

SMS School Meeting
Education Update, 20 Sep 2021
S. Beheshti, Director of Education

ADMIN ALLOCATION - Reworked to address actual areas of activity (and need)

ADVISING - Advising restructured to simplify things (more on this from Director of SE)

LECTURES - What you're seeing on the timetable:

Y1 – 5 contact hours comprised of two 2hr Lectures + 1hr (small group) Tutorials

Y2/Y3 – 4 contact hours comprised of two 2hr Lectures or 2+1 hrs Lecture + 1 (split) Seminar

Y4/MSc – 3 contact hours comprised of 2 Lectures +1 contact hours

Notes:

Tutorials are not MME (there are online only tutorials to catch those who aren't here yet)

Some modules have double taught components (seminars & IT labs)

Why some double/split seminars? Why online only, on campus only IT labs?

Some Level 5/6 modules are too large for interactive seminars in 2+2, better SE

For PGT, a few double taught seminars/IT Labs, fairly clearly delineated

TUTORIALS/SEMINARS - Tutorials will be held weekly

Y1 – Weekly tutorials will commence in Week 2

Y2/Y3 – Weekly seminar hour

In 2+2hr modules, you choose where the seminar hour goes

In 2+1+1 modules, split seminar is timetabled and double taught

Notes:

In Y2/Y3 Seminar/IT Labs start in Week 1 unless indicated otherwise

Your tutorial allocation is not yet out because...

Please do try to make your lectures/tutorials/seminars as interactive as possible

ASSESSMENT - Reworked assessment pattern to reduce admin burden

Most modules levels 4-6 have 20% coursework + 80% final exam

Typical pattern is 5 courseworks worth 4% (a few weekly with 5 submission points)

IFoA-accredited modules have special assessment pattern (already contacted by Gaik)

Bonus if you can coordinate due dates for bigger modules in the year (esp. Y1)

FINALS - Both main and late-summer exams due during term time

Tentative deadline for checked exam: middle of Week 7 (Reading Week)

New rule: every module needs at least 50% assessments to go to external examiners

Both UG/PGT SEB Chairs propose we revert to timed exams (2hr UG, 3 hr PGT)

More detailed written instructions will go out later from SEB Chairs

QMPLUS - Please clearly indicate the following on your module page

Weekly responsibilities of the student (e.g., independent reading, asynchronous videos, etc.)

Where questions should be directed (e.g., forum, email, office hours, etc.)

The days, times and modes of your Office Hours (in a physical space, online, etc.)

Basics Checklist:

Session Links, Recordings, Lecture Notes, Readings, Library Resources

Exercises + due dates, Solutions, Feedback, Exam Resources, Extras (as appropriate)

Notes:

Be explicit at weekly/bi-weekly level, e.g., "Do reading X, Week N, attend Tuesday lecture Week N, watch video A sometime on Wed-Thu, Revise exercise sheet Week N-1, etc. By the end of week N, you should know how to ..."

A FEW WORDS ON MME - the (stressed) elephant in the room

The three simplest approaches to try, depending on your timetabled space and class size:

1. Log into machine in lecture hall, open BBCollab/Zoom/Teams on your QMPlus page, and use tablet/stylus via screenshare to deliver lecture using OneNote
2. Log into machine in lecture hall, open BBCollab/Zoom/Teams on your QMPlus page, and use the visualiser/document camera to deliver lecture
3. Bring a laptop + tablet/stylus to connect to the lecture hall rig (check if you need connectors), open BBCollab/Zoom/Teams on your QMPlus page, and deliver lecture as you would have at home.

Notes:

The first option does not require you to bring any kit to get things working

The second option does not appear to work in every room yet, but we have raised IT tickets

The third option will use the mic and camera from your laptop, so be mindful of sound issues

I have escalated our concerns with the Dean of Education

We will still encounter IT issues (phone the helpdesk, use MME Stewards, have backup plan)

WELCOME WEEK - Thank you to those of you who are preparing talks/coming to lunch

If you are available, please join us in Godward Square 11:30-13:00 on Wed/Thu this week!

WHAT IS HAPPENING "ABOVE US"

The OfS will be auditing all universities to ensure that all students receive at least 50% of their education for 2021/22 "in person" / "face-to-face" with financial consequences.

Education principles / QMUL pedagogy for 2021/22. Communications and a diagram of various educational activities has been sent to all students about MME; in order to be clear about the expectation, attendance on campus has always been an academic requirement and remains so this year. This is done with the understanding that some students (primarily international on red list countries) will be joining live MME sessions online, with the majority of students - both home and international - on campus for the same synchronous / live session.

So students are expected to be on campus, in person (unless they are UNABLE, rather than unwilling, to travel to campus), meaning we shouldn't imply that students have the option to attend solely online if they prefer. If students make that choice regardless (somewhat implied by our engagement setup), that is an issue we can discuss another time.

This is also why we've been asked to avoid any reference to *Blended Learning* and moved to *Mixed Mode Education*. Students perceive "blended learning" as a euphemism for "online learning", and this could adversely impact both engagement and student satisfaction.

Please be assured that I have already pointed out that the above will be entirely irrelevant if we can't/don't get the basics of our provision and delivery right.