessions will likely improve the sense of community between students
ACTION	5.6	Welfare reps to contact Chris Harris and Alison McGregor to discuss potential solutions regarding getting to know staff
NOTED	5.7	The feedback from students who completed the survey indicated that many students did not know who to contact if they were having welfare issues. It was noted that there is a confidential link in the BMB bulletins which students can use to contact welfare. FEO will continue to include this information in future bulletins.
	5.8	Students felt supported by the course regarding self-isolation due Covid-19. Welfare included an item in bulletins regarding how to report Covid-19 self-isolation. If anyone is unsure, they should be encouraged to contact the welfare team. It was noted that the welfare survey was circulated to students before the bulletin was sent out and that all students in self-isolation felt well supported.
ACTION	5.9	Programmes Team to coordinate bulletins schedule to ensure the first bulletin for all 3 years is sent to students earlier in term 1. This will ensure that students have full access to information as soon as possible
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-04 - Year 2 report	
DISCUSSED	6.1	There has been a noticeable negative impact on overseas students. It was noted that the issues regarding i-explore modules and their timing have been contributing to this. Any students who have concerns regarding i-explore should be encouraged to reach out.
NOTED	4.12	Students are fully aware of self-isolation procedures and support
	4.13	As with Year 1, students are missing the interaction with their peers.
DISCUSSED	4.14	Feedback has indicated that students are struggling to contact their personal tutors.
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-05 - Year 3 report	
NOTED	7.1	Similarly to the other years, Year 3 students have reported higher levels of stress due to lockdown and Covid-19 related issues. The Welfare representative is creating a booklet to help students cope with stress to help combat this.
	7.2	Welfare are working to ensure personal tutors are aware of students who are outside London, as well as students who are isolation.
	7.3	Students praised the Welcome Week sessions, and feedback that some of the information would be useful to them prior to the start of the academic year.
ACTION	7.4	BMB Year 3 Welfare rep to gather suggestions regarding improved communication prior to the start of the year following concerns raised around communication.
NOTED	7.5	There was a divided level of satisfaction on the subject of personal tutors. A large number had not been contacted by their tutor or would like their tutor to be in contact more regularly.

	7.6	Welfare noted that there was an issue with a tutor resigning immediately prior to the start of term. The reps and welfare have worked together to ensure all students have been assigned to a tutor.
ACTION	7.6	Welfare and Welfare reps to follow up concerns around personal tutors
	7.7	Head of Year 3 and Welfare representatives to meet to discuss training given to supervisors prior to the start of the year
6. BMB Academic Rep Reports		
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-06 - Year 1 Report	
NOTED NOTED	8.1	Students are finding on campus sessions helpful. As they are only invited to specific sessions it has been requested that the full schedule of sessions be made available. It was suggested this could be built into the bulletin. FEO to discuss further outside of meeting.
	8.2	There has been an issue with students who live far away not being able to make it to home on time for their horizons session.
	8.3	<u>Blackboard</u> Some module activities do not always show as completed – FEO to discuss potential solution with E-Learning. Students have asked if there can be a way for it to be obvious that a session contains no material rather than simply not showing a link – FEO to discuss with E-Learning. Students have been encouraged to flag any issues with FEO BMB.
	8.4	<u>STAT</u> Students have had some technical difficulties for this module. Kirsty Flowers noted that students can contact bmb.stat to organise a one-on-one to discuss any issues. KF will reiterate this in class. Students would appreciate more feedback regarding coding from the ICA. They feel peer feedback is not enough.
	8.5	<u>CBI</u> Students who have not studied chemistry are finding it more difficult. Course lead noted that they're trying to find a middle ground to keep all students engaged with the material despite the vast difference in experience level and that student will gradually become on a more even footing. It was suggested there could be some pre-degree materials for this module as there is with MBBS.
	8.6	<u>MCB</u> Students are finding the module complex and are struggling with concepts. They would like some sort of drop-in session or more resources to support them. It was recommended that students should contact the module team if they are still having issues. BL + Year 1 Reps to discuss this further outside of SSLG
	8.7	It was suggested that a syllabus be provided for modules. It was noted in the meeting that each module has a module specification available via Blackboard.
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-08 – Year 2 Report	
NOTED	9.1	Most students are happy with how classes are spread throughout the week. They would like to know the proposed plan for terms 2+3. It was noted that Lab Pods should be running as planned in January.
	9.2	Mixed feedback was received regarding online learning. Students prefer being able to ask questions via chat and being able to control slide themselves. Students feel they receive more support in in-person sessions and that online sessions can be impersonal.

	9.3	There have been some occasions where technical issues have affected T-RAT and I-RAT explanations and that students can sometimes struggle to access LAMS, which is particularly stressful for PHARMA which is assessed. Students should be advised to contact E-Learning with details of the issue.
	9.4	Students would appreciate a drop-in session to interact face-to-face with teaching fellows.
	9.5	PHARMA Students appreciate the additional support provided by the team. They feel there was not enough time for I-RATS and that they were difficult. Students raised concerns around the link between e-module materials and assessment as well as the difficulty of assessment. This is to be expected at the start of the module but should it continue to be a concern, the module team would be happy to discuss ahead of the next SSLG.
ACTION	9.6	Due to time constraints, academic reps will discuss module specific concerns with the relevant module staff
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB2021-08 – Year 3	
NOTED	10.1	Welcome weeks was well received but it focused more on wet lab projects than other placement types. Students would appreciate project type specific sessions – this is being discussed by the programme team and will be implemented for next year.
DISCUSSED	10.2	Feedback from placements has been overwhelmingly positive: LABP – content is interesting and adapted projects kept students well informed of any changes. Some dry lab students reported struggling with coding and were wondering if there could be some coding resources/sessions made available via Blackboard WKBP – enjoying being out in the workplace and are hoping the buddy system will help support with issues concerning work/life balance. LITP – only 2 students provided feedback but they are both enjoying
	10.3	Relationships with supervisors are mainly positive. There is some inconsistency and students wondered if there should be a standard guidance for supervisors. Alison McGregor noted that supervisors have to adapt to individual students, and this can make it difficult to prescribe a 'recipe'. If students are struggling with supervisors they can contact Vania Braga or Nick Kirkby. Alison and Nick to potentially organise a drop-in focused on managing supervisors. Students would like students to check in more but there may also be some work regarding setting expectations for students to offset this.
	10.4	Buddy system- This is being organised by the FEO and will be implemented in the coming week.
ACTION	10.5	FEO to reiterate in bulletin who to contact regarding different issues and concerns
7. Update from Library Manager and Liaison Librarian (updated via chat due to overrunning of meeting)		
NOTED	11.1	Year One students have now completed their library student but not many of them submitted the feedback forms. It was noted that feedback would be appreciated.
	11.2	54 Year One students have not completed the plagiarism quiz and are being reminded to do so.
8. Any Other Business		
NOTED	12.1	The meeting overran due to the amount of feedback to go through. The chair thanked all who attended.
9. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 10th February 2021		

