Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Nanchang JP

Minutes from the meeting on <u>Monday, 23rd October 2023</u>
Time: 5:20 pm Beijing time
Location: NCU JP Conference Room 301

Staff Members Present：

Professor Mark Maconochie (QM)
Ms. Jane Qu Administrator Secretary (QM)
Ms. Nancy Wang Administrator (QM)

Professor Zhijun Luo (NCU)
Ms. Yun He Vice Dean (NCU)

Student Members Present:

Name	Class	NCU ID	QM ID
Wang, Yufei	231	4217123039	231209362
Wu, Shuoyi	232	4217123054	231209487
Shu, Xin	233	4217123114	231210184
Zhang, Yixiao	236	4217123240	231211273
Xu, Yizhou	234	4217123137	231210634
Wu, Wendi	221	4217122018	221147816
Pu, Xinyue	223	4209121029	221148880
Su, Lechen	223	4217122123	221148879
Zhang, Jiatong	224	4217122133	221149005
Wang, Zhaowen	211	4217121008	210969067
Song, Qimin	212	4217121074	210968967
Qian, Xianzhe	214	4217121129	210968853
Zhang, Kexin	215	4217121199	210969894

An apology was received from student representive Zhang, Kexin (QM ID 210969894)

Part 1: Preliminary Items

1. Welcome

Prof Maconochie and Prof Luo welcomed committee members to the Nanchang JP SSLC meeting held on 23rd October 2023. Prof Maconochie introduced himself to all the student representatives present. He also introduced all the staff members who attended the meeting, and student representatives were invited to introduce themselves to the meeting.

Prof Maconochie confirmed with all present that the previous minutes are an accurate and reasonable record of what was discussed. He also briefly updated matters arising from the minutes from the previous meeting on 21th April 2023.

Professor Maconochie provided an update on a question raised during the previous meeting. Ms. Yao, Nan had inquired about ways to enhance office hours and suggested providing problem-based questions as a means to stimulate student participation.

Professor Maconochie shared with students that he had discussed this with year 3 staff but found that this has yet to be implemented. He expressed his intention to pose this suggestion to staff again, but had found that for year 1 this is not essential as we have already observed good attendance during office hours, however we noticed a steep decline in year 2 and year 3. He has encountered only very few students during office hours in years 2 and 3, he is disappointed on this attendance and wishes to encourage more student engagement. He further expressed his commitment to bringing any constructive suggestions from students to the attention of QM staff during the internal staff meetings that might help boost attendance.

A student representative proposed the idea of setting up office hour sessions immediately after lectures in class, with the duration of half an hour, varying according to the lecture schedule.

Professor Maconochie, however, expressed his reservation about this arrangement as he believes office hours should not simply extend the lecture time. Ideally, he would like students to take some time to reflect on the lecture material from the day and previously, before seeking clarification. He emphasized the importance of students making efforts to seek answers themselves by discussing with peers or even undertaking additional reading, and then to discuss at the office hour.

A student representative raised a concern that some students may find it inconvenient to travel from the teaching building to the main office. As a solution, they proposed setting up a room next to the lecture hall specifically for office hours.

Professor Maconochie dismissed this suggestion, stating that he does not believe it is unreasonable for students to walk a hundred meters from either teaching building one or two to the main office on the same campus. He mentioned that during his time here, he observed very few students attending office hours for either year 2 or year 3. And only for a very short period. Given the low attendance, he saw no justification in relocating staff from the main administration building to another location.

Prof. Maconochie requested students' to consider how to improve students participation and attendance in during office hours. He pointed out that it is important to note that office hours are intended for individual student and small group consultations rather than formal lectures. He is planning to raise this issue with QM staff during the upcoming meeting in London as to how to encourage more students to attend office hours. He will inquire about the reasons behind the low attendance and explore possible solutions. For instance, we already tried to allocate specific time slots for each class and we invite students to bring questions or suggestions. The objective is to make the most of the office hour with lecturers by providing additional opportunities for students to engage with their teachers and seek clarification. Furthermore, he states that attending office hours allows students to reflect on their understanding and raise any concerns. Even if students don't have specific questions, listening to others' enquiries and the corresponding responses can be very beneficial. He mentioned that there are three large picnic tables for office hours that have been designated, but we can arrange for more space if there is an increase in student attendance.

