
Actions from 2020-21	Update:
<p>Course Director Response:</p> <p>Thankyou for your comments about the strong performance of our 'non-gateway' students – we are very proud of their achievements, and are grateful to all the teaching staff for ensuring they remain supported during a very challenging year. Whilst we were of course disappointed to see the relatively more variable performance of gateway alumni, we are very confident that the support we are putting in place for these students is high. This year the transition tutor has worked with these students on specific aspects of the programme such as preparation for ISF oral exams; next year this support will continue to be developed through a transition summer school, and other support activities. We would point out that students from disadvantaged backgrounds were most severely impacted by the pandemic, and so it is gratifying that the number of poor outcomes for students in this group was no higher than in previous non-pandemic years (and in fact somewhat improved).</p> <p>Thankyou for your comments with regards to ISF orals – this was the first time we had run these online, although the students did get a formative experience. We would suggest the lower than usual performance (although, students historically do perform slightly less well across the board in this assessment) would have been impacted by the relative isolation in which some students worked during the pandemic, limiting their exposure to verbal communication and discussion of scientific topics. As you suggest, ensuring students understand the importance of face to face group work sessions in preparing for these types of assessments in 2021/22 will need to be a deliberate effort on our part.</p> <p>Action Required:</p> <p>Continued monitoring and efforts to ensure Gateway alumni are supported in transition to BVM1 (Year Leader, Transition Tutor)</p> <p>2. Students to be reminded that group work and discussions that take place during those sessions prepare them for oral examinations and are vital for developing communication skills (Year Leader)</p> <p>Action Deadline: 31-Oct-2021 Year Leader; Transition tutor</p>	<p>Gateway student performance in ISF oral exams</p> <p>In the 2021-22 academic year students returned to face-to-face teaching and, for the most part, face-to-face oral exams. Ex-Gateways students under-perform on the ISF oral exams compared to the cohort as a whole, with 38% of ex-Gateway BVM2 students failing the June ISF exam (26% who passed the year, 15% of students who failed the exams at this sit), compared to 26% of the rest of the BVM2 cohort (and only 3.5% who failed the exams as a whole in addition to the ISF oral exam).</p> <p>As the 2020-21 academic year was entirely online, the data is not really comparable, and there were no oral exams the year before that. It is therefore hard to comment on the effect of any Gateway-BVM1 transition work that has been done over the last years.</p> <p>83% of the ex-Gateway students passed the exams at the first sit, fairly comparable to the 88% for the whole cohort, though with a higher proportion of pass marks and a lower proportion of distinctions.</p> <p>It should be noted that no specific support is given to ex-Gateway students as part of their BVM2 studies, beyond any Advice Centre/Study Skills support that the students organise for themselves. Therefore, any improvements in progression rates that are seen are likely to be a result of the work done in the Gateway year.</p>
<p>Course Director Response:</p> <p>Thankyou for your comments, and we agree that our staff put huge efforts and time into assessing our students. We will keep our assessment portfolio under review. It is unlikely that we will return to pencil/paper exams in the future and so we now look to take forward the most beneficial elements of the assessment modes used during COVID19. This will understandably take time as we work through the various benefits and pitfalls of the new methods and consider how compatible they are with existing infrastructure and the ongoing need to satisfy PSRB requirements.</p> <p>Action Required: Continual review and improvement of assessment modes and delivery mechanisms</p> <p>Action deadline: 01-May-</p>	

Student performance

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

2.1 Students' performance in relation to those at a similar stage on comparable courses in other institutions, where this is known to you





4.7 The standards set for the awards are appropriate for qualifications at this level, in this subject

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

4.8 The standards of student performance are comparable with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

4.9

Completion

If you have identified any areas of good practice, please comment more fully here. We may use information provided in our annual external examining report:

5.1 Do you have any suggestions for improvements based on experience at other institutes? We may use information provided in our annual external examining report:

