

BMB Staff Student Liaison Group

Wednesday 11th November 2020

14:00 – 16:00

MS Teams

	Agenda item	Lead	Paper
1.	Welcome & Apologies for Absence	Chair	
2.	Updated Terms of Reference	Chair	SSLGBMB2021-01
2.	Minutes of the last BMB SSLG	Chair	SSLGBMB2021-02
3.	Matters arising	Chair	
4.	BMB Wellbeing Rep Reports		
	4.1 Year 1	Dominic Haworth-Staines	SSLGBMB2021-03
	4.2 Year 2	Zicheng Wang	SSLGBMB2021-04
	4.3 Year 3	ICSMSU Vice-Chair of Wellbeing Reps	SSLGBMB2021-05
5.	BMB Academic Rep Reports		
	5.1 Year 1	Yuki Agarwala Miss Angellica Marta	SSLGBMB2021-06
	5.2 Year 2	Cris Riquelme Vano Nitya Gupta	SSLGBMB2021-07
	5.3 Year 3	Kah Ng	SSLGBMB2021-08
6.	Update from Library Manager and Liaison Librarian	Rebecca Jones	
7.	Any Other Business		
8.	Date of Next Meeting		
	Wednesday 10 th February 2021		

Staff Student Liaison Group (BSc Medical Biosciences BMB) Terms of Reference and Membership 2020-21

The Staff Student Liaison Groups report to the relevant Undergraduate Education Board and are chaired by the President of the ICSM Student Union. The role of these groups is to provide a forum for consideration of academic and non-academic issues raised by staff and/or students regarding all three years of the BMB programme.

The Group's specific responsibilities include:

1. To consider academic and non-academic issues and problems raised by students and/or staff concerning the relevant years of the course, identify possible solutions and oversee remedial action, referring matters to the relevant Education Committee where appropriate.
2. To receive and respond to teaching evaluations as part of the quality management process.
3. To consider proposed changes to teaching and assessment.

Membership:

ICSM Student Union President	Muntaha Naeem (Chair)
ICSMSU Welfare Chair	Natania Varshney
ICSMSU Welfare Vice Chair Representatives	Mabel Prendergast
Director for Undergraduate Science	Professor Alison McGregor
Head of Programme	
Head of Assessment and Feedback	Dr Birgit Leitinger
Senior Welfare Tutor	Dr Rebecca Salter
Head of Year 1	Dr Jacqueline Dickson
Head of Year 2	Dr Elizabeth Want
Head of Year 3	Dr Vania Braga
BMB Module Leads	Dr Birgit Leitinger (MCB) Dr Toby Athersuch (CBI) Dr Paul Strutton (INTS) Dr Kirsty Flower (STAT) Dr Luisa Garcia-Haro (LP I) Dr Andy Porter (GEN) Professor Charlotte Bevan (CBIO) Dr Ana Costa-Pereira (IMI) Dr Laura Canevari (NEURO) Professor Julian Marchesi (MHD) Dr Duncan Rogers (CTB) Dr Harry Leitch (SCRB) Dr Jacqueline Dickson (LP II) Dr Chris John (PHAR) Dr Anne Burke-Gaffney (DESD) Dr Ian Adcock (DESD) Dr Catherine Webb (SCPE & SCPEA) Dr Jennifer Wallis (CREF) Dr Miriam Sbaiti (GLOH) Dr Peter Clark (NANO) Professor Terry Tetley (NANO) Dr Ali Abbara (OBD) Dr Charlotte Dean (REGM) Dr Samuel Barnes (BOA) Dr Andrew Edwards (TAR) Dr Brian Robertson (TAR) Professor Hector Keun (PMED) Dr Nicholas Kirkby (LABP, LITP, WKBP) Dr Ricardo Petraco Da Cunha (LABP, LITP, WKBP)

Instructional Designers	Dr Agata Sadza
Programme Officer (BMB)	Deanna Greenwood (Secretary)
ICSMSU Academic Officer	Jai Chapman
ICSMSU BMB President	Elena Torrell
Student Year Reps:	
BMB Year 1 Representatives	Yuki Agarwala Angellica Marta
BMB Year 1 Wellbeing Rep	Dominic Haworth-Staines
BMB Year 2 Representatives	Cris Riquelme Vano Nitya Gupta
BMB Year 2 Wellbeing Rep	Zichen Wang
BMB Year 3 Representatives BMB Year 3 Wellbeing Rep	Kah Ng TBC
Associate Dean & Head of Undergraduate School Medicine	Dr Martin Lupton
Teaching Facilities Manager	Rebecca Sie
Director of Education Management	Vanessa Powell
Programme Manager (BScs)	Alyeisha Joseph
Head of Programme Management	Chris Harris
Head of Technology Enhanced Education	Lisa Carrier
Student Services Manager	Francesca Bertolini
Library Manager and Liaison Librarian	Rebecca Jones
Head of School of Medicine Secretariat	Trish Brown
Communications Manager	Dorrit Pollard-Davey

Department Education Leads, College Consuls and other FEO staff will receive papers.

Working Groups & Co-opted members:

The Committee will expect to form working parties, co-opting other members of staff with particular knowledge and experience, to consider specific issues, when appropriate.

Frequency and Timing of Meetings:

Three times a year (once per term).

