

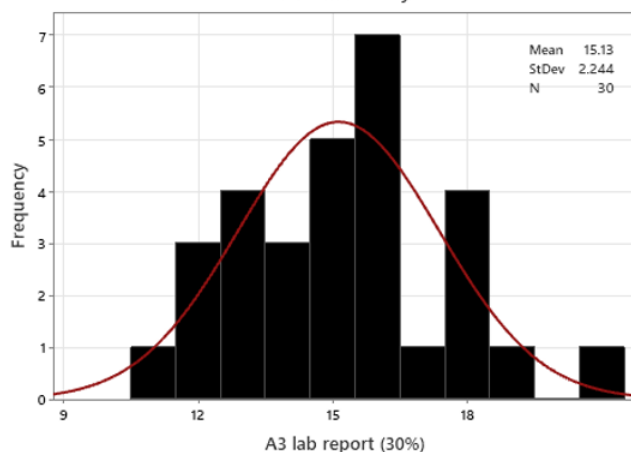
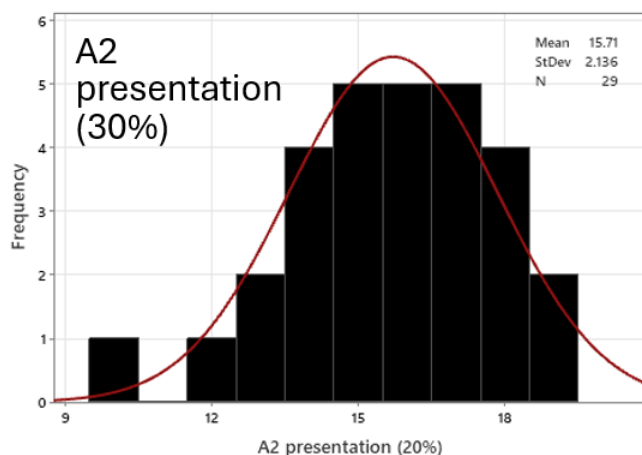
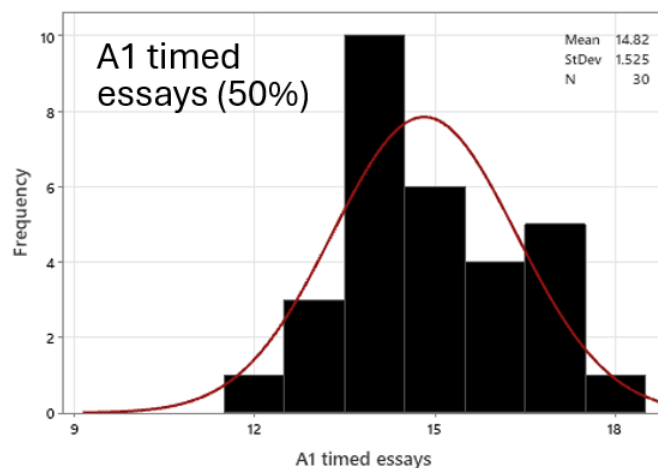
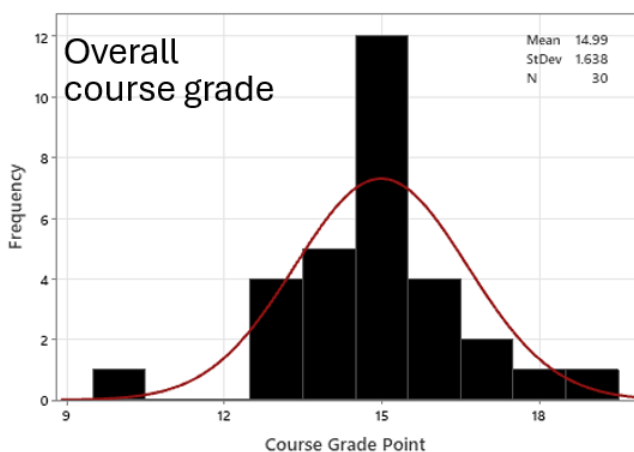
ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW REPORT

COURSE INFORMATION:		
Course code	Course Title	Course Co-ordinator
PL3505	Plant-Environment Interactions	Dr Martin Barker
Period of review: (1 st / 2 nd half session (or summer term for PGT) and academic year)	Semester 2	
No. students registering:	31	
No. students withdrawing:	1	
Pass Rate (%) based on first attempt and excluding any C7, NP, GC or MC:	100%	

COURSE APPRAISAL:

a) **PASS RATE:** Please provide a reflective commentary on the **pass rate**

Pass rate was similar to 2022-2023 (95%). One student only completed two of the assessments and did not pass the course. Mean values shown below do not include zeroes. Mean overall course grade was similar to 2022-2023 (14.9) but lower than 2021-2022 (15.8), 2020-2021 (16.6). This could be due to a cohort effect. The target was 16/B2.