This discussion finished on this theme and subsequently the committee approved the minutes from the previous meeting, held on 21th April 2023, as an accurate record of proceedings. No questions were raised from the minutes.

Part 2: Programme Delivery and other Matters Raised

Student representatives raised following questions or concerns related to learning and teaching matters:

Year 3 cohort of 2021

Q1. **Ms. Wang, Zhaowen** raised a question about clicker questions. She mentioned that in class, students need to answer the clicker questions. In some subjects, the final module scores include the scores of the clicker questions. Students wonder how teachers calculate the scores of the clicker questions and whether their scores can be displayed on the report card.

Professor Maconochie mentioned that it is important to note that the contribution of your clicker questions towards the module is very small, typically only 2-4% for most modules. However, he understands that every mark matters to a student. How much it counts is shown on the details on QMPlus for individual modules.

Concerning how students can see their clicker scores, he will consider options and see what can be done. One possibility could be to create a spreadsheet with all student names and their marks. However, this goes against QM and UK academic regulations as marks should be kept private due to privacy concerns and so can not be adopted. A different way to address could be to submit the clicker scores at the end of the module and make it available on QMplus on individual student reports. Unfortunately, it is too late to implement this for the current semester, but Professor Maconochie will discuss with Edyta to explore if this is a workable solution or if not, if there are any alternative solutions.

Concerning the use of clickers, Prof. Maconochie states that currently clicker usage is being perfected as we are still adjusting to in-person teaching after a period of remote learning. For example, he is currently experiencing difficulties with the clicker software, while others may not may be experiencing issues with the signals. The company selling the equipment is looking to encourage further licenses. However, these will be resolved shortly, and once clicker use is reliable, he will consult with Edyta in the QM office who oversees education, to explore the possibility of how to make these marks available to students at the end of the semester.

Professor Maconochie would like to confirm that he is not dismissing this idea as he also believes it would be beneficial for students to not only view their individual score but also have the ability to monitor their attendance. Student attendance is a serious matter of concern to QM, and we intend to utilize clickers more extensively for monitoring purposes. We will make a genuine effort to explore the feasibility of implementing this plan.

Q2. **Mr. Song, Qimin** raised a request to bring back Mentimeter questions. He states that in the past two years, students used to have online office hours where they could ask questions about lectures, and the teacher would allocate time for practice and addressing important questions. However, now that office hours have transitioned back to in-person, it mainly involves teachers waiting in the room for student queries. Once students ask their questions, teachers provide answers. He enquires if there is a way to change office hours to online?

Professor Maconochie responded that he believed and hoped that students would prefer coming in person to office hour. It's surprising that students want us to go back online. However, he understands now why (see above conversations), and he appreciates the students' perspective. He thought students would value the opportunity to meet and converse with teachers face-to-face. Prof Maconochie used an example of the current year 1 office hour, where a large number of students regularly come along for office hours for both lecturers, and all three tables are filled. It is not uncommon for approximately 40-50 students to attend office hours, which is why it's surprising that students want to revert to online office hours.

However, he is open to considering a compromise in later years where we can have both in-person and online office hours. But remember your course lecturers should already have a QQ group or some other platform where students can interact with them and ask questions regardless, but he understands that some detailed discussions cannot be held there. He asks if this is view only shared by year 3 students. He suggested to maybe consider once a week to have online office hours, but he is uncertain about students opinion as a whole, so he would like to know if most year 3 students would like to reinstate online office hours, and how many. Will this improve engagement? He does not mind requesting organization of online office hour so students can sit in the canteen and answer questions in an online session. The current office hours mainly serve as a Q&A and discussion session as they are designed to do.