Academic Rep Agenda for the Student-Staff Meeting [February 10]

School of Medicine
SSLGBMB22021-02

To: SSLG BMB Year 1

Date: 10th February 2021, Term 2

Presented by: Academic Representatives for Year 1 BMB – Angellica Marta and Yuki Agarwala

Written by: Academic Representatives for Year 1 BMB – Angellica Marta and Yuki, ICSMSU Academic Officer for BMB – Jai Chapman

BMB Year 1 Student Report

1. Introduction

This paper summarises the findings from a survey sent to the BMB year 1 cohort on the 25th of January 2021. 41 students responded to the survey and were invited to give their opinions and concerns regarding past ICAs, exams and remote learning.

2. Recommendations

The committee is invited to:

- Consider having formative assessments for all the summative assessments, with feedback from the assessors
- Consider having occasional INTS and MCB sessions that are dedicated for Q&A, especially due to exams

Padlet

Students were asked their opinion on the existing Padlet system and whether or not they preferred to stay anonymous.

- Majority of the students (37 students - 90%) feel more comfortable asking questions with the current anonymous Padlet system
- The remaining students (4 students - 10%) feel that showing names would make the students accountable for their post and would also allow the teaching fellows to know the level of understanding of the students, enabling them to offer extra support if necessary.

Students were asked on what improvements they would like to have for the existing Padlet system.

- Suggestions to switch to a new system that allows notifications when your post has been answered and provides subsections to make navigation easier.
- Suggestions to have a separate Padlet for exams.

Improvements to Q&A System

Students were asked if they had any suggestions for a Q&A system:

- Suggestions to have INTS+ sessions / group tutorial sessions / drop-in live Q&A sessions every 2-3 weeks to clarify content (14 students - 35%)

Suggestions and Feedback From Exams

Students were asked for any suggestions for the INTS exam:

- Suggestions about having an upload image button at the end of every question to make it easier for the student and assessor to navigate between the question and the uploads
- Requests for specimen papers for all modules, considering that the open book exams were quite different from the past paper questions. This would help understand mark allocation for short essay questions with as many as 20 marks.

Students were asked for any feedback they had on past STATs and CBI exams:

- Concerns regarding how the CBI exam was testing the ability to plot excel graphs rather than chemistry ability, as some students had technical troubles with excel.
- Students suggested knowing that excel could be a requisite for the exam would save time with technical issues.

INTS TBL, ICAs, and Lab Pods

Students were asked if there were any aspects that they thought went well last time and should also be applied this term, or if they had any requests for improvements of the TBL sessions.

- Praise for how the MCB team answered a few popular padlet questions in their Face to Face session which was very appreciated as the students were able to hear explanations in person.
- Suggestions regarding having references to resources on extra reading at the end of the eModules.
- Suggestions on having more knowledge check questions and quizzes for INTS and some practice questions in the consolidation.
- Suggestions for having class activities that allow students to meet others outside their TBL group
- Concerns regarding the length and format of the INTS eModules which made them slightly difficult to follow because some information was repeated and contradicting in various sections.

Students were asked about if they had any suggestions for the upcoming ICAs based on past ICAs.

- Suggestions for having a formative assessment before each summative assessment to allow students to learn from their mistakes before the summatives

STATS Data Interpretation

Students were asked to give a rating for the feedback provided for the STATS ICA, with 1 being that marks were completely unjustified and 5 being very detailed feedback and justification. The average rating was 3.54 out of 5.

- There was praise for the helpful and thorough feedback, but some students are still unsure of how they could have gotten better marks and requested for more feedback on improvements
- Concerns raised about contradictory feedback between examiners and conflicting comments

Students were asked to give a rating for the support provided for creating the presentation, with 1 being absolutely no help and 5 being full support. The average rating was 3.27.

- There was praise for sufficient support for the ICA through the formative assessments and the STAT Padlet, but some students still want more practice
- Suggestions to have more detailed guidelines on each question

- Suggestions to have more guidance on what to write for the individual sections of the report.

MCB Presentation

Students were asked to give a rating for the feedback provided for the MCB presentation, with 1 being that marks were completely unjustified and 5 being very detailed feedback and justification. The average rating was 3.05 out of 5.

- There was praise for the constructive and helpful feedback, but some students are still not sure on how to improve
- Concerns raised about how the comments did not reflect the marks given
- Concerns raised about contradictory feedback between examiners

Students were asked to give a rating for the support provided for creating the presentation, with 1 being absolutely no help and 5 being full support. The average rating was 2.95.

- Suggestions to have an example of a good presentation
- Suggestions to have more time preparing for the formative presentation so students have time to prepare it to the best of their ability and receive feedback accordingly
- Suggestions to have formative feedback from lecturers instead of peer assessments
- Suggestions for more guidance on the discussion section of the presentation and a detailed instructions of which aspect of the presentation the questions could be asked from

MCB Data Interpretation

Students were asked to give a rating for the feedback provided for the MCB Data Interpretation, with 1 being that marks were completely unjustified and 5 being very detailed feedback and justification. The average rating was 3.61 out of 5.

- There was praise for constructive and thorough feedback, but some students would like feedback on general structure of answers and writing style as a whole
- Suggestions to explain the mark allocation as well as the meanings of half marks
Concerns raised about being provided with more personalized feedback regarding improvements
- Concerns raised about contradictory feedback between examiners

Students were asked to give a rating for the support provided for writing the data interpretation, with 1 being absolutely no help and 5 being full support. The average rating was 3.27.