Grade distributions were reasonable, with each assessment achieving some useful differentiation.

b) **STRENGTHS:** What worked well in the course (e.g. with respect to assessment, feedback on assessment, teaching methods, opportunity to develop graduate attributes)? You should use student feedback gathered by any method, which could include the Course Feedback Form, SSLC meetings, informal feedback during classes, mid-term evaluations, as well as feedback from external examiners, Programme Advisory Boards, Professional and Statutory Bodies and the teaching team if available.

Feedback is derived from CFF report (50%), SSLC and detailed surveys by the class reps.

Aspect of course	Student comments
OVERALL	"Passionate teacher and very stimulating to build our own investigation. I love this way of learning.", "The course experience was excellent."

CONTENT	"Different teachers, interesting topics, field trip and lots of labs", "A holistic course that develops critical thought processes and helps with the processes of coming up with ideas of how to study something".	
LECTURES	"loved the ...many questions asked during the lectures that made us think by ourselves"	
PRACTICALS		
format	"Loved the labs and the flexibility in the possible subjects", "I liked that the lab sessions created space for us to be creative and develop our abilities in experimental design"	
drafts	The practical work provided a good opportunity to put the lecture material into practice. I also really appreciated the feedback on draft reports and the opportunity to come for a drop in session re reports and presentations"	
STUDENT SUPPORT		
approachability	"The lecturers were friendly, and they paid attention and attempted to help the Chinese cohort specifically. "	
support for 2+2 contingent	"Martin is very serious and responsible, and often pays attention to our learning after class, making sure that we Chinese students can keep up with the teaching progress, and is willing to listen and answer our questions."	
c) WEAKNESSES: What did not work well in the course (e.g. with respect to assessment, feedback on assessment, teaching methods, opportunity to develop graduate attributes)? You should use student feedback gathered by any method, which could include the Course Feedback Form, SSLC meetings, informal feedback during classes, mid-term evaluations, as well as feedback from external examiners, Programme Advisory Boards, Professional and Statutory Bodies and the teaching team if available		
Feedback is derived from CFF report (50%), SSLC and a detailed survey (100%) by the class rep.		
Aspect of course	Student comments	Course coordinator responses
LECTURES		
Depth of content	"Lectures often seemed to run very slowly and not in depth enough sometimes"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o This comment was made by a few students, so clearly it is a real issue. o Will shift focus of sessions more to problem solving and discussion
Duration	"I enjoyed the subjects being taught but found the three-hour timetable slots to be difficult"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We will shift focus (see above)
PRACTICALS		
Duration	"The time of practical is short, maybe it could be longer."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We cannot extend lab or field time, but we can ask students to do more preparation
preparation	"having to make an experiment for every one was quite difficult particularly in the shorter five-week course"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o This format is a strength of the course and is valued by other students, so we see no immediate need to change. But we will help students to manage their workloads
DEADLINES	"There was also a lot of confusion around the final deadline for the report and the Presentation"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o There were some necessary adjustments and students were kept informed throughout"
WORKLOAD		
Pressure	"found the workload to be quite heavy for a 5 week course, especially when creating a new lab experiment every week."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o For a Level 3 course (only one of two) the workload was appropriate. o At least one student described the workload as 'light'"
Timing	"But all at the end, would be great if 1 of the 3 assessments is due earlier to better divide the workload."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Agree. Timed essays will be moved into the main course. Lab report and presentation cannot easily be moved"
turnaround	Not flagged by students, but course coordinator was concerned by delays in returning grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Changes in the format and delivery of assessments is likely to overcome this problem
formative exercises	"Being able to submit draft reports was really helpful, HOWEVER I felt there was a huge amount of pressure to submit drafts even when I knew I would not be using it for my final report."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Students who did not submit drafts tended to do less well in the summative assessment.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We can remind students that they can be selective in their choice of practical to submit as a draft ○ Note that Chinese students made very good use of this service
TIMING OF ASSESSMENTS	“Loaded towards the end of the course”	○ See below
Timed essays	“wish we could have had longer for the timed essays, and that they would be worth a slightly smaller % of our overall grade,”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arrangements for this assessment will be changed to 2 x timed essays at two intervals during the course ○ Duration of assessment could have especially challenging for Chinese students who needed time to translate.
presentation	“the presentation should be early in the course and on a topic of interest or one of the early labs”,	○ This would not work because students often choose to write up later practicals
ATTENDANCE		○ Not flagged as an issue this year
d) IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICE: Reflect on any new/innovative or particularly effective teaching or assessment methods. Indicate whether this good practice has been disseminated more widely within the School, University or outside of the University		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Problem solving and thought experiments during lectures. ○ Designing own investigations (lab and fieldwork) with basic equipment and minimal instruction. ○ Multiple opportunities, with formative audio feedback, to develop academic writing skills. ○ Timed essays included experimental design and data analysis, which cannot be easily answered by AI/ChatGPT. ○ Pecha kucha recording of presentations, with peer feedback for credit. 		