However we do not want office hours to solely become another way to become a practice question session to learn for exams, as students already have other means of getting exam practice. He will discuss the matter with the year 3 lecturers. One thing he and other QM lecturers are clear is that we are very happy to be back teaching in person, and we hopes students are also happy with having staff back in the classroom instead of being

online. However, We have noted that there were some positive aspects we learned to use during the pandemic that we could consider to use now we have returned, and maybe this is an example.

Whilst he won't make any commitments during this SSLC, he will suggest and discuss with year 3 lecturers the possibility of having one online office hour per week on a trial basis. This will allow QMUL to conduct an pilot experiment and observe the level of student interaction and engagement. We do not plan however to completely eliminate in person office hours.

Q3. **Mr. Song, qiming** has raised a concern regarding attendance. He mentioned that Chinese teachers use an app called XueXi TONG to take attendance, whereas QMUL teachers do not take attendance themselves. The student believes that not taking attendance may result in more student absences, which they consider disrespectful to the teachers. Therefore, they are wondering how QMUL can address this issue.

Prof Maconochie stated that using a Chinese App for taking attendence is not a preferred option due to language barriers. We would need a solution that the QM side can monitor and administer. Thus, we are exploring the return of the use of clickers as a potential solution for regular monitoring of attendance. He acknowledged the challenge of getting students to attend classes in person, as many have become accustomed to remote learning. In London, for all QM students it is now expected that students attend in excess of 70% lectures. However for Medical Students throughout the UK attendance of 80% is required and is needed to progress to become a licenced doctor. Prof Maconochie and Professor Liu are discussing this very topic and are persuaded that as you are medical students too, the 80% threshold would be appropriate.
Since we are already routinely using clickers in class, using clickers for attendance seems the most appropriate option. However should this not prove effective, we will explore alternative methods. Prof Maconochie wants to ensure students will stay for the entire session, not just sign in and leave which is where clickers have a significant advantage over other ways. Though there are software and reliability issues to resolve, once everything is functioning properly, the plan is teachers will use clickers to record attendance as well. We expect students to attend at least 80% of lectures, but the extent of the current attendance problem is unknown until reliable data is available. Prof Maconochie requests that this information in the answer be shared amongst students and hopes it addresses student concerns regarding attendance.

The student also inquired about the clicker that Prof Maconochie mentioned earlier. He expressed a concern about how lecturers can ensure that the clickers have been updated online since the updated clicker information is typically not synchronized with the lecturer's records at the same time.

Note added post meeting: Prof Maconochie wanted to confirm to students that we will have in place a streamlined procedure following a clicker change, as we return to using clickers as central to our teaching. When Students change a clicker, this will be alerted to lecturers of that year at the same time. Lecturers for that year will make the changes to the clicker database they use and confirm these changes have been carried out. In case of any concern students may have that they may miss a days clicker activity, even if a clicker is not associated with a student in class, the clicker score is lodged in the computer, and the student identity (names, NCU and QM IDs) can be added at any stage during the module so they can be tied in to clicker response.

Q4. **Mr Qian, Xianzhe** raised a question regarding the grading criteria for selection onto projects 301 and 309. Students express their hope that, in the future, the classification standards for these projects will not solely rely on grades, but also consider other factors such as experimental skill, academic performance, and academic writing skills. This way, students with lower grades but excellent skills can also have the opportunity to participate in the 301 project.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the existence of individuals with excellent laboratory skills but lacking the understanding of the purpose behind their experiments. He emphasized the importance of identifying the most appropriate criteria for assigning students to independent projects or investigative skills. Prof Maconochie also highlighted the distinction between 301 projects and 309 projects, stating that both offer critical laboratory skills, but mostly differ in developig teamwork skills or independence, important for both independent scientists and team collaboration respectively. Currently we use ongoing academic performance, with those in the top half of the top ~40% may have a higher chance of becoming PIs. However, he stressed that this system is not foolproof and general, and doesn't guarantee or exclude any student from becoming a PI.
Regarding laboratory skills for selection, he questioned the challenge of measuring laboratory skills when students have limited laboratory experience. Furthermore, also in terms of selection, whilst written assignments play a significant role in academic performance, some individuals excel in writing but struggle in the lab.