BSc Medical Biosciences Staff Student Liaison Group
Minutes of Meeting held on 03 June 2020

Present:	Prof Ian Adcock, Ms Anissa Alloula, Dr Toby Athersuch, Ms Fran Bertolini, Prof. Charlotte Bevan, Ms Emma Blyth, Ms Trish Brown, Dr Anne Burke-Gaffney, Dr Laura Canevari, Mr Jai Chapman, Dr Peter Clark, Dr Ana Costa-Pereira, Ms Caitlin Davies, Dr Jacqueline Dickson, Dr Andrew Edwards, Ms Aprodite Eshetu, Ms Andrea Flores Esparza, Dr Kirsty Flower, Dr Letizia Foroni, Dr Luisa Garcia-Haro, Ms Deanna Greenwood (Secretary), Mr Jack Hall, Mr Chris Harris, Ms Sharon Hubscher, Ms Nayana Iyer, Dr James Martin-Jensen, Dr Chris John, Ms Rebecca Jones, Ms Aleysha Joseph, Dr Hector Keun, Dr Harry Leitch, Dr Birgit Leitinger, Dr Jia Li, Mr Martin Lupton, Ms Marium Malik-Gabol, Dr Alison McGregor, Mr Sabino Mendez-Pastor, Ms Dorrit Pollard-Davey, Dr Andy Porter, Dr Duncan Rogers, Mr Ben Russell (Chair), Dr Rebecca Salter, Ms Rebecca Sie, Ms Veronika Suchankova, Dr Elizabeth Want, Mr James Wild
Apologies	Dr Ali Abbara, Dr Christina Atchison, Dr Samuel Barnes, Mr Josh Blacker, Dr Vania Braga, Ms Lisa Carrier, Dr Charlotte Dean, Ms Rumi Khanom, Dr Brian Robertson, Ms Agata Sadza, Dr Paul Strutton, Prof Terry Tetley, Ms Natania Varshey,

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence	
REPORTED	The Chair welcomed members to the second BMB SSLG of the 2019-20 academic year.
2. Minutes of the previous BMB SSLG	
AGREED	Minutes from the last meeting were approved as an accurate record
3. Matters Arising	
NOTED	<p>4.7 – In relation to student concerns over LP1 assessment, a session explaining assessment in more details took place and comms reassuring students were circulated by email and through the BMB Bulletin.</p> <p>4.9 – Student concerns over assessment overall - Year reps met with Dr Birgit Leitinger to discuss assessment and proposed changes for next year.</p> <p>4.13 – In relation to feedback on the MHD Module, Dr Leitinger and Dr Want met with Dr Jia Li to review module feedback in detail.</p> <p>4.21 – Feedback on the SCRIB Module was reviewed with Module Team and Head of Year</p> <p>4.23 – Year 2 reps to advise students to contact Dr Vania Braga and Aleysha Joseph in case of any issues</p> <p>4.30 – In relation to issues of confidentiality for students on projects and the impact on assessments – Dr Braga and Chris Harris looked at contracts in more detail, and assessments are included in confidentiality agreements. This was particularly relevant for AZ students.</p> <p>5.3 – Organising careers sessions – Careers sessions for all three years have been organised in Term 3</p> <p>5.4 – In relation to support for new Y1 students – plans are under way with tutorials, padlet and other online platforms.</p>

	<p>10.2 and 10.4 – Action plan for Y3 – an updated version was circulated via the Bulletin and a Town Hall organised for WKBP students</p> <p>10.4 – In relation to WKBP markers and marking criteria – Assessors were briefed in more detail on what students were expected to do in the assessment.</p>	
4. BMB Academic Rep Reports		
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB21920-04.3 - Year 1 Report	
NOTED	4.1	111 students answered the Y1 survey
	4.2	Mock papers and consolidation sessions had been helpful in order to practice and prepare for the formal examinations
	4.3	In relation to the MCB Exam, where one question had no right answer, students reported that many lost time looking for a right answer.
NOTED	4.4	Students requested suggestions on how to improve the write-up component. Many students had found that the amount of detail they were told to include was difficult to achieve because of the word count. Prof. Alison McGregor (AMG) explained that one of the key skills in scientific writing was learning to be succinct. AMG acknowledged that this was a difficult skill to achieve in a short time and noted that more support for BMB students was being developed around study skills and essay writing.
	4.5	Dr Luisa Garcia-Haro (LGH) also acknowledged that scientific writing was a difficult skill to master but noted that 2000 words was sufficient to convey the information requested by the ICA. LGH reminded students that support or LP1 assessments had been available year-round and the write-up should be viewed as an ongoing assessment, week by week. LGH reported that the LP1 Team were working on developing new tools to support students with this.
DISCUSSED	4.6	Some students reported that they struggled to know what was expected of them with coursework and requested more formative assessments or examples of good quality work from previous years to understand what they should strive for. AMG noted that the risk with releasing examples was that it stopped students from writing independently, when the point of coursework was to give students some academic judgment on their understanding.
	4.7	Students were reminded that the centre for Academic English and the Library both had useful study skills resources to help students transition from A-Level to University level writing.
NOTED	4.8	Students were reminded that the proposed changes to Y1 assessments were already approved and would come into force in 2020/21.
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB21920-04.2 - Year 2 report	
NOTED	4.11	Whilst most students reported no issues with exams, a few students found the interface challenging, particularly when answering the Data Interpretation questions, and having to look at figures.
DISCUSSED	4.12	Some students found the length of the CTB Exam challenging. Dr Duncan Rogers (DR) noted that he had requested for the exam to be extended to 3 hours. Members of the Group were reminded that any changes to assessment have to go through appropriate governance procedures and the FEO do not have the authority to make these changes. DR noted that a mechanism should be in place to allow more flexibility, in the event of unforeseen situations. Trish Brown (TB) added that whilst some changes may seem pragmatic at the time, in the long run they could become counterproductive.

	4.13	Students reported that many were still confused about Year 3 structure and requested more clarity on Year 3. Members discussed current challenges in relation to planning for next year, noting that the situation was complex and dynamic, with advice and guidance constantly changing. Students were reassured that all College staff was completely focused on this and on planning for them.
DISCUSSED	4.14	Mr Martin Lupton (ML) asked students whether they preferred more communication from College, accepting that advice may change, or less communication with more precise information. Students noted that they were under a lot of pressure with commitments such as accommodation and contracts. Members acknowledged that it was challenging to strike the right balance here.
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB21920-04.3 - Year 3 report	
NOTED	4.22	In 20/21 there will be a member of staff specifically dedicated to Year 3 projects, which should make things run smoother for students and staff
	4.23	Students reported being satisfied with how the Safety Net was updated and calculated for BMB
	4.24	Students were reminded that final year project marks and feedback would be released after the Exam Board in July
	4.25	AMG noted that the team were working with tutoring around a better understanding of the BMB programme and the structure of Year 3, aiming to make sure that staff who engage with the course properly understand it
5. Welfare		
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB31920-12 Year 1 Report SSLGBMB31920-13 Year 2 Report	
NOTED	5.1	The volume of Mitigating Circumstances applications has increased further to Covid-19 and the process has been expedited.
	5.2	Some Year 2 students reported not feeling supported or recognised during the Covid crisis. AMG said this was disturbing to hear, as the focus for all staff had been to be empathetic around the issues and anxieties that the situation had caused. AMG reminded students that the impact had been far reaching on everyone, that none of it was addressed casually and that staff had been affected too.
	5.3	Chris Harris recognised that students had pressures in relation to accommodation, and confirmed that more guidance would be circulated very soon.
NOTED	5.4	Mr Martin Lupton (ML) asked students for their views on what College should be doing, in light of the Black Lives Matter demonstrations in the U.S. and across the world. Aphrodite Eshetu (AE) said acknowledging that it's a systemic issue that is not separated from us. Acknowledging the situation and having the support of staff and supervisors is crucial. Trish Brown reported that BMA had released a charter on tackling and addressing racial discrimination in Medical Schools. College has been reviewing this and there was enthusiasm for adopting the principles more widely across Imperial. TB noted that this will need extensive input from the College community.
6. Student engagement around development of CX Campus		
CONSIDERED	SSLGBMB31920-14	
NOTED	6.1	As part of the refurbishment project to update facilities at Charing Cross, a student engagement group was set up to look at various elements of the project and provide feedback. Students were invited to contact the group with thoughts and comments on the refurbishment project.

7. Proposed changes to BMBY2		
CONSIDERED		SSLGBMB31920-15 SSLGBMB31920-16 SSLGBMB31920-17 SSLGBMB31920-18 SSLGBMB31920-19 SSLGBMB31920-20
NOTED	7.1	<p>Dr Liz Want gave an overview on the rationale and proposed changes for Year 2, explaining that the review of assessments throughout the BMB programme was to relieve the burden of assessment on BMB students, which was higher than necessary and needed to be streamlined and consolidated. The team also recognised that skills were being repeatedly assessed across modules and that the balance of assessment formats throughout the year could be improved.</p> <p>To that end, for Year 2, the following changes were proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In GEN, a reduction of the number of ICAs from two to one. • In CBIO, a reduction of the number of ICAs from two to one. • In CTB, the change of exam length from 1 hr to 3 hr to bring it in line with all other Y2 exams. • In LP2, removal of the Lab Book and Practical Exam, and re-weighting of remaining components • In IMI, replacing coursework with an individual oral presentation
DISCUSSED	7.2	Students were pleased with the changes suggested which will streamline Year 2.
	7.3	Some students reported being more confident with more assessments. Dr Leitinger explained that the course was designed to ensure each assessment had a formative before a summative, allowing students to try the assessment first.
8. Update from Library Manager and Liaison Librarian		
NOTED	8.1	Rebecca Jones reminded students that the Library was open online and to check the main library webpage for updates. Students were reminded about the LibKey Nomad extension in Google, which provides links to full text articles subscribed to by Imperial.
9. Any Other Business		
NOTED	9.1	The Group thanked Mr Ben Russell and all the Reps for their hard work in 2019/20.
10. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 11th November 2020		



Term 1 – Year 1 Welfare Report

Feedback collection Information:

- Total survey respondents: 60
- Survey opened on **31st October** and closed on **4th of November**
- Qualitative feedback methods: open-text boxes on Qualtrics survey

Areas of focus:

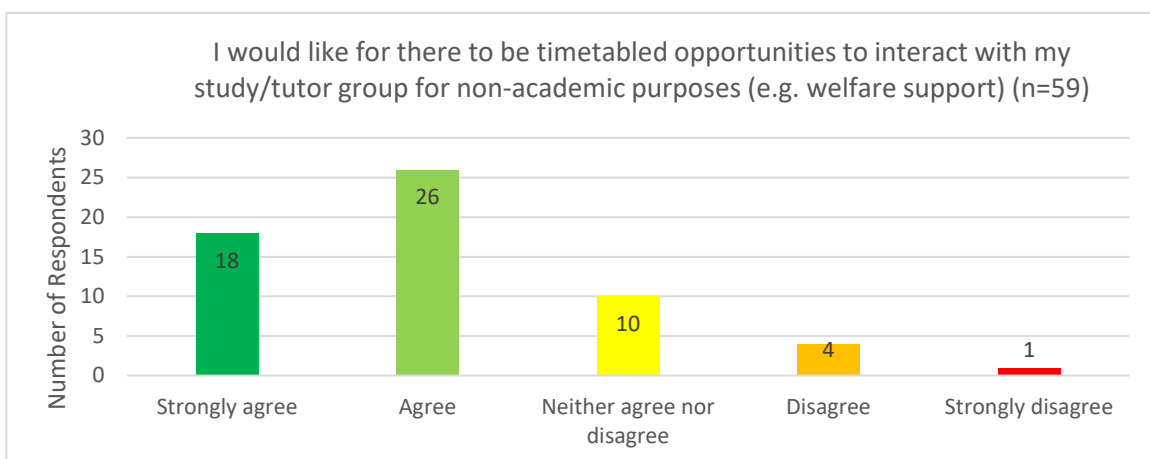
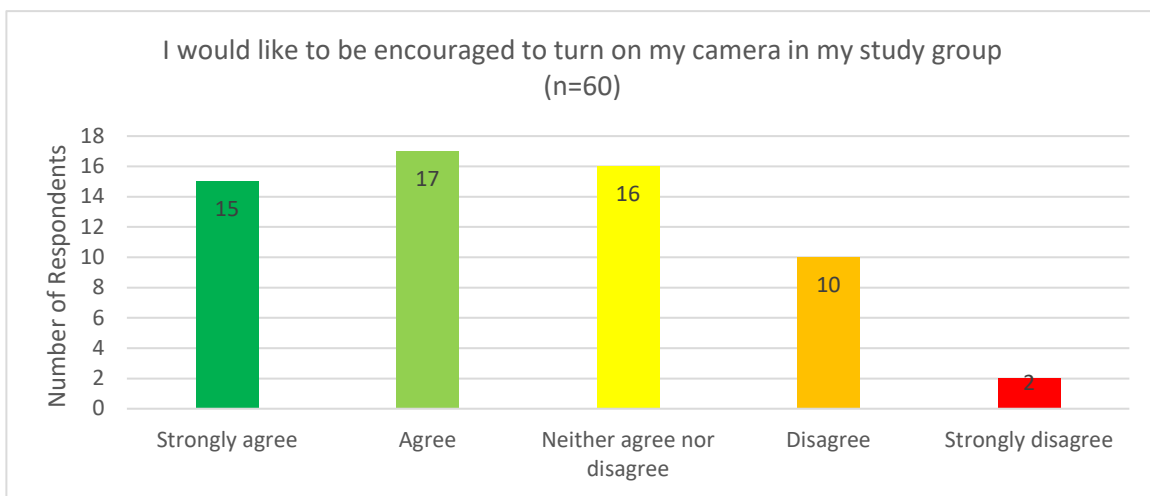
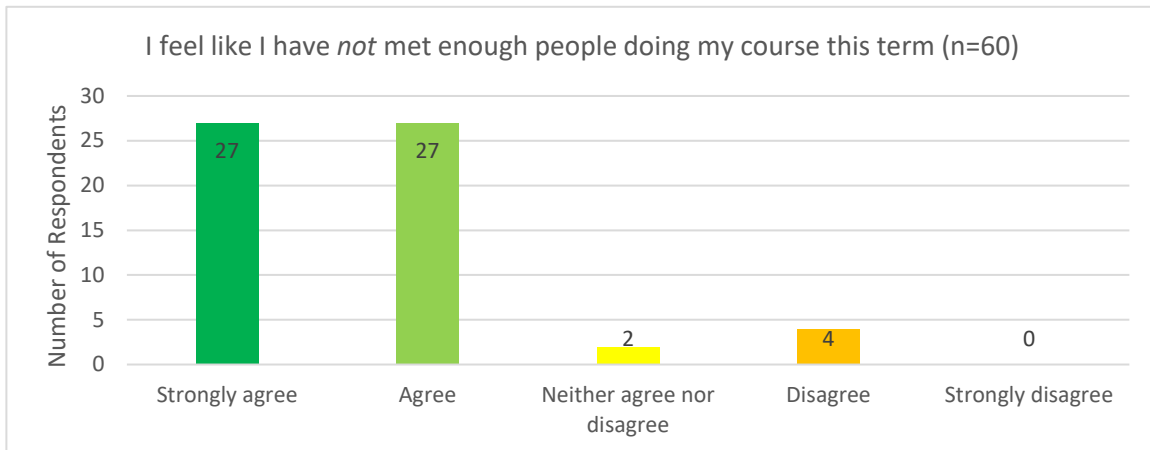
- Wellbeing during online learning
- Feedback
- Self-isolation

Welfare Vice Chair of Representatives: Mabel Prendergast

Year 1 Wellbeing Representative: Dominic Haworth-Staines



Focus 1 – Wellbeing during online-learning



Qualitative Feedback

Mental health of students

- “I feel quite stressed and overwhelmed and i feel sometimes quite abandoned by the teachers as well.”
- “this (*online learning*) is really affecting my anxiety and stress levels”

