

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Nanchang JP

Minutes from the meeting on Thursday, 13th November 2025

Time: 5:15pm (Beijing Time) GMT+8

Location: NCU JP Conference Room 310

Present from QMUL:

Prof. Mark Maconochie Co-Director/Chair

Ms. Jane Qu Administrator

Ms. Nancy Wang Administrator

Present from NCU

Prof. Zhijun Luo Director/Dean

Prof. Xiaojuan Hu Vice Dean

Student Members Presented:

Name	Cohort	Class	NCU ID	QM ID
Wu Xinyi	2023	232	4217123054	231209487
Shu Xin		233	4217123114	231210184
Xu Yizhou		234	4217123137	231210634
Zhang Yixiao		236	4217123240	231211273
Wei Jiani	2024	241	8101124035	241091867
Zhou Minyou		242	8101124080	241092325
Wang Xingchen		243	8101124108	241092598
Yang Canyu		244	8101124161	241093126
You Siqi		245	8101124198	241093481
Wu Yandong		246	8101124238	241093908
Wan Rongrong	2025	252	6601124039	251091196
Xiao Jinlin		253	8101125115	251091543
Li Yachen		254	8101125135	251092089
Tu Baoyuan		254	8101125172	251092562
Tu Lezhi		254	4267124066	251092229
Jiang Yichen		255	8101125172	251092562

Apologies were received from student representatives Tan Yinuo and Yan Fengxu.

Part 1: Preliminary Items

1. Welcome

Professor Maconochie extended a welcome to all committee members at the Nanchang JP SSLC meeting convened on 13th November 2025. Student representatives first introduced themselves to the committee members. Prof Maconochie then introduced himself, Prof Luo, Prof Hu and followed by introductions of all other attending staff members to the committee.

2. Brief Updates

Prof Maconochie briefly updated the committee on ongoing matters and questions raised at the previous meeting on 12th May 2025.

- a) Regarding the concern raised of getting late feedback from lecturers raised by former Year 3 students, Prof Maconochie understands the frustration and noted that current year 3 students should not wait until the SSLC in May to voice concerns, but let him and the relevant project module organisers know the individual lecturer without delay if this issue arises and is not easily resolved. He advised students to follow the established procedure: first request feedback from their project advisor in the defined time periods. If that does not resolve the issue, they should then contact the module organizer copying myself. This way, specific problems with any individual project advisors can be identified and addressed proactively.

Prof Maconochie also announced a change in the module organiser team for Year 3. He clarified that SNU301 is now overseen by Dr Aravindan and Dr Ben, and Dr Nikola will replace Ben next year. He confirmed that these organizers are the responsible points of contact for the module.

- b) Regarding the previously reported issue of a flickering projector in the Lecture Hall, Prof Maconochie checked with Jane Qu that the equipment underwent a complete rewiring and HDMI lead replacement over the summer and expressed his thanks. Students confirmed that the problem has now been resolved and the projector is functioning much better.
- c) Regarding students' request for lecturers to swap midway through each module, Prof Maconochie noted that this had been shared with staff. Currently there are no plans to make this compulsory at this stage, but does support the students view and will continue to encourage teaching staff to voluntarily implement such swaps. He explained this approach would expose students to diverse teaching styles and accents while ensuring equitable access to different instructors. The suggestion has

been communicated to faculty over the last year, with some lecturers already adopting the practice. The JP team will evaluate the initiative based on subsequent students' feedback.

The committee approved the minutes from the previous meeting, held on 12th May 2025, as an accurate record of proceedings, and no other questions were raised from the minutes.

Part 2: Programme Delivery and other Matters Raised

Student representatives reported the following issues and requests related to learning and teaching matters:

Year 3_Cohort of 2023

Q1. Mr. Xu Yizhou raised a concern about the number of NCU compulsory activities students are required to attend. He explained that these activities, which sometimes take place on weekends, are cutting into students' break time and personal study periods, especially as they prepare for their final exams. He expressed a hope that the number of such mandatory events could be reduced.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the heavy teaching load for third year students and noted that he and the team have been working to merge modules to free up timetable space, but these changes will only begin to take effect from 2026 and thus won't apply to the current third year. He added that the goal of the timetable adjustments is to allow students more time for thinking, sports and rest. He offered no immediate solution for the current Year 3 students but encouraged them to implement time management skills learnt to date and reassured them that the additional activities are intended to contribute to their best long-term interests.