Prof Maconochie explains that some individuals who excel in writing and critical thinking may even not be proficient nor enjoy laboratory work or becoming PIs. The challenge lies in finding the best method of selection due to limited project availability. Academic performance is currently used

as a basis, but it is noted that some students below the cutoff at this stage of their academic development, later performing academically better. Undertaking either independent or investigative skills projects provides students with valuable experience for interviews and postgraduate opportunities and Prof Maconochie encourages students to emphasise whatever project they undertake in applications. The difference between the modules lies in the level of support and size of the lab. While acknowledging the points raised, there is no convincing argument to and he is yet to be convinced that these alternatives prioritizing writing skills and/or laboratory skills can be objectively measured. Nevertheless he remains open to alternative suggestions for monitoring and evaluation student performance in project selection, but remains skeptical until persuaded otherwise.

Q5. **Mr. Qian, Xianzhe** raised a request regarding management for the QM AV systems in class. He asked if some students can be selected and trained to assist QMUL lecturers in setting up devices in the teaching rooms to assist lecturers.

Prof Maconochie reminded students that QM lecturers have just recently returned to China to teach in person after a 3 year absence. During this period, several new members of staff have joined and this may be their first or second trip and thus relatively new to using our quipment in the classroom. Whilst we train new staff in London, as we do not have the same equipment and classroom set up, it is not until they arrive in the classroom that the detailed and sensitive procedure can be tested and mastered. Also during these 3 years absence, some elements of equipment will of course degrade and breakdown over time e.g. cables and boxes. Thus we are still in the process of identifying where this is the cause of delay and disruption to the occasional lecture. When identified and diagnosed, the issue is then rapidly resolved as soon as possible.

He thanks students for the offer of aiding staff in setting up. However, Prof Maconochie emphasized the importance of not allowing students to handle the equipment (unless requested) due to the complexity of the equipment and potential for generating additional work, and indeed may simply be due to equipment failure/degradation. He requested students could help to inform the appropriate staff if any equipment issues arise.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the difficulty in seeing the screen from the back of the classroom (lecture hall) and discussed the use of television screens. He will remind staff teaching there to turn on the TV screens.

(Note added after SSLC – students can help remind the lecturer). In a small lecture room with about 125 students, students should still be able to see from the back.

Year 2 of 2022 cohort

Q6. **Ms. Zhang jiatong** enquired about the assignment for the pharmacology class that is scheduled for this week on Thursday afternoon. There is a sports meeting scheduled for the same day, and she is concerned that students who participate in the sports meeting will miss this assignment and receive a zero mark for it.

Prof. Maconochie explained that if it is an official sports event, genuine participation can be considered for excluding the assessment. However, not all students will be participating in the event. If a student is genuinely competing during the assessment period, that assessment will be excluded from their grade calculation. They will miss that assessment, but they won't receive a zero mark. Instead, their practical mark will be calculated based on other assessments. It is important to still try and participate in the assessment event for learning purposes, but the grade won't be counted towards the practical assessment. It's essential that participation in sports day is genuine and not used as an excuse to avoid assessments.

Q7. **Ms. Su, lecheng** raised a question regarding the lecturers. She mentioned that in year 2, there are two QMUL lecturers assigned to the class. One lecturer teaches classes 1-3, while the other teaches classes 4-6. Some students are wondering if the lecturers can alternate, with one teaching for the first half of the semester and the other teaching for the remaining half.