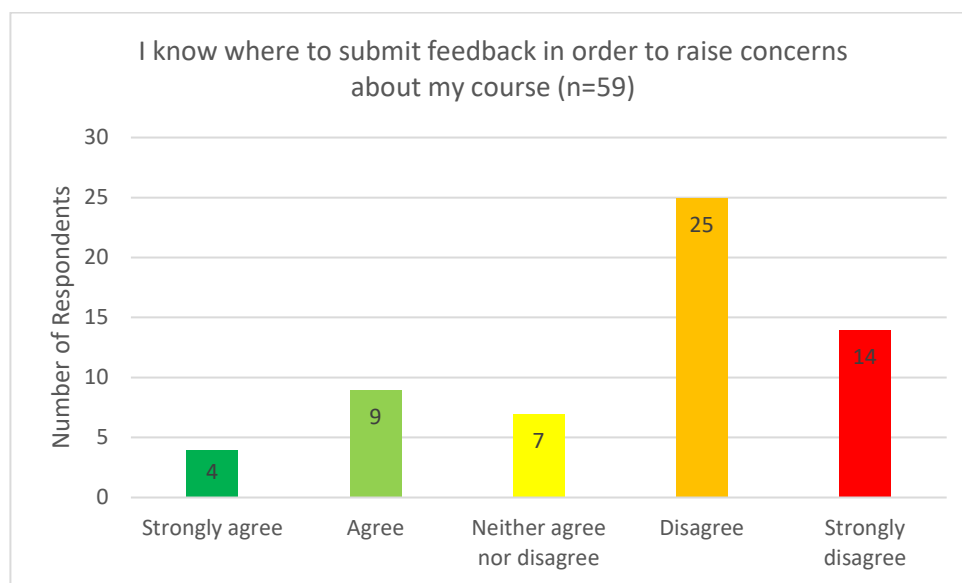


Some students raised that they would like to increase the interaction time they have with their professors

Action Points

- Continuously encourage students to turn on their cameras throughout teaching
- Liaise with FEO welfare to consider the opportunity of timetabled welfare sessions and/or brainstorm ideas about how we can provide timetabled welfare opportunities for biomed students
- Consider providing drop-in sessions led by professors where students can provide feedback and simultaneously increase interaction with professors

Focus 2 – Feedback



Qualitative Feedback

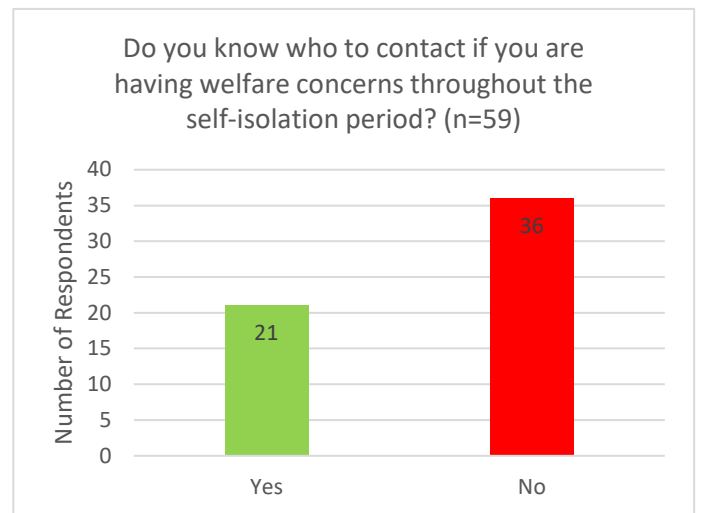
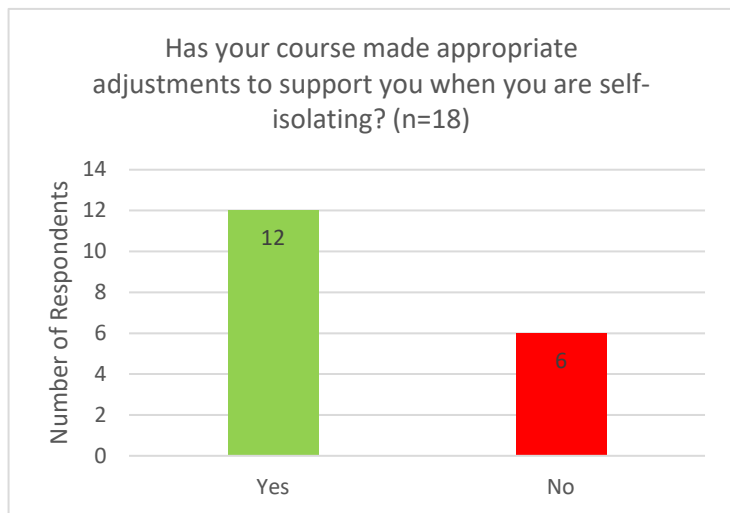
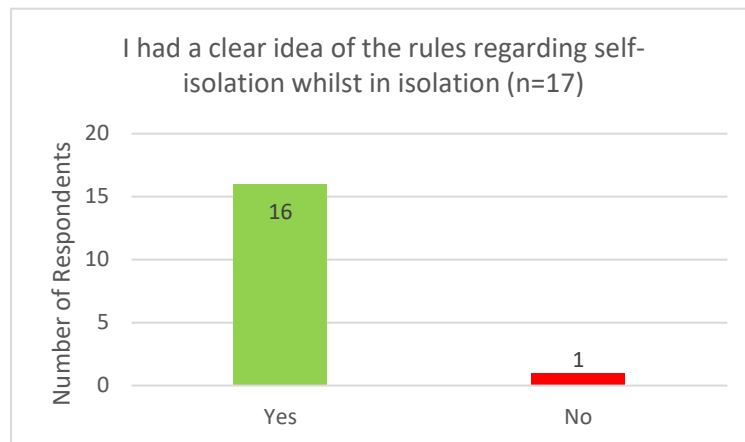
- Some students raised concerns about questions not being answered enough on the Padlet

Action Points

- See Action Point raised above
- Signpost students to the relevant feedback links and resources in an upcoming email or newsletter



Focus 3 – Self-isolation



Qualitative Feedback

- Some students raised concerns about more guidance on how to relieve their academic pressure if they are ill during self-isolation