Prof Hu then sought clarification on the nature of these compulsory activities. The student described a mix of mandatory lectures, such as alumni talks, and events like sports meetings and concerts where a select number of students from the class are chosen to attend. When asked if students could opt out, the student confirmed that attendance was often mandatory, with a sign-in system in place to enforce it.

In addressing this concern, the professors acknowledged the students' perspective, but explained the rationale behind these activities. They emphasized the importance of developing a well-rounded character beyond academic studies alone. Prof Maconochie illustrated that extracurricular involvement helps build interpersonal skills and makes a student more

competitive for postgraduate programs and future careers, where interviewers often look for interests and hobbies outside of academics to present with a more well-rounded mature character.

While they heard the students' feedback, the professors maintained that these activities are considered beneficial for overall development. The proposed solution was not to cancel the activities but to better manage participation, for example, by having students take turns attending events, so the burden isn't always on the same individuals.

Q2. Ms. Zhang Yixiao raised a request concerning lectures for NCU Clinical Diagnostics module. The student asked if the lecturers could upload their presentation slides after class, allowing students to download the materials for independent review.

Prof Hu acknowledged the issue, confirming that this pertained to modules taught by the Diagnostics department. She noted that the frequent rotation of lecturers for these courses might be a reason why the consistent sharing of slides or teaching materials has not been standard practice.

Prof Luo stated that the faculty can formally relay this request to the relevant department, specifically the clinical department of teaching affairs. He explained that Medical School can urge the clinical staff to provide their slides, but he clarified that the process requires coordination through the wider Medical School administration, as the school itself cannot directly compel the clinical department's lecturers to do so.

Q3. Ms. Zhang Yixiao raised another request that lecturers of SNU305 Human Genetics and Genomics can add more Clicker Questions in class. She clarified that the current questions in the slides appear to be identical to those used in the previous academic years.

Prof Maconochie agreed with the suggestion. He acknowledged that the practice of wholesale reuse of all questions from past years should be avoided to ensure their effectiveness. He confirmed two action points: first, the request to provide new questions that students haven't seen before, and second, to address the need for updating any old content.

Prof Maconochie concluded by stating that he would direct this feedback to Dr Tanya, the new module organizer for SNU305 Human Genetics and Genomics. While he noted that this change would come too late for the current Year 3 students, as the genetics module has concluded, he assured that new questions would be implemented for the Year 2 cohort in the

following academic year.

Q4. Ms. Shu Xin raised a concern regarding the NCU Diagnostics course. She identified two main issues: first, a lack of organization and communication amongst the teachers, and second, that exam questions appear to be set without a clear or consistent basis. To address this, she specifically requested that the teachers from the First and Second Clinical Colleges coordinate with each other to standardize both the difficulty of exam questions and the grading standards.

Prof Luo stated that he would raise this issue with the head of the Diagnostics teaching team. He emphasized the importance of such feedback for improving the Diagnostic teaching group's effectiveness.

Prof Hu explained the underlying difficulty: the medical school can only communicate with the clinical colleges through administrative channels, and the clinical teachers often change from year to year, which contributes to the inconsistency.

Ms. Shu Xin further pointed out that Classes 456 are receiving more class hours and content for Diagnostics than Classes 123. Prof Luo confirmed that the timetable and content should be identical across all classes and committed to investigating this imbalance with the medical college. He requested that students provide specific evidence of the differences to strengthen their case. Prof Hu will chase this up and give feedback to students.

Q5. Ms. Wu Xinyi presented a concern on behalf of her class regarding the AI-based facial recognition attendance system. She argued that the system is inefficient and inaccurate, frequently mislabeling entire classes and forcing all students to go through an appeals process, even when they were present. This, she stated, defeats the original purpose of making attendance checks quicker and easier. She reported that some students exploit the system by briefly showing up to be scanned and then leaving. The student proposed that a simpler and fairer method would be to have a teacher or student officer take manual attendance randomly in classes.