Following discussion for clarification, it seemed that this question was raised in the belief that only the lecturer teaching a class marked that class assessment. Prof Maconochie explained that normally lecturers take it in turns to mark an entire assessment for 250 students to ensure consistency for that assessment and avoid bias in grading. Having explained the normal procedure, he asked if students would still strongly support the idea of swapping teachers regularly? He is unsure because if teachers are frequently swapped, it may hinder the development of student-teacher

relationships and hence interaction during office hours. It is uncertain whether this approach would be beneficial. He has listened to students points, but he is neither agreeing nor disagreeing at this stage, as he believes the issue has become less problematic following clarification of how the marking process is being done. Also to note that both teachers do get to review each other's work and provide feedback to one another.

Swapping teachers can also lead to students electing to follow one teacher! This can lead to problems with the MoE in us not following class size limitations set by the Ministry of Education.

Further information was provided. At the exam board where we consider all student results, we calculate averages in different assessments to identify any discrepancies in coursework grades. We consider factors such as difficulty level and marker tendencies. So, rest assured, all students receive the same piece of coursework marked by the same teacher throughout the entire cohort. Although it is a lot of work for your lecturer it does ensure fairness. Therefore, there is no need to worry about tough grading since it applies to everyone in all classes! Statistical analysis is routinely used to monitor for this.

Q8. **Ms. Wu wendi** inquired about the PDF file of the lectures. She mentioned that many students are hoping that teachers can upload the PDF files in advance before the class. For instance, in the technique of biomedical science courses, there have been changes in the PDF lecture materials compared to last year. However, students only have access to the previous year's PDF files, making it challenging for them to review the updated content. Therefore, students are requesting that the teachers upload the new PDF files before the class, allowing them to download and read the materials in advance.

Prof Maconochie appreciated students for bringing this to his attention. He mentioned that this discussion has been brought before for modules and he would like to refer students back to his response. In general, small changes, like one or two new slides, are generally acceptable without prior notification. However, if there are significant changes, especially when introducing a new topic, students should be informed in advance. Students should be provided with reading materials or at least an outline of the upcoming lecture if it is substantially changed. It's important for staff to have the flexibility to make changes, but it's equally important for students

to have the opportunity to preview and prepare accordingly. He would need to assess the extent of the changes before making any judgment on whether proper notification was given. If it was just a few slides, it can be considered part of the continuous improvement process. But if it was an entirely new lecture, students should have been alerted beforehand. The order of slides is important as well, but students should ideally review the entire lecture and then it is not an issue. We usually aim for around 20 to 25 slides per lecture although can vary with style. If there were excessive changes, that's a separate issue. We will investigate the changes made and provide a response regarding their significance.

Regarding the upload of PDF lectures, we try to aim that students should receive the lecture PDF that was delivered to them within three hours after the lecture. The problem arises when there are substantial changes to lectures close to the time of delivery, which can make the hard work in previewing materials irrelevant. We understand the need for proper notification and will address the issue to ensure better communication in the future.

Q9. **Ms. Wu, wendi** raised a concern about the teacher's voice. Many students have expressed their difficulty in hearing the teacher during class, and they would like the teacher to consider adjusting the microphone placement so that everyone in the room can hear clearly. As an example, they mentioned Rosemary's case. They discussed how Rosemary prefers to use the handheld microphone during her lectures, especially in larger lecture halls where students at the back may have difficulty hearing

While adjustments cannot be made this semester as the module is finished, students may find it beneficial to provide this feedback to Jane, who knows how to directly address the situation. The professor also mentioned we will soon be having new microphones and hope this will allow easier adjusting for better sound quality, particularly for students at the back. He emphasized the importance of addressing and raising such small concerns as he understand this can greatly impact the learning experience. Students can help in this and other modules in letting the teacher and/or the office know as this will allow action to be taken.