Action Points

- Signpost to students whom they can contact regarding welfare concerns before they are due to enter self-isolation
- Provide advice to students about how to relieve academic pressure when ill during self-isolation within the welfare check ups that are provided for students



Term 1 – Year 2 Welfare Report

Feedback collection Information:

- Total survey respondents: 61
- Survey opened on **31st October** and closed on **3rd of November**
- Qualitative feedback methods: open-text boxes on Qualtrics survey

Areas of focus:

- Impact of COVID-19 on student wellbeing
- Improvement of service from personal tutors

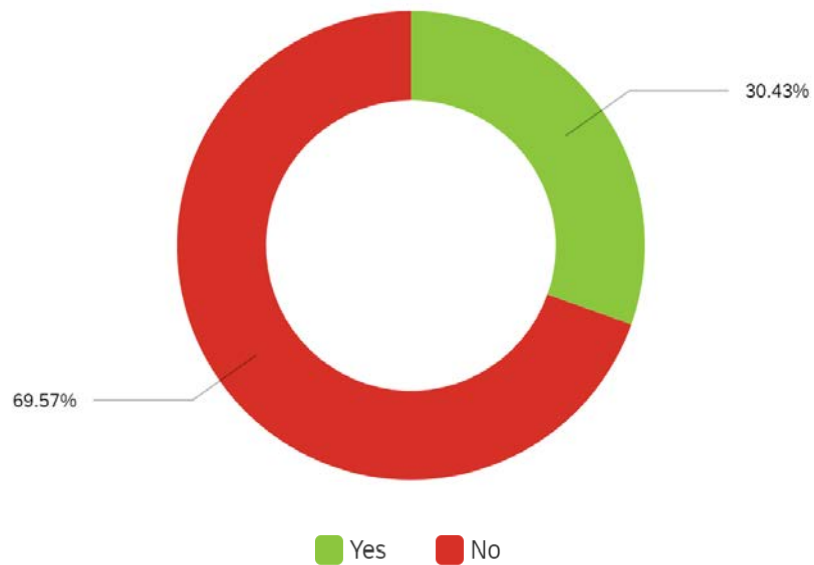
Welfare Vice Chair of Representatives: Mabel Prendergast

Year 2 Wellbeing Representative: Zicheng Wang

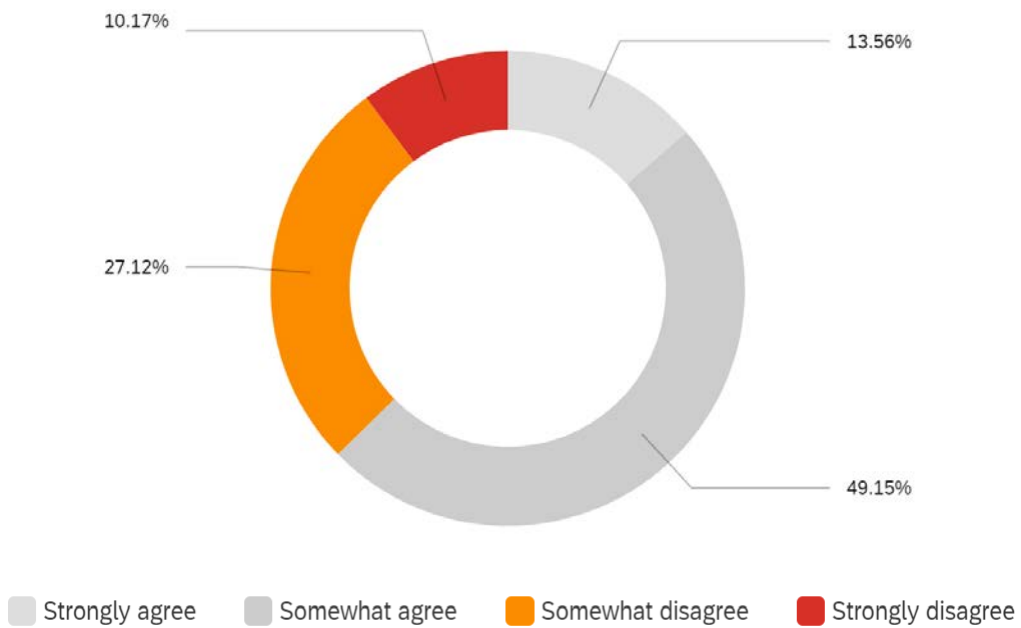


Focus 1 – Impact of COVID-19 on Student Wellbeing

Has not being in London negatively impacted your wellbeing this term? (n=23)



I know where to submit feedback when I want to? (n=59)



Are you currently in self-isolation? (n=60)



Qualitative Feedback

Lack of interaction with peers

- “It’s helpful to have your peers around for academic and moral support”
- “would be better if I’m actually with students and studying together/discussing”