Prof Luo cited data indicating the system's accuracy is over 95% and stressed that its use is crucial to prevent absenteeism, which he noted could be as high as 50% without such measures. He emphasized that the system is a protective measure, as university regulations mandate penalties, including potential expulsion, for students who exceed a certain number of absences.

Prof Maconochie supported this view, explaining that high attendance is a universal requirement, noting that in the UK, students with less than 80% attendance can face deregistration. This is both to aid learning and to fulfill the university's duty of care to the students. He shared that QM have been formalizing the use of clickers to track student attendance for QM purposes of registration compliance. The clicker system not only records student presence at the start of a session but will also monitor participation throughout the entire two-hour class. This measure is specifically designed to ensure students remain engaged for the full duration of the lecture.

Ultimately, Prof Luo concluded that they would review the system's performance but would not be discontinuing its use. They maintained that the current method, despite its flaws, is the most practical solution for enforcing mandatory attendance policies.

Year 2_Cohort of 2024

Q6. Ms. Wei Jiani proposed adjusting the class schedule. She reported that students have been following an overwhelming timetable, with classes from 8am to 4pm or 5pm daily, without weekends, for a continuous period of 41 days. She explained that this exhausting schedule is causing burnout and making it difficult for students to focus, and she formally requested a more reasonable timetable in the future.

Prof Maconochie fully acknowledged the problem. He agreed that the schedule is excessive and attributed the intensity to several structural factors. He explained that the programme must compress a significant amount of teaching from both QMUL and NCU into the academic year, a challenge compounded by the need to avoid major holidays like Christmas. Furthermore, he noted the logistical difficulty of scheduling when two QM modules are delivered at the same time, but with available teaching weeks lower in number than individual module teaching weeks, this is sometimes unavoidable.

Prof Maconochie and Prof Luo expressed sympathy but stated that there is no immediate solution. They emphasized that the intense nature of the programme is an inherent challenge of earning two degrees in five years.

However, Prof Maconochie pointed to a longer-term strategy aimed at alleviating this timetable pressure: an ongoing curriculum review. The plan involves merging certain modules and eliminating overlapping content between the two institutions. The goal of this module restructuring is to

create a more manageable timetable for future student cohorts. The professors concluded by reaffirming their awareness of the issue and their commitment to this curricular improvement, while also acknowledging the current hardship faced by the students.

Q7. Ms. Wei Jiani sought clarification on the procedure for submitting a leave of absence form, specifically in the case of sudden illnesses like a fever or other emergencies. The student asked if the form must be completed before the lecture begins.

In response, Ms. Jane confirmed that the procedure is flexible for genuine emergencies. While students are encouraged to submit the form before class if possible, it is acceptable to submit it afterwards in emergency situations that prevent this from reasonably happening before.

Prof Maconochie explained that the requirement to submit the form in time is not meant to be punitive but to ensure there is a documented record of the absence. He clarified that this process helps students by reminding them to gather supporting evidence (like a doctor's note), which in turn makes it easier for the administration to officially grant the leave.

The student confirmed that this explanation resolved their question.

Q8. Ms. Wei Jiani raised a concern on behalf of the student body regarding the short notice rescheduling of assessments and quizzes. The core request was for lecturers to provide at least 3 to 4 days' advance notice for any changes, as opposed to announcing them the day before, to allow students to manage their time effectively.

The student provided context, citing a specific instance where Dr. Rosemary switched some quizzes from online to offline format with short notice due to persistent technical issues with the QMplus platform. While the student understood this was an emergency solution, it still caused disruption and some students were forced to change prebooked engagements in order to take this assessment.

Prof Maconochie strongly agreed with this principle. He stated unequivocally that it is against university policy to change assessment dates for coursework without significant advance notice. He explained that last-minute changes can unfairly disadvantage students who have made alternative plans based on the original assessment timetable as found when the module opens on the module homepage, and that any appeals from students in such cases would likely be upheld by the college.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the basis of this issue is a technical problem with QMPlus but this incident reinforces a broader point that discourages the use of online quizzes for graded assessments which contribute to coursework scores, precisely because of their susceptibility to technical failures on QMPlus and/or internet provision.