- There was praise for the amount of practice students received for the data interpretation

To: SSLG BMB Year 2

Date: 10th February 2021, Term 2

Presented by: Academic Representatives for Year 2 BMB – Cristina Riquelme Vano and Nitya Gupta

Written by: Academic Representatives for Year 2 BMB – Cristina Riquelme Vano and Nitya Gupta, ICSMSU Academic Officer for BMB – Jai Chapman

BMB Year 2 Student Report

1. Introduction

This paper summarises the findings from a survey sent to the BMB Year 2 cohort on the 24th January 2021. 52 students responded to the survey and were invited to give their opinions and concerns about modules, assessments, remote learning and Lab Pod 2.

2. Recommendations

The committee is invited to:

- Consider providing model answers for past papers in the future as a form of guidance for students.
- Consider reviewing length and difficulty of SCRB and PHAR exams, particularly taking length into account when marking.
- Consider reassuring students attending Lab Pod 2 about rules and regulations concerning protection from COVID-19 when attending labs, particularly in regard to how to approach social distancing within teams.

Padlet

Many questions that students had posted on Padlet remained unanswered even after the exams had taken place. For the most part, the teaching fellows have generally been on top of all the questions on Padlet, but students would like more attention to be paid to the queries.

When asked about replacing Padlet with another system, 69% of students said they would prefer remaining anonymous and 29% would prefer their name being visible just to teaching fellows.

Module Feedback

GEN

Exams

The majority (62%) of the students who responded to the survey said that the GEN exam was manageable in terms of time allocated to complete the exam. 24% thought that the exam was 'too long' and did not have sufficient time to complete it to their satisfaction and the rest (14%) thought that the exam was 'too short'. 72% of students found the exam manageable and just right in terms of difficulty, and the rest (28%) thought the exam was 'too difficult'.

ICAs

Most of the students who responded, 72%, thought that the GEN ICA was manageable in terms of the level of difficulty and the rest thought the ICA was 'too difficult'.

Module content + F2F session

54% of GEN students think that the level of difficulty of the module is 'just right', and 46% think that the content is 'too difficult'. When asked about the quality of the face-to-face sessions over MS Teams, most students, 51% responded with 'okay', followed by 30% who responded with either 'good' or 'very good' and only 20% chose 'poor'. Some students have commented that they enjoy the how challenging the tAPPs are and appreciate the level of difficulty. They find that often the GEN face-to-face sessions can become quite disorganised, however, this did improve as the term progressed.

PHAR

Exams

The majority (54%) of the students who responded to the survey said that the PHAR exam was manageable in terms of time allocated to complete the exam. The rest were evenly split between the exam being 'too short' and 'too long'. 55% of students found the level of difficulty of the exam to be manageable and the rest 45% thought the exam was 'too difficult'. When asked for comments, a lot of students shared complaints about the exam being too difficult. They also felt that the time limit within which they were expected to complete the exam was insufficient for them to properly answer all the questions, in particular the data interpretation questions.

ICAs

Most of the students who responded, 74%, thought that the PHAR ICA was manageable in terms of the level of difficulty and the rest thought the ICA was 'too difficult'. The majority (56%) were satisfied with the final grade that they received on the ICA, and the rest were split between dissatisfied and neutral.

Students have suggested replacing the iRAT tests with a different assessment such as an essay or a data interpretation exercise. Furthermore, for future iRATs, perhaps more care could be taken to minimise errors and not to have overcomplicated questions as a lot of students feel as though they are being 'tricked'.

Module content + F2F session

89% of PHAR students think that the level of difficulty of the module is 'just right'. When asked about the quality of the face-to-face sessions over MS Teams, 70% of the students responded with either 'good' or 'very good', followed by 20% who responded with 'okay'. Students feel as though the tAPP exercises are too easy (sometimes simpler than the iRAT questions) and not challenging enough. They also found that the TAPPs were not interactive as they did not require much debate or discussion within the team. Furthermore, the students found that the tAPPs did not at all prepare them for the data interpretation section in the exam that was more challenging than the questions discussed during class. They think that too much time is spent on the iRAT questions and discussion that could be spent on tAPPs.

SCRB

Exam

In terms of time taken to be completed most students found the exam either too long (46%) or manageable (38%). Students have reported Section B, the data interpretation, was very long and could not be done with the recommended time

In terms of difficulty most students found the exam was too difficult (59%) while 38% thought it was manageable. Some students also added that although the exam was very difficult, they liked the challenge.

ICA

In terms of difficulty most students found the ICA was manageable (88%).

Most students were satisfied with their ICA marks (58%), 25% were okay and 17% dissatisfied.

48% of students were satisfied with the feedback they got, 26% were okay and 26% were dissatisfied.

Module content + F2F session

In terms of overall difficulty of the content, 65% of students thought it was manageable while 35% of students thought it was difficult. In terms of quality of the F2F sessions, most students (83%) rated them either good or very good.

MHD

Exam

Almost all the students (90%) who responded to the survey said that the MHD exam was manageable in terms of time allocated to complete the exam. Two students did find that the exam was 'too long' and they did not have enough time. 68% of students found the level of difficulty of the exam to be manageable and the rest, 32%, thought the exam was 'too difficult'.

ICAs

Most of the students who responded, 77%, thought that the MHD ICA was manageable in terms of the level of difficulty and the rest thought the ICA was 'too difficult'. We received mixed responses on the students' level of satisfaction with the ICA mark. 33% of students were satisfied with the grade they received for MHD ICA, 38% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 27% were dissatisfied. Furthermore, the majority of the MDH students, 50%, were dissatisfied with the quality of feedback that they received, and the rest were almost evenly split between satisfied and dissatisfied.

Module content + F2F session

72% of MHD students think that the level of difficulty of the module is 'just right'. When asked about the quality of the face-to-face sessions over MS Teams, 67% of the students responded with either 'good' or 'very good', followed by 27% who responded with 'okay'.

CTB

Exam

In terms of time taken to be completed most students found the exam was manageable (67%).