Action Points

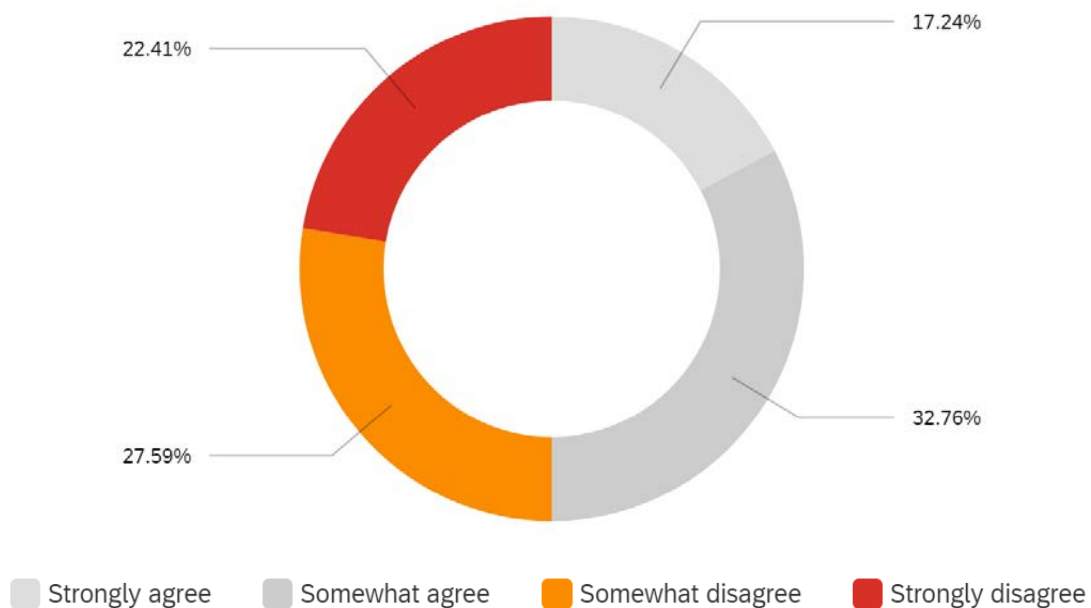
- Signpost students to where they can submit feedback in a newsletter/e-mail
- Encourage personal tutors to reach out to students about their welfare (particularly those in self-isolation), without students having to request this
- Consider Zoom drop-in sessions once a term where faculty can listen to the welfare and academic concerns of students

Focus 2 – Improvement of Service from Personal Tutors

On a scale of 0-10, how satisfied are you with the overall experience with your personal tutor? (n=55)

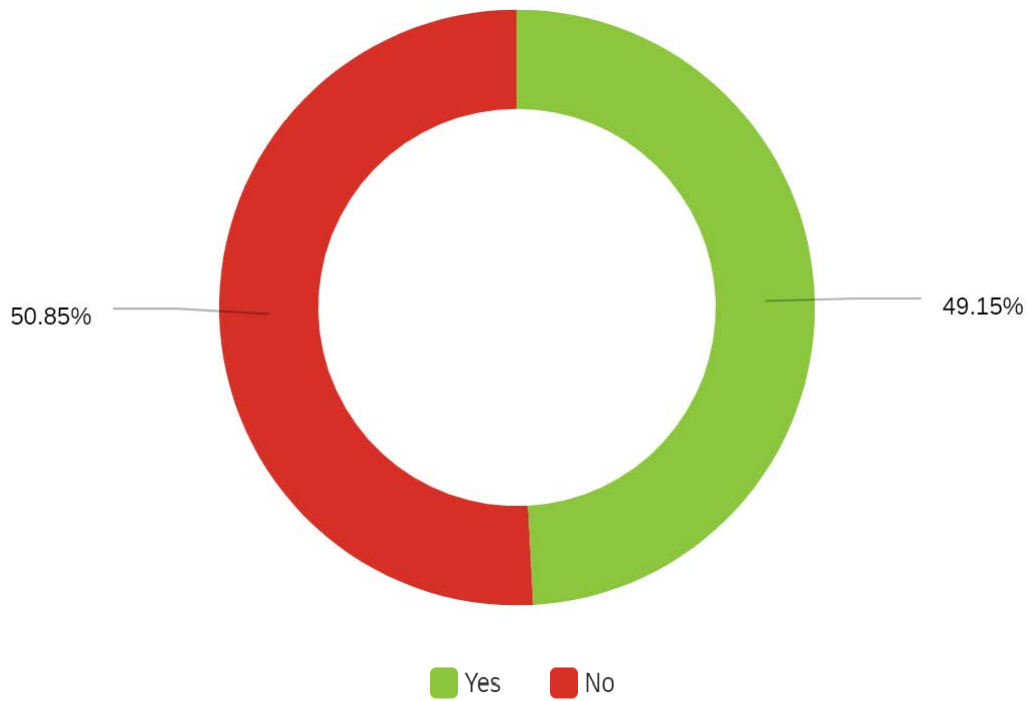


My personal tutor has a clear idea of how our course is structured (modules, flipped-classroom, exam structures)? (n=58)