He affirmed that he would address the matter with the lecturers involved and reiterated his ongoing efforts to minimize dependence on unreliable methods for formal coursework assessments.

Q9. Ms. Wei Jiani, on behalf of the classmates, strongly recommends a change to the grouping principles for team-based assessments. The specific suggestion was to allow students to form their own groups, rather than being assigned to them.

Prof Maconochie provided a direct and definitive response, explaining that the current policy of assigning groups is intentional. He stated that the purpose of this approach is to develop crucial transferable career skills, specifically the ability to collaborate and work in a team with a diverse range of people, not just one's friends. He declined this proposal.

Q10. Ms. Zhou Minyou raised an issue regarding the NCU Microbiology module. She reported a significant inconsistency between the classes: Classes 123 and 456 are being taught by different lecturers. The problem is that these two lecturers use completely different teaching materials, focus on different key points, and even structure the module curriculum differently, one connects to the next term's content, while the other focuses solely on the current term's Chinese microbiology syllabus. The student expressed concern that this lack of standardization could lead to an unfair playing field on the final exam between classes.

To address the core concern about exam fairness, Prof Hu provided a crucial assurance. She stated that while the teaching content may differ, the lecturers are required to coordinate on the final assessment. The exam will be designed to cover only the overlapping material that has been taught to all students, regardless of their class.

As an immediate practical suggestion, the professors encouraged students themselves to share slides and key points with peers from the other classes to help identify this common ground. For the longer term, Professors Luo and Hu committed to speaking with the Microbiology lecturers again to reinforce the need for alignment and to work towards a more unified syllabus for future cohorts.

Q11. Ms. Wang XingChen raised a concern about the performance of the QMplus online learning platform. She reported that the site has been extremely slow, which significantly hinders students' efficiency when downloading files, submitting assignments, and most critically, completing time limited quizzes for courses like SNU205 Techniques in Biomedical Sciences.

Prof Maconochie thanked the student for the specific feedback, stating that he would file an official ticket with the London IT team to investigate the slow responsiveness experienced by students in China. Students identified a pattern, noting that the system seems to slow down during peak usage times in the afternoon compared to the morning. Prof Maconochie found this info useful to include in his report to IT.

The discussion then expanded on the recurring issue of online quizzes. The student noted that Neurobiology also uses quizzes worth a significant portion of the grade, which are similarly affected. Prof Maconochie reiterated that this is why he tries to dissuade the use of online quizzes for graded work, as technical failures create unnecessary stress and compromise assessment reliability. While it is too late to change the format for the current semester, he indicated that this feedback would inform planning for the next academic year to prevent or reduce these issues for Year 2 students.

Q12. Ms. Wang XingChen has inquired about the possibility of suspending QM lectures on the days of NCU school sports event.

Prof Maconochie noted that while the idea could potentially relieve timetable issues, it would need to be discussed with staff and would require a foolproof plan. A major concern, raised by Prof. Luo, was that not all students actively participate in the sports day, so many might treat the time as a vacation and travel, which would undermine the academic purpose of the adjustment.

The professors acknowledged the students' need for a break but emphasized the importance of time management discipline, and withdrew his initial support after considering the potential for misuse.

A discussion was had on starting the semester earlier and discussion considered practical hurdles such as the intense heat in early September, as well as a further shortening of time for staff vacation following the summer school. Prof Maconochie concluded that while the proposal was discussed with the intention of benefiting students, the cons currently outweigh the advantages of increased timetabling time. The issue was minuted for the

record, with an understanding that it could be revisited in the future.

Q13. Ms. Wang XingChen raised a significant concern about the inaccuracy of the NCU new AI attendance system, which uses classroom cameras. She reported that the system is highly unreliable, often marking a majority of present students as absent. In one recent example, 125 out of 128 students were incorrectly flagged. This inaccuracy creates a substantial burden, as student like Xingchen, who is responsible for her class, must spend hours manually correcting the records each week. The problem is particularly bad in specific classrooms, such as 1-402 and 1-404.