In terms of difficulty most students found the exam was manageable (74%).

Some students would like more content-based questions

ICA

In terms of difficulty most students found the ICA was manageable (79%).

Most students were dissatisfied with their ICA marks (57%), 20% were okay and 23% satisfied.

53% of students were dissatisfied with the feedback they got, 23% were okay and 23% were dissatisfied.

Module content + F2F session

In terms of overall difficulty of the content, 95% of students thought it was manageable.

In terms of quality of the F2F sessions, most students (70%) rated them either good or very good, while the remaining 30% rated them as okay.

LP2

Students attending labs in person raised the following concerns:

- Safety when attending labs (working closely and eating with other students even if they are from their bubble). Pressure on having to stay away from your lab partner for work when having two people together is needed, to adhere to social distancing.
- Sudden transition from exam to labs. Students expressed the first two sessions were very packed and stressful. They were given short time notice to form hypotheses and lack of guidance.
- Increased workload due to some teammates being overseas (working alone).
- Not enough time given to do the lab report (some students think 2 weeks is not enough for them)
- Difficulties in communication with students from different time zones (i.e. to arrange lab meetings)

Students attending labs remotely raised the following concerns:

- Difficulty to follow up actual techniques without hands-on experience and feeling like they are missing out on the most important part of the course.
- Are not sure about what they should write on the eLab books.
- Students not communicating enough with teammates. Difficult to keep up to date and help them.

To: SSLG BMB Year 3

Date: 10th February 2021, Term 2

Presented by: Academic Representatives for Year 3 BMB – Kah Yan Ng and Katherine Bethell

Written by: Academic Representatives for Year 3 BMB –Kah Yan Ng and Katherine Bethell, ICSMSU Academic Officer for BMB – Jai Chapman

BMB Year 3 Student Report

1. Introduction

This paper summarises the findings from a survey sent to the BMB Year 3 cohort on the 24th January 2021. 45 students responded to the survey and were invited to give their opinions and concerns about third year placements and remote learning.

2. Recommendations

The committee is invited to:

- Consider contacting project supervisors to explain the structure of the BMB placement and clarify the amount of work students are expected to undertake
- Consider inviting LABP students to a session regarding assessments very soon to ease their minds regarding the upcoming report and presentation.
- Consider holding a Q&A session this term to explain in more depth the structure of the short modules and answer any questions students may have.
- Consider how the mitigating circumstances process will work due to the effect of COVID-19 on placements

Placement Feedback

Lab Based Project

Students on wet lab projects are enjoying learning new exciting laboratory techniques and exploring new areas of science beyond concepts learnt in first and second-year modules. Several students have mentioned that they felt well prepared for their lab placement due to the skills and techniques learnt in Lab Pod modules. By gaining insights into academic research and lab research in a business setting students feel well prepared for further future studies, especially for masters and PhDs.

Some students on dry lab placements have felt they have been left alone to independently carry out their project with very little guidance from supervisors. This has caused some worry regarding the amount of work they have completed compared to students going into laboratories for wet lab placements. We believe having more frequent drop-in sessions run by faculty could have eased concerns had by students working remotely.

Some student's projects are completely different to what was advertised last year, it would be helpful if year 2 students were provided more information regarding the project and in detail their responsibilities .

Work Based Project

Students have settled into the working environment well and are happy to have become part of the team. In particular, students are immensely enjoying collaborating with their colleagues in projects that directly impact society.

Some WKBP students feel overwhelmed with their companies' extra work, which gives them less time to focus on their assessed project. It would be helpful if BMB can make it clearer to the company to allow students to focus on their assessed project.

Literature Project

Students have found their research topic interesting as it has allowed them to explore in depth a new area of science. Due to the remote, independent nature of the project students are worried they have not been able to properly learn transferable skills and have felt isolated.

We would recommend for future years setting up more meetings between literature placement students where they can discuss their projects with fellow students and give feedback to each other. Students in LABP find lab meetings really useful and a similar set up for LITP students could help those who feel isolated.

Impacts of COVID-19

The impact of the pandemic on placement varies for different projects. Some students have been severely affected by restrictions with limited working times. These restrictions impacted data collection in Term 1, especially when students were told to leave labs two weeks earlier than planned due to the college guidelines.

Students are worried that there will be a lack of results to form a coherent and complete "research story". We believe it would be beneficial for faculty to send out a message to students to ease these worries and reaffirm reports will not be marked based on the number of significant results a student has.

Although some students have found a change to dry lab project slightly disappointing because of the pandemic and find it challenging to work independently they are appreciative of BMBs contingency plan for remote data generation.

Guidance

Supervisor

As a whole, students feel that their supervisors have provided them with enough guidance. The supervisors are very kind and understanding of the workload given, they show a genuine interest in the students' wellbeing and learning by providing thorough guidance and support when needed.

Some students feel that their supervisors are not well informed about the course, especially regarding the pandemic guidelines. It would be desirable if BMB can work more closely with the supervisors to keep them informed about the projects' timescale. Some supervisors are unavailable to guide the students in-person or too busy to schedule a meeting, leading to last-minute scheduled appointments outside of working hours; some students are meeting with supervisors on the weekends which is not beneficial for the student's wellbeing.

Faculty

More than half of the students feel that the faculty gave plenty of guidance regarding placements. Although several students undertaking dry lab placement believe BMB did not sufficiently prepare them for extensive coding as computational techniques were challenging to understand through self-learning.

Several students have expressed concerns that they have not received enough guidance and information about the short modules; it would be appreciated if an update about short modules could be sent out to students especially regarding if they will be delivered remotely or in-person.

Feedback System and Bulletin

Most students prefer the current anonymous system of Padlet compared to a system where their names are visible to everyone. Students feel that the bulletin sent by BMB is helpful, especially the assessment information, project and COVID-19 updates. It would be useful to shorten the updates or add a section to summarise the most important points.

Assessments

Assessment Q&A

The WKBP and LITP students who attended the assessment Q&A found it very useful and were thankful that all the questions were answered with additional details provided when asked. The format worked well, and students now better understand the way they'll be assessed. It was mentioned that having these sessions earlier could have been beneficial as some students started their assessments a long time ago.

