

Inquiries List

A. Student Engagement in Data Science

To gain a better understanding of the level of student engagement in Data Science, we would like to collect the following data:

1. The total number of Year 1 Data Science students;
[There are currently 74 students registered on Year 1 of a Data Science Programme.](#)
2. The number of students who will be participating in industrial placements during their 3rd year; and
[There are currently 19 students registered on Year 1 of Data Science with year in Industry \(BSc\).](#)
3. The turnout rate for the Year 1 Data Science Course Representative Election.
[We do not have access to this information. To find out, please email \[bristolsu-representation@bristol.ac.uk\]\(mailto:bristolsu-representation@bristol.ac.uk\).](#)

B. Attendance Policies

We have noticed that some students are uncertain about the attendance policy and fear that their progression may be hindered due to attendance issues. Therefore, we would appreciate it if the school authorities could provide clarification on the following:

1. The required number of hours that both local and international students must attend each term to meet their progression requirements;
[You can find the University's student engagement and attendance policy on the following pdf - <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/student-engagement-policy.pdf> This states that all full time taught students should be attending a minimum of one contact point per fortnight](#)
[Although note that some units, for example MATH10009 Mathematical Investigation \(not taken by Data Science students\) or PHYS10004 Physics Laboratory \(not taken by Data Science students\) have additional attendance requirements which can be found in the unit description \(<https://www.bris.ac.uk/unit-programme-catalogue/Welcome.jsa> \)](#)
2. Procedures for reporting absences in cases where students are unable to attend lessons due to reasonable circumstances (e.g., sick leave or unforeseen emergencies); and
[For any compulsory sessions \(I don't think there are any for Data Science\), missed due to reasonable circumstances, the student need to submit an Exceptional Circumstances form \(<https://bit.ly/SubmitECs> \) with evidence. For non-compulsory sessions where attendance is recorded, missing a day or two is ok, however the](#)

student has the responsibility to catch up themselves on the work they missed (i.e., watching RePlay, reading lecture notes, going to office hours etc), they can talk to their personal tutor or they can book a meeting with the Senior Tutor if they need to discuss how to catch up on missed material. For any known absences of 5 days or more, please fill in the form at (<https://forms.office.com/e/yyzvQ8uSYd>), note that this does not authorize the absence. For such long absences, a meeting with the Senior Tutor is strongly recommended to discuss the impact on the student's studies and potential next steps

3. What options are available to students who are marked as 'absent,' even when they have attended lectures and submitted the correct code in the Blackboard Attendance System.

If the correct code is entered in Blackboard, the student should not be marked as "absent". If it does happen, as long as the student has been marked present at a sufficient number of teaching sessions in any given fortnight, absences will not negatively affect the student's marks and progression outcomes.

If the student has tried but not been able to be marked present in any session in a given fortnight, can the student let the math admin team (math-info@bristol.ac.uk) know so they can look into any potential errors with the system.

C. The Applied Analysis A Course issues:

We recently held a meeting to discuss various concerns related to this course, and the details can be found in DSReps_First_Meeting_Memo.pdf. We are pleased that the school authorities have taken into consideration some of our concerns, such as the potential modification of laboratory sessions and the provision of additional non-compulsory exercises. To further explore possible course modifications:

1. We kindly request the results of the Feedback on the Analysis A mid-term survey. This information will enable us to create a more targeted questionnaire focusing on this course before the end of TB1.
As a School we do not publish student feedback. However, the unit organisers (who is often the lecturer) are encouraged to discuss feedback not only by responding to Blue, but also by discussing the feedback with students during class.
Once the unit organiser has responded on Blue to the mid-unit questionnaire, students should be able to see these on Blue.
We would appreciate feedback if you think some unit organisers have not responded or discussed the mid-unit questionnaire with students.

D. The End-term Assessment Issues:

As we are now halfway through the TB1, we have received few inquiries from students regarding the details of the end-term assessment. We would like to request information about the arrangements for the examinations in the following courses: 'Applied Analysis A,' 'Probability and Statistics A,' and 'Matrix Algebra and Linear Models A.' Specifically, we are interested in the following details:

1. The exam rubric and the weightings of questions;
2. The duration of the examinations;
3. Whether calculators are allowed during the exam;
4. The number of A4 notes allowed to be brought into the exam; and
5. The number of A4 notes allowed to be brought into the exam; and
6. Whether the use of printed student notes is permitted during the examination.

Lecturers can answer each of these questions for their own course.

Also all of these will be communicated to students by the admin team through the Exam Rubric at the end of November/start of December. Once these have been communicated to students, the information will also be available on Blackboard -> "Resources for Students: Mathematics" -> "Examinations" (you can currently see the rubric from last year).

There will also be an Exam talk given by Arne (School Education Director) and Florian (Year 1 Senior Tutor) on 30th November.

The note policy has already been communicated to students in an email sent on 22nd September, which I reproduce below

This email is to let you know about the Notes allowance for January and May Mathematics examinations in 23/24. This applies to all units delivered by the School of Mathematics.

*The allowance for all students will be **ONE** sheet of A4 handwritten double-sided for each Mathematics examination. You may prepare this sheet using an iPad or other tablet if you prefer, but you need to write by hand using a stylus.*

Students with a disability who may benefit from additional pages (for example due to a visual impairment) should contact Disability Services (disability-services@bristol.ac.uk) to discuss this requirement by 11.59pm (UK time) on Thursday 9 November 2023 for the January exam period. Any recommendation would then be incorporated in the Study Support Plan (SSP).

Best wishes,

Ivor McGillivray (Examinations Officer)

on behalf of

School Education Director

Student Administration Team

E. Issues related to Forming Voluntary Workshop and Study Groups:

We are pleased that the School of Mathematics encourages us to form study groups during the meeting. For instance, we conducted a survey regarding students' preferences for forming study groups, and quite a number of students are willing to attend our voluntary study

groups outside their scheduled lesson hours. Based on the result, we are considering organizing a voluntary Year 1 math study session before the end of Teaching Block 1 (TB1). We would like to inquire:

1. The possibility of booking a room in Fry Building for the purpose of hosting these study sessions. If this is feasible, please provide the information on the booking procedure.

The student admin team has got back to me and replied that the rooms in Fry are not bookable. But you can use the following service provided by the University - [Study space booking | Library | University of Bristol](#)

We have also noticed that some enthusiastic students in our class have created Jupyter notebooks (e.g the usage of Python Libraries such as Pandas, Numpy, etc) that could serve as valuable teaching materials outside of the Data Science curriculum. Additionally, they are willing to host and organize voluntary workshops on math or coding for students who are eager to learn more, believing hosting these workshops can also enhance their teaching skills. We would like to inquire:

2. Would the school authorities approve students to host and organize voluntary workshops on math or coding, provided they submit a detailed proposal and gain approval? If so, could the school authorities offer support in terms of complimentary snacks, venue, and assistance with event promotion?

While the school encourages students to run their own study groups and workshops, the school currently does not have the resources (i.e., staff time) to read a proposal and approve of student run workshops. We would recommend that you coordinate with the math society Matrix regarding how they run their talks, including the organization of a venue and provision of snacks. You may also want to talk to Study Skills Service as they can also help facilitate the running of workshops (study-skills@bristol.ac.uk)

In terms of promotion, you can email math-info to include items in the newsletter, or (if appropriate) email certain math groups (i.e., all Year 1 Data Science students)

3. Would the school authorities grant credit (for example something that can be written into students' profile) to event organizers after successful completion of the events?

While no official credit can be given for any work done outside of the units taken by students, personal tutors often comment on activities such as these when writing a reference for a student.