Student representative, Wu Yandong, from the student union, provided further technical insight into the causes. He explained that the system's failures are due to outdated cameras, poor angles that fail to capture students' faces (especially when they are looking down at devices), and a database that lacks complete student information, making correction efforts inefficient.

The professors acknowledged the issue. Prof Luo and Prof Hu asked for specific data on the error rates and advised reporting the faulty classrooms for technical fixes. When the student expressed that the system is exhausting and unpopular, the professors defended its necessity.

Prof Maconochie and Prof Luo pointed out that without some form of attendance tracking, absenteeism could likely rise dramatically, potentially by 50% or more. Prof Luo also mentioned that the system serves a security purpose, ensuring the university can account for its students. The professors committed to investigating the technical faults, but they made it clear that the principle of monitoring attendance is considered essential for both sides despite the use of different systems. The meeting ended with an action plan to improve the system's accuracy rather than discontinue its use that is used across the entire University.

Q14. Ms. You Siqi raised a concern about the high volume of group assignments and presentations, which often occur simultaneously. She explained that this overlapping schedule of assessments, involving both QMUL and NCU specific courses, leaves students with insufficient time to prepare and practice effectively, impacting the quality of their work.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the issue and proposed a formalized solution. He stated that he would instruct QMUL staff to lodge any planned presentations with the Director of Education, Prof Giulia as should already be the case, but clearly needs to be revisited. This would allow for better

coordination to prevent overlapping assessments within the QMUL curriculum. He confirmed that monitoring assessment clustering is already being carried out and remains an ongoing priority.

To address this, Prof Hu offered to reach out to NCU module leaders to collect approximate timelines for their coursework and presentations. Prof Maconochie welcomed this, stating that any info collected would greatly aid in joint programme coordination across the two universities.

In conclusion, the professors recognized the validity of the student's concern and committed to implementing better internal coordination while seeking improved communication with NCU to alleviate the scheduling burden in the future.

Q15. Ms. You Siqi suggested that all teachers follow Dr Choi's practice of uploading lecture slides online before class, allowing students to prepare in advance. She acknowledged that lectures often change from year to year but emphasized the usefulness of early access.

Prof Maconochie explained that while Dr Choi prepares far in advance, many instructors, including himself, frequently update their materials, sometimes as late as the night before a lecture. He noted that the policy on the JP is that minor adjustments are common, but students are notified of major changes. For instance, Dr Lilah recently added a new slide to include a staff member's latest research on microtubules, which had only just been published and is of interest for students.

Prof Maconochie emphasized that requiring all lecturers to share slides early will hinder their ability to continuously improve and update the teaching content. While he understands students' desire for preparation, he believes flexibility is essential for improving teaching quality and incorporate new developments. If significant changes occur, students should be informed beforehand, otherwise, they are encouraged to alert him if such notifications are missing.

The request was declined.

Year 1_Cohort of 2025

Q16. Ms. Jiang Yichen raised a concern about the learning methodology and curriculum for the Year 1 students on the NCU module Human Anatomy. The student pointed out that Human Anatomy carries a

significantly higher credit weight now (6 credits) and argued that this seemed unreasonable given that many students find the subject extremely time-consuming and challenging. Her primary questions were about how to balance learning theoretical knowledge in Chinese while also mastering English terminology to ensure a more efficient transition to the second year. She also inquired if the British teaching model for anatomy differs from the Chinese approach, which currently focuses on regional anatomy, and what changes in learning methods would be necessary to adapt.

Professors Maconochie and Luo acknowledged the difficulty but defended the course's structure and importance. They explained that the high credit value directly reflects the substantial study hours and effort required from students. They both emphasized that a solid foundation in anatomy is non-negotiable for medical students, as it is critical for future licensing exams. They clarified that while the NCU module is demanding and requires heavy memorization, it will ultimately make learning anatomy in the QMUL module later in the year much easier.

Prof Maconochie confirmed that the teaching model on the British side is different, with a greater focus on linking anatomical structure to function and using English/Latin terminology. The professors advised the students to begin familiarizing themselves with the English terms gradually alongside their current studies. They concluded by acknowledging that the subject can be tough but is an essential investment for their future medical careers.