COURSE DEVELOPMENT:	
a) EVALUATION OF CHANGES MADE THIS YEAR: Evaluate any changes implemented during this year as a result of feedback from previous years. Changes made that were not successful are just as important as changes that have been successful.	
Proposed for 2023-2024	Implementation in 2023-2024
Practical work enhanced.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuing emphasis on students utilising feedback on draft lab reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mostly achieved, Formative feedback was timely and delivered as audio files. Some students may need more encouragement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If possible, more plant physiological instruments will be utilised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing. Purchase of pressure chamber to be explored.
Lecture programme enhanced. Further development of lecture content:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ add yet more depth, problem solving and discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing. We will continue to add more detail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ add more case studies focussing on real-world research work on each theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing. We increased the use of published research in the sessions
In-course essay assessment. Open book exam used this year could be replaced by an ‘in-course essay’, based on a choice from four alternative titles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparation sessions for timed essays was included in timetable. ○ Students who don’t have English as their first language may have faced an unnecessary pressure.
Practical work enhanced. Further development of self-directed practical work:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved, but continuing to explore more ideas for practicals
Presentation assessment	
Allow students to choose between live and recorded pecha kucha presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not done this year, partly due to the composition of the class
b) PROPOSED CHANGES FOR NEXT YEAR: Summarise changes planned in the light of this review	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver timed essays (x2) <u>during</u> the course at two intervals. ● Will explore whether to use 2 h (invigilated) or 48 h (not invigilated) duration of timed essays. ● Continue to Include timed essay elements more explicitly during lectures. 	

- For each of the 4 practicals:
 - require that each group uploads their data (to provide options for all students)
 - expectation that students submit at least two drafts, with the option of submitting more.
- Consider using audio feedback (Panopto) on lab reports.
- Provide recorded lectures and key references as prior reading.
- On campus sessions could consist of:
 - mini lecture (40 mins)
 - question / discussion about 'theory' from lecture/key references.
 - group-based problem-solving exercises.
- Allow students to choose between live and recorded pecha kucha presentations.
- A glossary of key terms and phrases will be provided in Mandarin
- **SSLC action point:** Discuss course with current and future 2+2 students to gain suggestions for any improvements.

c) APPROVAL:

Will approval be needed to make changes to the course using the Curriculum Management System?	YES	NO
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Signed: *Martin G. Barker* Date:03.06.24.....
 (Course Co-ordinator)

COPIES OF THIS FORM SHOULD BE:

1. UPLOADED TO THE [QUALITY AND PLANNING SHAREPOINT SITE](#) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF THE COURSE. DEADLINES WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE SCHOOL, WITH AN OVERALL CENTRAL DEADLINE OF **31 AUGUST (UG)** AND **30 NOVEMBER (PG)**
2. PUBLISHED TO STUDENTS AND STAFF VIA MYABERDEEN
3. CONTRIBUTE TO THE ANNUAL PROGRAMME REVIEW

* Phase Co-ordinator for the MBChB curriculum; Interdisciplinary Degree Programme Co-ordinator, or Vice-Principal (Education) where appropriate.