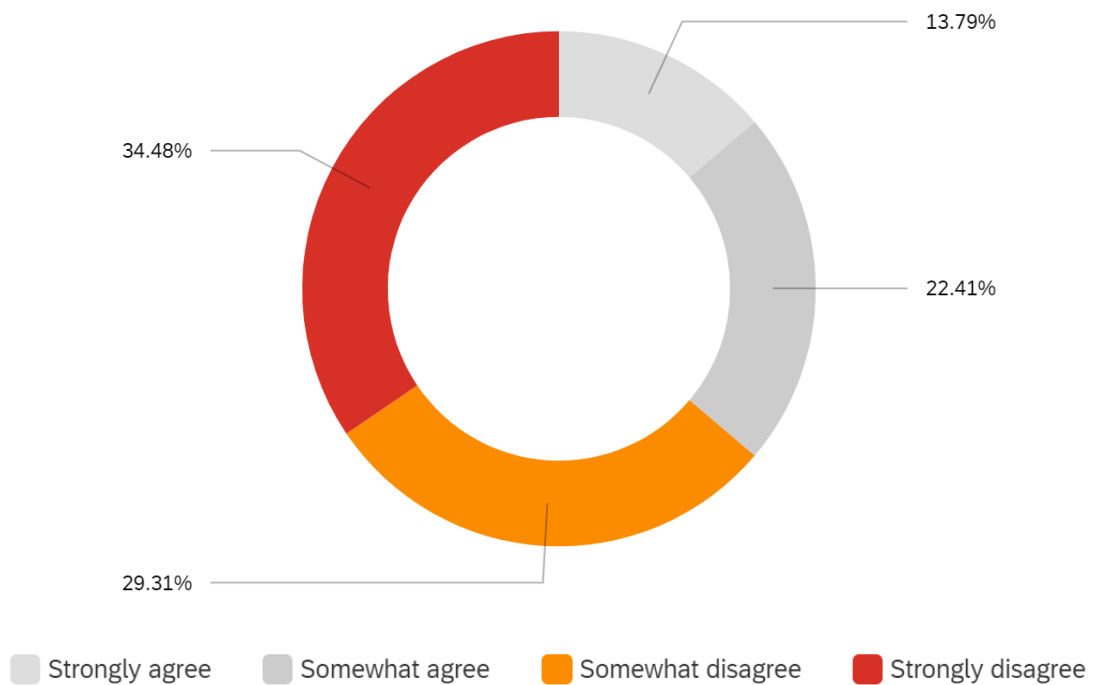




I have sought help from my personal tutor at least once, regarding some difficulty I encountered (financial, academic, wellbeing, etc.)

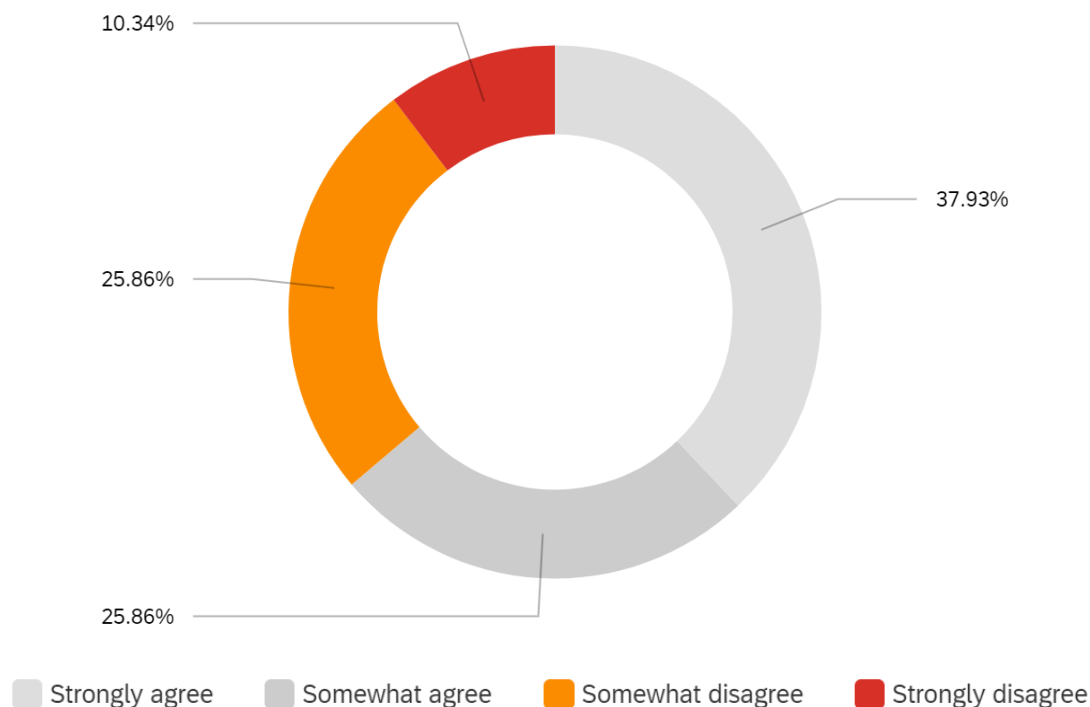


I think of contacting my personal tutor when I encounter difficulties (financial, academic, wellbeing) (n=58)





I wish my personal tutor would reach out to me more (n=58)



Qualitative Feedback

Tutor unresponsive	<p>"I could not reach my personal tutor."</p> <p>"I asked for further details and I haven't got a response."</p> <p>"He doesn't reply to emails, even if he does it's after the 2nd-3rd reminder I sent them."</p>
Students are hesitant to contact their tutor	<p>"They seem unavailable"</p> <p>"The thought that my personal tutor might have to write a recommendation for me scares me"</p>
Students are unsure when to contact their tutor	<p>"[I want to] be told what kind of problems I can come to them about."</p> <p>"I'm not really sure what my personal tutor is there to do."</p>
Tutor does not have sufficient knowledge/did not have sufficient training	<p>"They should get in touch with the FEO more to know more about what's going on with the course."</p> <p>"Maybe not all personal tutors know when/how often they should contact their students."</p>
Students look forward to being contacted by tutors	<p>"Be contacted by them more."</p> <p>"Haven't heard from them at all this academic year."</p> <p>"More meetings arranged compulsory so more interactions with them."</p>





Action Points

- Send out a newsletter/e-mail dedicated to tutors so students can understand when to seek help from their tutors and effective ways in which to communicate with them
- Encourage and ensure that tutors are reaching out to their students every term
- Create an easily accessible feedback link for students where they can submit their ideas, concerns and expectations about the tutoring system. Signpost this link.
- Ensure that the education of tutors covers but also emphasizes the following topics:
 - o In-depth knowledge of the BMB course as well as the new online adaptations
 - o Understand how to effectively communicate with their students through e-mails in a *timely* manner