Q17. Ms. Jiang Yichen raised a concern about the exam schedule, noting that the NCU Human Anatomy course forces students to dedicate a disproportionate amount of their final exam month to reviewing for it. This leaves insufficient time to prepare for other important subjects, specifically SNU101 Human Cell. To study more efficiently, the student requested targeted review sessions for the Human Cell course that highlight key knowledge.

In response, the professors explored potential logistical solutions. Prof Maconochie focused on whether the exam timetable could be adjusted, suggesting that creating more space between the Human Cell and Human Anatomy exams might be the most feasible way to help. He clarified, however, that he would not compromise academic standards by making exams easier or by narrowing down the topics in advance for students.

Prof Luo and Prof Hu added context, explaining that the exam schedule is partly influenced by the need to align with the broader Clinical Medicine

department at the university. The professors concluded by acknowledging the challenge for Year 1 students and reaffirmed that their primary adjustable solution would be to review the exam timing, not the content or difficulty of the assessments.

Q18. Ms. Xiao Jinlin requested more after class exercises. She explained that while Human Cell module uses in-class clicker questions, many students feel anxious about their grasp of the material and would appreciate supplementary exercises with key points to help them review.

Prof Maconochie first directed the students to the past exam papers available on QMplus, encouraging them to use those for practice and to bring their answers to office hours for discussion. He then elaborated on the philosophical shift in learning at the university level, stating that the goal is to train students to become independent, self-reliant learners rather than simply coaching them to pass exams as this is not higher education and will not help them in their further career.

Addressing the request for answer keys for all the past exam papers, he explained that providing them would lead to an endless cycle of demands for more questions and answers. He clarified that the QM teaching approach involves creating brand-new exam questions each year to assess understanding, not memorization, and thus relying on memorizing answers to as many past exam questions would not be of particular use for students. While reaffirming that lecturers are available during office hours to provide help and feedback, he confirmed that they do not plan to introduce more exercises in class, as this would reduce valuable teaching time, making it more difficult to deliver the syllabus and above all contradict the core purpose of higher education.

Q19. Ms. Xiao Jinlin raised a concern about Chinese students' hesitation to attend office hours due to shyness. The student noted that some prefer using QQ or email to contact teachers but don't always receive prompt replies.

Prof Maconochie addressed the issue in several parts. First, he acknowledged that shyness is common among Chinese students but emphasized the importance of overcoming it through face-to-face interaction. He explained that building confidence is essential for future national and international career opportunities, where students will compete with highly confident individuals. Second, regarding QQ, he explained that his own access had been temporarily disabled, causing a

delay. He also suggested that QQ is an excellent platform for students to answer each other's questions, as teaching a concept to others is a powerful way to solidify one's own understanding. Third, He admitted that while he tries to reply, the high volume of emails can lead to delays and some emails may be overlooked. He pointed out that a conversation during office hours can resolve questions much faster than written communication. He also recognized that the year 2 and year 3 students present in the meeting agreed they had grown in confidence over the Queen Mary degree to date.

Prof Maconochie finally stressed that office hours are a valuable and unique resource, even not available at the London campus. He encouraged students to take advantage of this unique opportunity for personal and academic growth, noting that the goal of education extends beyond exams to overall personal development.

Q20. Ms. Li Yachen raised a concern regarding students who had not taken Biology in high school and might lack foundational knowledge relevant to their current studies. She asked whether lecturers could briefly review foundational biology topics as they arise in class.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the issue but clarified that it is not feasible for lecturers to reteach high school Biology during class. He emphasized that doing so would not be fair to the rest of the cohort, who had enrolled with the expectation of studying at university level. However, he expressed willingness to support affected students in other ways. He mentioned having already lent one of his own textbooks to a student and identified genetics and DNA as common areas where important background knowledge may be lacking. He proposed several supportive measures, such as supplying basic Biology textbooks in the JP library, recommending reliable online resources for self-study, and organizing informal meetings among students to discuss their specific needs.

He also encouraged the student representative to gather feedback from those without a biology background to better understand what kind of support would be most helpful. These insights could help shape obtaining the appropriate resources for future student cohorts that can support them in their catch up studies.