Q10. **Ms. Wu, wendi** also raised another issue regarding the speed at which the teacher speaks. He mentioned that many students have expressed difficulty in understanding the lecture because the lecturer speaks too fast.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged that staff receiving feedback about their speaking pace is common and valuable. He explained that striking the right balance is crucial; speaking too slowly may result in inadequate course coverage, while speaking too quickly hinders student understanding. An example was raised with Aravindan, as when students mentioned the fast pace to him, he slowed down immediately but sped up again by the end of the lecture.

Prof. Maconochie will discuss with Aravindan whether the fast pace is due to an excessive amount of content or if it's simply their normal speaking speed. Prof Maconochie believes that the staff will appreciate the feedback and not take it personally. Students also mentioned exploring ways to improve the biochemistry part of the course, as there is always room for improvement. However, he acknowledged that it is too late for the current students. In the meantime, Prof Maconochie advised students to approach Aravindan or Ben before the next two weeks of lectures and kindly request them to slow down if they feel the pace is too fast. If in slowing down the lecturers do not manage to cover the necessary content, they could record lectures they do not manage to deliver online and upload them on QM plus for students' reference. This solution will only be considered if there is an overwhelming amount of material to cover that is not possible following slowing down delivery. Also it will then be up to the students to follow these.

Q11. Ms. Pu, xinyue raised a question regarding the timing of classes. She mentioned that in the morning, classes start at 8 AM, and there is a two-hour break at noon. However, the afternoon classes begin either at 2 PM or 1:30 PM, leaving only a two-hour break. Many students have expressed that they don't have enough time for their lunch break within this limited timeframe. Therefore, they are requesting if it would be possible to postpone the starting time of the afternoon class to 3 PM.

Prof Maconochie highlighted that if the schedule begins at 3 pm and ends at 7.00pm, with evening lectures starting at 7 PM, that leaves no time for dinner. The current timetable is already quite packed. To accommodate a longer lunch break, it may be necessary to shorten or adjust some lectures, but this is not feasible as content would have to be dropped. Furthermore, completely removing any lectures is not feasible as the content is part of an accredited degree. He explained in detail that if the first class runs from 3.00pm to 4.00pm, followed by a 30-minute break, and then the second lecture 4.30-5.30pm and then followed by office hour 6.00-7.00pm there

is no dinner time as evening lectures start at 7.00pm.

Prof Maconochie mentioned that working culture in the UK, up to a one hour lunch break is considered normal. Chinese students in the QM Summer School get 2! While a longer break would be preferable from the student perspective, a two-hour break is already considered very generous. It is crucial to maintain the syllabus and fulfill the requirements established by the Chinese medical education committee. Unfortunately, it is not possible to allocate more time for lunch break.

Q12. **Ms. Pu, xinyue** brought up a concern regarding the feasibility of completing the Pharmacy report within the given timeframe. One of the reports has a deadline of one day, and numerous students feel that it doesn't provide them with sufficient time. Considering they just finished the previous report at 12:00pm, the next day they are required to submit another one before 12:00pm. Taking into account morning classes, sleeping time, and class time, the available time is less than 24 hours.

Prof Maconochie discussed the need to strike a balance between workload and allowing students sufficient time to complete their tasks. While 24 hours may seem challenging, it is not unreasonable given the nature of the work. It's important to avoid excessively long deadlines that could lead to group collaborations instead of individual effort. For example, if students were given two weeks to write a report, it's likely they would submit a group report. The practical submission deadlines for experiments and tests appear reasonable, considering the time constraints. However Prof Maconochie will communicate these concerns to Choi and explore potential minor adjustments. Additionally, in the case of practicals involving multiple sessions on different days, having consecutive evenings or a combination of afternoon/evening or evening/morning sessions is preferable to ensure fairness and minimize group collaborations. Prof Maconochie will discuss this issue with Choi and address any potential disadvantages or advantages.

Questions/Concerns raised from Year 1 of 2023 cohort student representives

Q 13, Ms. Wu, xinyi raised a question regarding teaching and mentioned that there are three NCU teachers for histology and biology. She mentioned that some students have complained about the difficulty of adapting to different teaching styles. Therefore, the students are wondering if it's possible to

have only one teacher.