All 25 LABP students who completed the survey said they would attend an assessment Q&A with faculty and believe it would be useful.

Concerns and Safety Net

The majority of students are concerned about the weighting of third year. Although the faculty have tried their best to mitigate any COVID-19 related problems, most students have been affected. It is understood that the college does not wish to put in place safety nets this year but approximately 70% students mentioned that having no safety net policy would be significantly detrimental to them.

Concerns have also been raised regarding the fairness of judging the difficulty of each student's project; will assessors be made aware of how much independent work students have been required to do without guidance or how much time the student was allowed in labs because of COVID? We believe faculty need to be clear regarding how projects will be marked when they have varied a lot in workload and type of work conducted.

It would be useful for faculty to send out an update clearing up these concerns. Along with the faculty's plans on how remote presentations will work. For example, students are worried about who the assessors will be, potential network issues and time differences if they are still abroad. Some students are also apprehensive about lab presentations being due on the last day of placement as it gives no time to collate data especially if students have reduced time in labs due to COVID-19.

Students are worried that the timetable of the short modules may not reflect their learning ability accurately. The assessments make up a large percentage of the overall degree grade, but the pandemic might affect the standard of teaching, which affects the students' understanding and therefore the quality of assignments produced. We believe it would be beneficial to hold a Q&A session with students to answer all of their queries regarding short modules.

Additional Queries

Several students have asked whether the short modules can be released before term 3 so that they can begin their preparation early. If possible, this would be really useful for students and help them feel less stressed about the upcoming modules and assessments.



Term 2 – BMB Welfare Report

Feedback collection Information:

- Total survey respondents:
 - Year 1: 39
 - Year 2: 52
 - Year 3: 45
- Survey opened on **25th of January** and closed on **30th of January**
- Qualitative feedback methods: open-text boxes on Qualtrics survey and student interviews

Areas of focus:

- Welfare communication and home student support
- International student support
- Mitigating circumstances
- Safety net policy

Welfare Vice Chair of Representatives: Mabel Prendergast

Year 1 Wellbeing Representative: Dominic Haworth-Staines

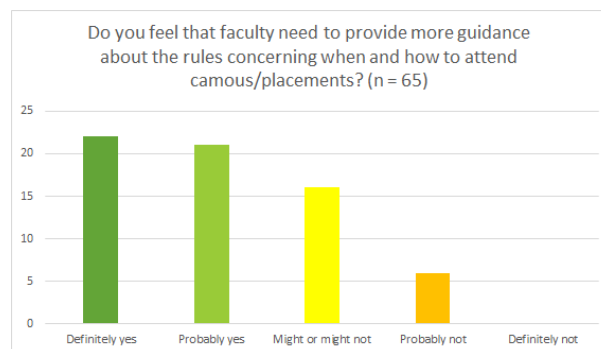
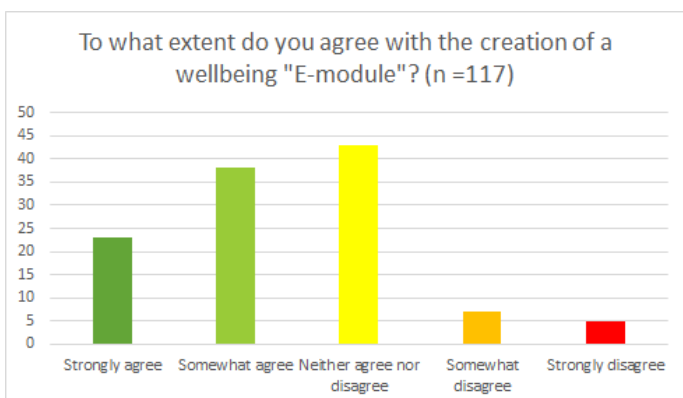
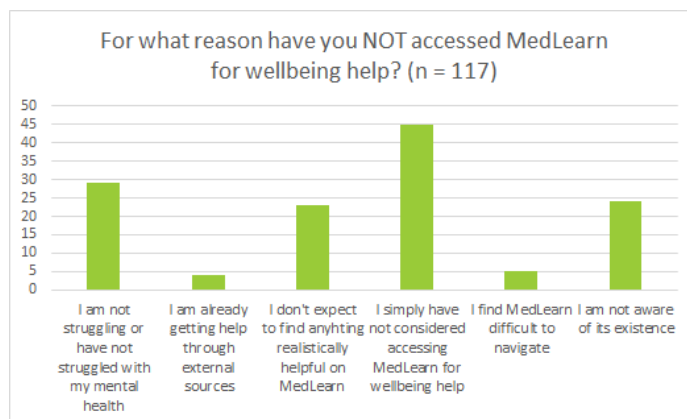
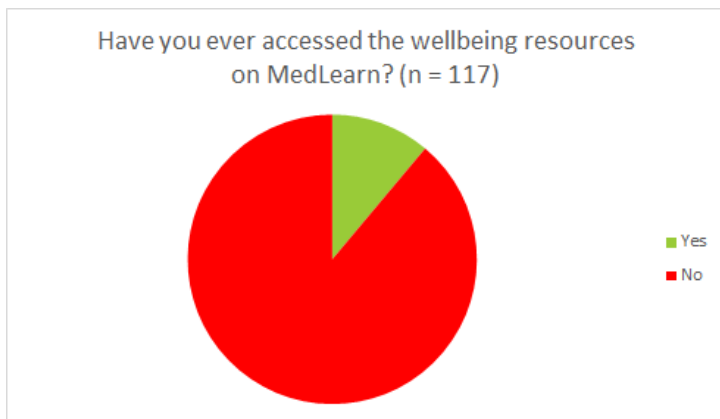
Year 2 Wellbeing Representative: Zicheng Wang

Year 3 Wellbeing Representative: Cristina Piñel Neparidze





Focus 1 – Welfare Communication Methods and Home Student Guidance



Qualitative Feedback

Home student guidance:

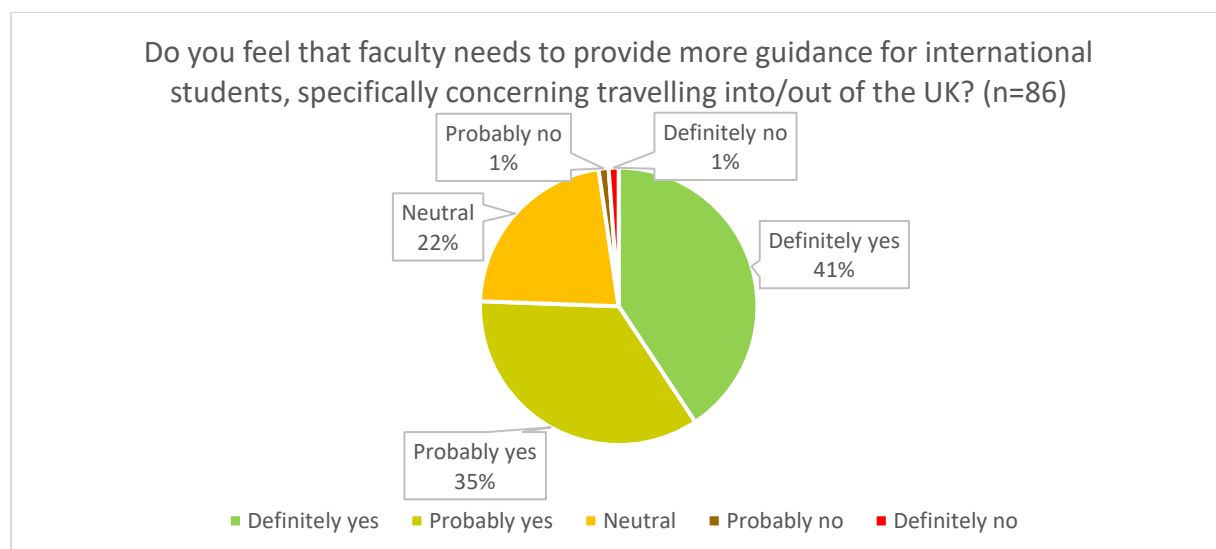
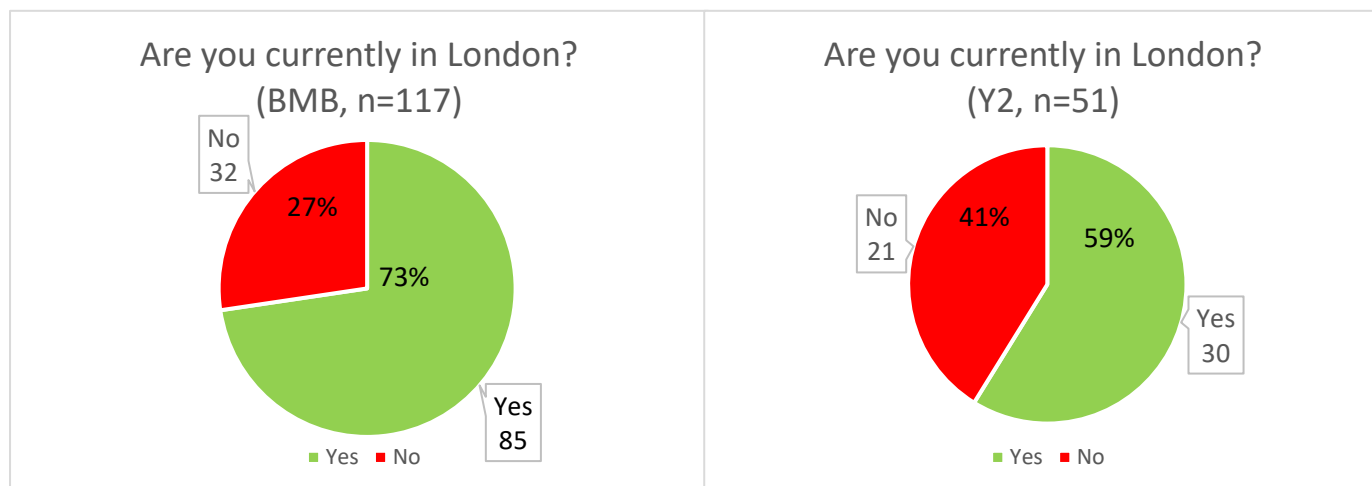
- “How the one-way system works, what is open and what is closed at Hammersmith Hospital.”
- “It would be great to have a short summary of what you can/can’t do, go or not go, etc. For now, the information is slightly all over the place.”

Action Points

- Consider creating an E-module dedicated to wellbeing as an alternative or supplement to Medlearn
- Specific newsletter explaining all the rules and regulations, clarifying where students can go on campus and which rules, they must follow in those areas.



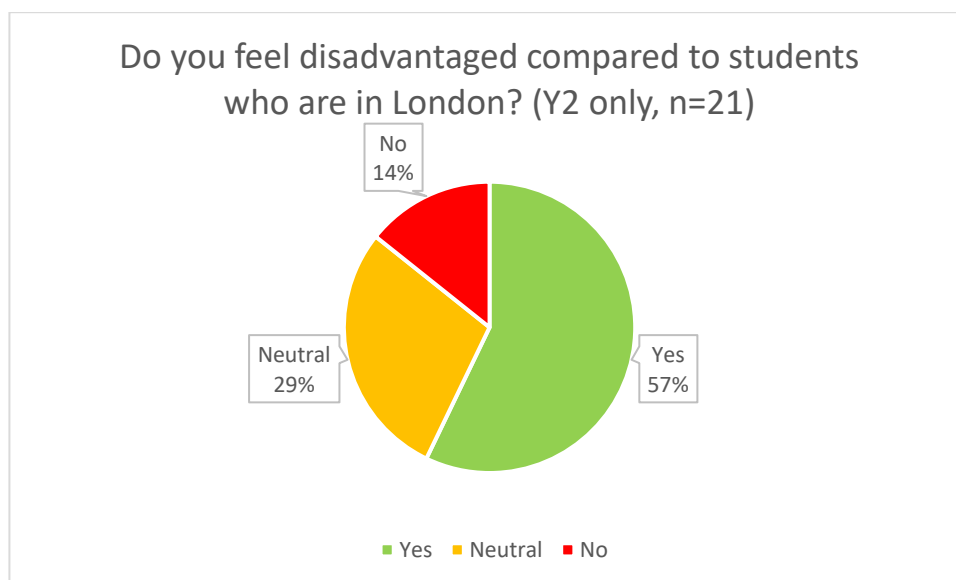
Focus 2a – Guidance for International Students