Prof Luo added that Human Cell course represents only a small part of biology, underscoring that high school biology is much broader in scope extending far beyond the human body. Prof Maconochie concurred, noting that the current curriculum focuses only on essential, medically relevant

topics. In summary, while in-class review of high school biology is not possible, lecturers are open to providing supplementary resources and guidance to help students bridge knowledge gaps independently.

Q21. Mr. Tu Lezhi raised a concern regarding the NCU Human Anatomy course. The student, a transfer student with prior experience in Clinical Medicine major at NCU, highlighted a disparity in instructional time. While NCU students have three days of classes per week, the JP students have only one. Despite this difference, both groups take the same exam and are held to the same standard. The student argued that this is unfair, as the condensed schedule forces them to cover an overwhelming amount of material, approximately 170 slides per day compared to the 30 to 40 slides per day for clinical students.

Prof Luo acknowledged the issue and committed to discussing this with the Anatomy department. He also pointed out the need to verify that the JP curriculum covers all the necessary content. He provided context, noting that the programme has many modules compressed into a short time. He also mentioned that attendance and engagement on NCU anatomy had improved this year but also revealed a worrying statistic that the JP students have a lower passing rate (70%) for medical licensing exams compared to the regular NCU students (80%) that in part is due to anatomy.

Prof Maconochie agreed that for the students long-term perspective, the extensive NCU anatomy teaching is essential for preparing students for the mandatory medical licensing exam.

Note added post meeting: Prof Hu provides feedback after this SSLC meeting that following discussions with the lecturers of NCU Human Anatomy, the JP students will have separate exam paper and content, making the final exam more appropriate for testing their academic achievement based on their delivered curriculum.

Q22. The student did not want to be identified raising this question. This student, on behalf of some classmates, shared feedback on the Academic and Clinical Skills course delivered by lecturers Mr. Peter and Ms. Jeanette. This student said that the class content feels limited, citing an example where two hours were spent primarily summarizing a single paragraph from a journalistic story. He suggested incorporating more diverse materials like case studies and real-world applications to make the sessions more practical. The second concern was the teaching style of the lecturers, which was described as intimidating.

Prof Maconochie acknowledged the issue but provided a different perspective. He noted that the student representative comes across as very confident, the course is designed to support students who struggle with foundational skills such as summarization, a crucial competency for academic and professional communication. While he agreed to relay the students' concerns about class atmosphere to the module organizer Dr Irene and the teaching team, he also stressed the need for a balanced approach. He explained that some firmness in teaching is necessary to maintain classroom discipline and ensure all students, including those students less confident or less engaged to meet academic expectations. Stronger students may well want far more demanding in class work, but the programme commits to support students at all levels.

Prof Maconochie further noted that the Academic Clinical Skills course is continually adjusted based on student feedback and staff review. He encouraged students to develop resilience in navigating different communication styles, underscoring that such experiences can prepare them for real-world professional interactions. He agreed to relay the feedback about the class atmosphere and pacing to the academic skills team and will give feedback to students at the next SSLC meeting.

Q23. Ms. Wan Rongrong raised two questions regarding laboratory experiments in the Human Cell practical from that day. The first question concerned the rationale behind specific dilution factors (e.g., 100-fold versus 1000-fold) in cell counting. Students felt they needed a clearer understanding of the basic principles to determine the appropriate dilution before starting an experiment.

Professors Maconochie and Luo encouraged students to ask demonstrators for detailed explanations during the lab sessions. They clarified that the specific dilution factor does not ultimately affect the result, as the final cell count is calculated by multiplying by the appropriate dilution factor. They explained that the process can be empirical. If a count is inaccurate, students can simply dilute the sample again.

The student's second question was about strengthening the connection between theoretical knowledge and practical experimental work. Prof Maconochie affirmed that this linkage is intentional, with experiments designed to complement taught theory e.g. membrane practicals after membrane teaching. He emphasized, however, that a complete understanding is often achieved through a combination of lectures, independent study, peer discussion, and actively seeking help during office hours.

Ending the meeting, Prof Maconochie thanked the students for bringing their queries to the staff's attention. He reiterated that all student feedback would be taken seriously and that action would be taken where feasible.

Minutes submitted by Nancy Wang