Prof Maconochie suggested that rotating the students among the three teachers might really be a beneficial idea. This would provide students with exposure to different teaching styles and cater to their diverse learning preferences. However, he acknowledged that implementing this rotation may require substantial effort and increased workload. Having multiple teachers with different styles can help students in discovering their own learning styles.

As this is a NCU-side delivered module, he deferred the response on this matter to Prof. Zhijun who will respond in due course.

Q 14, Ms. Wu, xinyi mentioned an issue regarding difficulties students are facing in using QMPlus. She reported that there are many students are not familiar with the platform and some students have expressed a desire to have a chinese teacher guide them on how to use it effectively.

Prof Maconochie emphasized the importance of actively using the QMPlus to learn how to navigate it. Similar to using a Chinese app without knowing the language, exploration by "doing" and seeking guidance from knowledgeable students or instructors is key. He encouraged students to approach him or other QMUL lecturers during office hours for assistance and demonstrations. We are happy to help. Prof Maconochie explained that the NCU Chinese teachers may not be familiar with QMPlus, but the QMUL lecturers are all available to support students in completing assignments and understanding the platform's features. He also urged students not to hesitate in seeking help and emphasized that the QMUL lecturers are there to support them in improving their English skills and use of all QM facilities and learning structures. We are here to help and support you.

Q15, Mr. Wang , yufei inquire whether it would be possible for QMUL to provide past test papers from year 2 and year 3, as completed by students during their first year. The reason for this request is that students are keen to familiarize themselves with types and composition of test papers in order to better prepare for upcoming exams.

Professor Maconochie stated that this query is raised on a yearly basis. In

order to facilitate students' preparation for examinations and enhance their familiarity with the exam structure, practice papers are consistently made available and are accessible on QMPlus. It should be noted, however, that we do not offer an extensive collection of past examination papers and corresponding solutions, as our intention is to discourage students from excessively relying on rote memorization of questions and answers from previous examinations.

Q16, Mr. Xu, Yizhou raised a question regarding the extra points policy implemented by NCU. Yizhou is concerned that as first-year students, who have only been at the school for a few months, they may not be familiar with the rules of this policy. Therefore, they would like to request detailed information regarding the specific rules and requirements for earning extra points towards the graduating program.

A response will be provided in due course, at the following SSLC.

Q17, Mr. Xu, Yizhou raised another question regarding the use of professional vocabulary in lectures. He has noticed that there are often difficult and lengthy professional terms used, making it challenging for students to comprehend and fully grasp the content within the limited time frame of the lecture. As a result, he suggests that lecturers speak slowly when introducing these terms and utilize simpler language to provide explanations.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the difficulty of medical terms during medical courses and emphasized the need for students to actively engage in reviewing and translating the taught material. He explained that while they cannot provide a dictionary for every word that comes up in a lecture, students are in a position to translate before or after the lessons to aid their understanding. Prof Maconochie also mentioned that it is important for students to attend office hours and seek clarification on any concepts they struggle with. However, he noted that speaking too slowly may irritate some students, and that there is a syllabus that needs to be covered within the given time frame of the medical and Biomedical Sciences degree. He encouraged students to work hard and take responsibility for their own learning, while assuring them that the QM teachers are available to provide assistance.

Q18, Ms. Shu, xin raised a question regarding the desire that lecturers emphasize key points in each lesson. One specific example Ms Shu mentioned was the importance of understanding the role of transport proteins.