Action Points

- Newsletter specifically made for students who are currently overseas considering specific topics such as...
 - o Travel guidance
 - o COVID tests
 - o Absences due to quarantine
- Updates about COVID restriction in the UK for students who are currently overseas in order to understand the situation better

Focus 2b – Equality for International Students



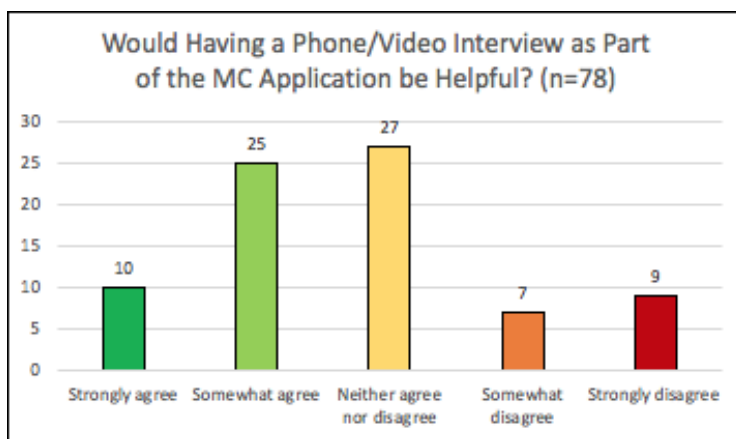
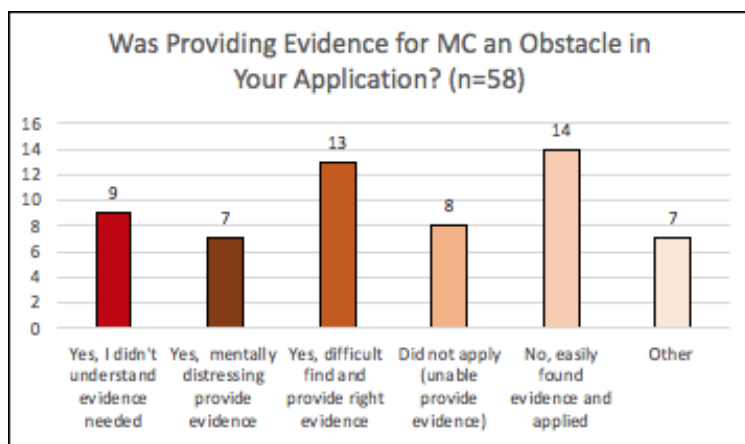
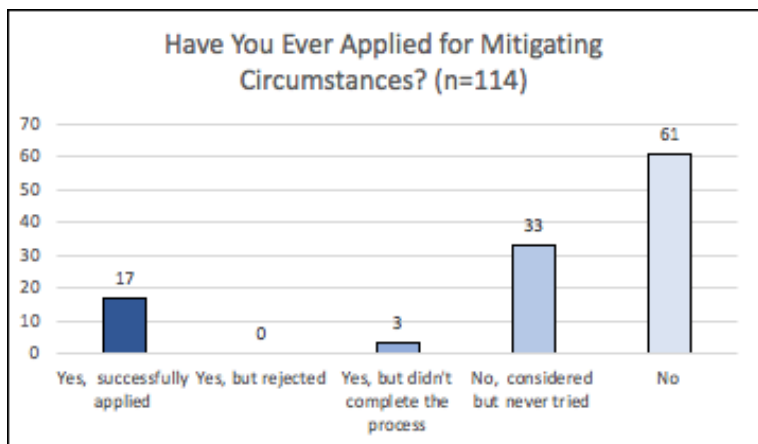
Qualitative Feedback

- "I'm afraid that I cannot understanding lab techniques well just from watching online"
- "Techniques are difficult to understand without practice"

Action Points

- Understanding that students studying overseas, and in-person receive different assessment styles and have different university experiences, many clearly feeling disadvantaged.
- Additional considerations for overseas students specifically when considering mitigating circumstances
- Open discussion about how the experience for overseas students can be improved

Focus 3 – Mitigating Circumstances



Qualitative Feedback

Student 1:

“I would like to ask FEO to consider the opportunity of an “interview process” for a student who nearly missed a 1st or 2.1, where their past performance is assessed and a slightly better mark is granted if they prove to deserve it (e.g. student having a 68 overall and needing a 1st to get into their masters, specially if the student has proven to have worked very hard for the past years during BMB). I fear that many of us will not be able to meet the grade we need for postgraduate studies because our marks will be impacted by our mental health issues and inability to concentrate during our studies due to family members dying or other impactful issues that COVID has brought, so a more accommodating MC process for final marking would be extremely helpful”

- Students are particularly worried about how accommodating MC are regarding overall degree marks (especially for 3rd years students who are close to getting a 1st or 2.1 and whose marks have been impacted by COVID)

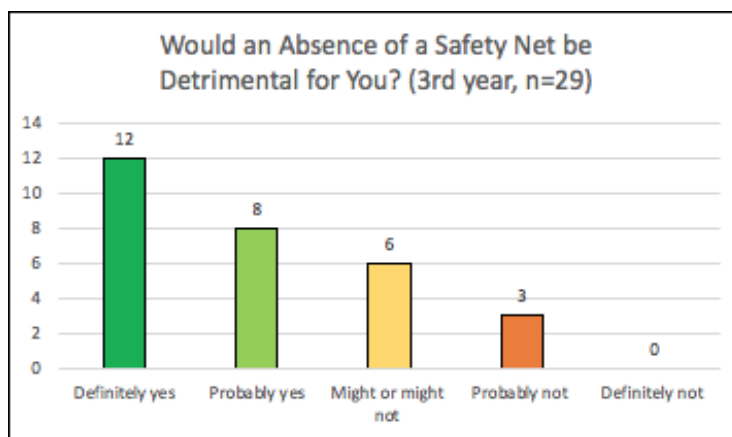
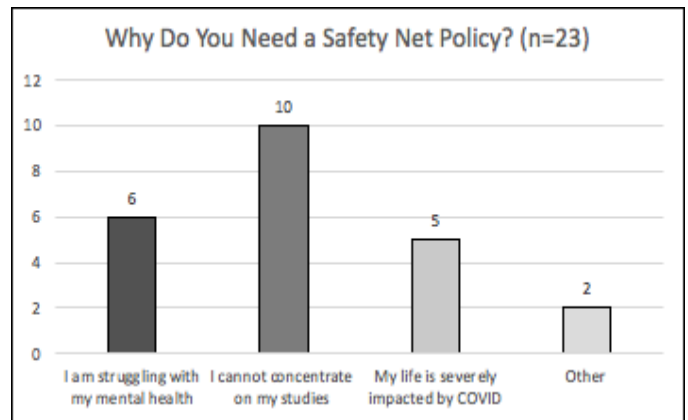
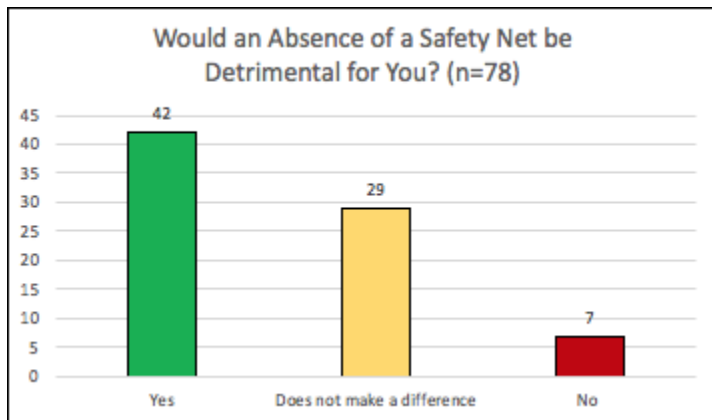


Action Points

- Provide a clear and concise explanation for students (e.g. on Blackboard) on **how to provide evidence the right way** (e.g. make a pdf with case examples)
- Consider being more **accommodating with the evidence that students provide**
- Consider implementing a **phone/video call as part of MC application process** to facilitate a better communication and agreement between students and FEO (help students give out evidence and to avoid students abusing MC)
- For 3rd years: **when students slightly miss a mark (e.g. get 68.8 overall and need a 1st to get to their offered postgraduate studies) consider evaluating student's overall performance during BMB (e.g. by holding an interview with the student) to potentially accommodate their mark** (if it is decided that they deserve it). This would be fairer considering how students' marks have been impacted by the pandemic.



Focus 4 – Safety Net Policy



Qualitative Feedback

Student 1:

“The safety net: last year we were learning online for a month, and the safety net was in place. Now, after 10 months of lockdowns, illnesses, stress, mental instability and depression, we are deprived of the support when we need it the most. How was it needed last year and not needed this year? Why are school exams adjusted to home learning and a great mental health toll on the students, but we are not? It would be interesting to hear the explanation”

Student 2:

“A safety net should be implemented this year. Even though we were more prepared for the remote teaching this year, there is still so much uncertainty and unexpected events happening now. Even though I am still allowed to go into the lab, the lockdown and uncertainty is affecting my ability to work and focus, which will negatively impact my grades this year. As third year is worth 75% of the degree mark, I definitely think we should have some form of safety net policy”

Student 3:

“Just because year 3 was planned with the COVID-19 pandemic in mind, does not mean that there were not unexpected incidents. Things are not going as planned EU and international students struggled to come back to the UK, there was significant time lost from the placements etc. Therefore,



it is important that the faculty acknowledges these difficulties and sets up a safety net policy. The pandemic has gotten worse, the circumstances are much worse than planned by the department, thus it is only logical that the department is more understanding towards students”

- Particularly for 3rd year students, absence of a safety net would be detrimental to them because of how much 3rd year counts (75%), given that this year was severely impacted by the pandemic

Action Points

- Given that this year has been more impacted by COVID than last year, consider implementing a safety net policy like last year
- Consider implementing any other similar policy that may help students have their marks not severely impacted by the pandemic (e.g. 3rd years whose marks this year count 75%)
- For 3rd years: **when students slightly miss a mark (e.g. get 68.8 overall and need a 1st to get to their offered postgraduate studies) consider evaluating student’s overall performance during BMB (e.g. by holding an interview with the student) to potentially accommodate their mark** (if it is decided that they deserve it). This would be fairer considering how students’ marks have been impacted by the pandemic.



To: BMB SSLG
Date: 10 February 2021

Presented by: Aleysha Joseph (Programme Manager BScs)
Written by: Aleysha Joseph (Programme Manager BScs), and Chris Harris (Head of Programme Management)

Proposal: Changes to BMB prizes

1. Introduction

This paper outlines proposed changes to the BMB prizes. The current BMB prizes are:

Year cohort	Current prizes
Year 1	Academic Excellence - £125 Most Collegiate - £125
Year 2	Academic Excellence - £125 Most Collegiate - £125
Year 3	Academic Excellence - £125 Most Collegiate - £125

The academic excellence prize is the student with the highest overall year mark within their year cohort. The collegiate prize is determined purely by student vote.

2. Proposal

The changes being proposed will address student concerns that the collegiate prize is felt to be a popularity contest (as this is purely voted on by students), and the consequent low participation in student votes.

Year cohort	Proposed Prizes
Year 1	Academic Excellence Prize - £150 Academic Excellence Prize (proxime accessit) - £100
Year 2	Academic Excellence Prize - £150 Academic Excellence Prize (proxime accessit) - £100
Year 3	Academic Excellence Prize - £150 Academic Excellence Prize (proxime accessit) - £100 Overall degree Academic Excellence £150

The changes would also:

- Extend the opportunity for students to be recognised for their academic achievements in each year of the programme.
- Increase the monetary award for the 1st prize Academic Excellence winner
- Officially introduce an Overall degree Academic Excellence prize of £150

3. Recommendations

The committee is invited to consider and discuss this proposal