Professor Maconochie mentioned the importance but also difficulty of highlighting and emphasizing key points in the course. In response the wondered if the question is maybe about highlighting examinable parts of the course? He explained that most slide(s) will have a bottom line, which often represents the key points. However, this does not mean that the content in the middle is unimportant, as it provides necessary explanations leading to the key point. Understanding the entire slide is crucial for achieving a higher mark on exams. Prof Maconochie advised students to spend time comprehending the material now rather than just memorizing the bottom line later. Different methods, such as using different colors or adding emphasis, may be employed by lecturers to highlight important information. For example, with over 800 slides in a course, it is vital to focus on grasping the concepts rather than simply memorizing words. Despite the large volume of material, Professor Maconochie acknowledged the challenges faced by medical students and their need to understand the subject matter rather than just memorize it. He encouraged students to always look for the main message or take-home point of each slide, which can often be found at the bottom or on the next slide, while recognizing that everything in between contributes to that message.

Q 19, Ms. Shu, xin raised another question about the absence of answers for the exam papers. She express the wish that students are eager to have access to the answers.

Professor Maconochie emphasized the importance of critical thinking, and providing comprehensive answers rather than memorizing predetermined responses. He mentioned that examiners do not provide model answers on QMplus because they want to avoid students solely relying on memorization. Indeed, as has been previously mentioned, teachers create new questions for each paper. Professor Maconochie acknowledged his acute awareness of students' desires but stated that it is not feasible to fulfill those expectations. He reiterated the need for students to come to office hours with completed/part completed past paper questions to support their studying.

Q20, Ms. Zhang, yixiao brought up a query about the availability of

exercises that are accompanied by answers for the module exercises. Furthermore, she wondered if there could be additional practice resources provided for students to revise and reinforce their understanding after completing each module.

Professor Maconochie explained that in most years, there are revision sessions provided for students. These sessions may include online office hours and/or in person workshops lasting two to three hours, specifically designed to cover exam content and provide practice opportunities. He mentioned already the presence of practice exam papers without answers on QMPlus since textbook questions may not always be relevant. If students desire more past exam papers, they could create their own questions and bring them to the office hour. Professor Maconochie also highlighted the importance of reflection and critical thinking when developing exam questions. He assured students that online revision sessions are typically organized for most modules, often close to the exam date. While understanding the concern raised for additional exercises, Professor Maconochie explained the need to strike a balance between providing adequate assessment and avoiding overassessment, especially considering the frequency of assessments already present in the curriculum. He explained the challenges students faced in higher years with multiple modules running concurrently, resulting in more frequent assessments. The aim is to allow students sufficient time to process the course materials and think critically rather than rush through assessments due to tight timelines and include further assessments for practice.

Q21, Ms. Zhang, yixiao recommons providing QMUL lecturers with more opportunities to interact with students, which would help to cultivate a higher level of enthusiasm among students.

Professor Maconochie believes that all the QMUL staff actively engage with students to foster their enthusiasm. He addressed two points in this regard. Firstly, regarding the notion of increased interaction, one might question how much more interaction is possible beyond office hours. But as an example for additional interaction, he noted that during events such as your singing competition, QMUL staff are delighted to interact and offer support since if we are present teaching, we hope to be invited to participate as judges! Secondly, students are also encouraged to approach lecturers during office hours for a chat particularly if lecturers are not busy explaining some detail they have been asled to clarify. Our lecturers are

very happy to interact with you, and this is a major reason why we fly from the UK – to teach you!

Understandably, it may be challenging to engage in conversation during breaks between lectures as staff require a rest before another hour of delivery. Additionally, after the second lecture, time constraints make it necessary for staff to rush to the next appointment, which typically involves an office hour. Prof Maconochie wanted emphasize that a whole hour is dedicated for office hours for students, during which students can consult and converse with them, not only directly on the lectures given recently. Moreover, QQ communication remains an another option

Therefore, prof. Maconochie encourage students not to hesitate in reaching out. He is open to suggestions on how to enhance the interactions and improve the learning experience, but also Providing free time for lecturers to prepare for upcoming lectures and practicals.

Finally, Prof Maconochie expressed gratitude for the time students have taken to collect and raise questions today, and hopes to have addressed some questions and has received valuable advice from students to pass on to staff.

Minutes submitted by Jane Qu