

Student Dean Forum Term: LCC Media School, Term 2			
Date & Time: 05.03.25	UAL Staff: Steve Cross	Arts SU Officer: Yvonne Yuan	Arts SU Staff: Rachel Wornell
Number of students in attendance: 3			

Action Log and key takeaways

Actions for School Dean	Update on Progress	Response to students
Speak to Sam about messaging to ensure it is consistent across different tutor groups		
Action SC: suggest tutors find ways to build more icebreakers into collaborative units to promote cross-course mixing.		
Action SC: Share the feedback that Media and the Environment may be better suited to being an optional module.		

Key takeaways

- Important to ensure staff are aligned and say the same things (esp. in areas of worry for students, like assignment briefs).
- There is an issue about seminars – they need more directed work to be more challenging and feel like people are getting enough out of them.
- Term 1 needs better explanation, sharing how it prepares students for what's to come.
- M&C needs a clearer focus, that allows students with more of an academic/ business focus to forge their own path through the course.
- There should be accountability for students in class – students need to understand the readings they have been set, why they have been set them, and to be questioned on that in class.

Minutes

Discussion points from the Dean

Timetables – do they work for you?

Media & Communications Yr 2: CELCAT is accurate, but Outlook isn't (as it shows multiple groups' information). Students still look at Outlook, see contradictory information and must reach out to Course Reps and Course Leaders to confirm their timetable.

Public Relations Yr 1: Some students have multiple hours between their lectures and seminars, and due to this multi-hour gap, some students choose between coming in for the lecture or seminar. Reasons for this include a lack of space and opportunity to engage in other enrichment activities between the sessions.

Course organisation and management – what does good organisation and management look like for you?

Tutorials

M&C Yr 2 and PR Yr 1: Tutorials are scheduled one week before a unit's deadline. Agree that this should be changed as often it is too late to make significant changes to a piece of work. Particularly for work that require filming and editing a piece. Suggest either: a) hosting the tutorials earlier in the unit, or b) hosting two tutorials per unit, one at the midway point and another close to the hand in deadline. It was noted some courses already offer two tutorials per unit.

PR Yr 1: Tutorials are not working as well now as in the last module. Previously, all students were given a 15 minute 1:1 tutorial. This module offers a 1 – 2 hour slot for all students, this didn't work well as students weren't engaging, and there was little chance for personalized feedback.

Journey through the course

M&C Yr 2: The organization of the course is much better in second year. Assignments are now better explained, for example through the creation of FAQ pages. The level of intellectual challenge has also improved, in first year students weren't bothering to attend as the course was "too easy" and this was raised at course committees. There is also a better balance between the creative and business aspects of marketing which was lacking as first year was so focused on the creative.

Ad Yr 3: Also had difficulties with the focus on creative aspects of the course. Wants to pursue client-focused work, but there is no information about that on the course. All insights have been gained through independent work. The course's focus is on copywriting and art direction.

M&C Yr 2: One ongoing issue with course organization is miscommunication between staff, e.g. tutors for different groups on the same unit set contradictory expectations and give contradictory advice on what students should include in their assignments.

PR Yr 1: Experience of course organization has improved throughout the year. The first term didn't feel challenging enough and staff didn't give the rationale for the "easiness" of the term or share a roadmap showing how the course would evolve over the coming terms and years.

Ad yr 3: Students feel like the Creative futures unit is too similar o the Professional Industry Practice unit. This means that people are less engaged with it.

Challenge and rigour

M&C Yr 2: Year 2 is more challenging than first year but feels that there should be more accountability and emphasis on self-study as many don't engage with the readings. This impacts the quality of seminars. Seminars are just discussions, there are no activities that encourage engagement with the self-study material.

PR Yr 1: Agree that self-study is not emphasized. Students are unclear on why they should complete the readings when the content is the same as the lectures.

SC: Suggest tutors embed more impetus for engagement with self-study material into seminars, e.g. sharing prompt questions about the reading. Mentioned that students usually discover the importance of self-study as they go through the university experience, as they learn that the more they put in, the more they get out of it.

PR Yr1: The first term wasn't intellectually stimulating or challenging. Students weren't given feedback or asked to present their work, lectures were infrequent, and seminars were not challenging. Second term is more satisfying, with more challenging readings, more engagement with readings in seminars, and lectures run three times a week.

M&C Yr 2: Felt similarly about first year as it was more about finding your feet and there was an overemphasis on creative work.

Ad Yr 3: Also had these feelings in first year.

SC: clarified that the start of first year is designed to accommodate students coming to the course from lots of different backgrounds, allowing everyone to acclimatize to the course. It is also about creating a foundation for future years of the course. Seems like there needs to be a way to balance that alongside also challenging the more advanced students.

Communication across the course

M&C Yr 2: In the Professional Industry Unit there was some confusion in both staff and students. Seminars didn't feel focused and some tutors had to clarify content with other tutors. In Global Media Business, there was inconsistency in what tutors asked for in the assessment – one tutor saying a presentation should contain as few words as possible, another saying as much as possible. This worries students as they know assessments are moderated by all tutors and aren't clear on what is tutors' personal preference, and what is important for marking.

SC: Clarified that stylistic preferences should not impact marking.

Ad year 3: In first and second year, it also felt like there was a lack of alignment in what tutors were saying. Students were getting feedback and approval on work from one tutor, then the other gives feedback and didn't approve. Feels like the feedback isn't given efficiently due to this. Feels like this could be an issue for the Final Major Project.

SC: Agrees that once an assignment is set, there needs to be consistency in messaging and explanations, so that students aren't confused.

Action SC: Speak to Sam about messaging to ensure it is consistent across different tutor groups

If you had to choose two things to improve on your course

M&C: 1. Organisation and alignment (ensuring consistent information and messaging between tutors). 2. Going beyond conversations in seminars (e.g. giving prompt questions for the reading to promote engagement).

PR: 1. More challenging seminar activities. 2. The chance for students to receive challenging feedback.

Ad: 1. Adding more creativity (although this is already being acted on by staff). 2. More discussion of the variety of careers within advertising, started at an earlier stage in the course.

Discussion points from students

Registers – moving from a tap-in system to a phone system

M&C Yr2: Worried that phone sign-in means students might sign in and then leave class (similar to those who tap in and leave).

PR Yr 1 and M&C Yr 2: Agreed the tap in system is easy as you already have cards on hand.

Ad Yr 3: Beacon is quite accurate as it uses Bluetooth. You need to be in the room to be registered as attending.

SC: Clarified the new system was brought in as, due to issues with the tap-in system, some students were getting letters about their absence when they had attended.

Any other business

PR: Students happy that the canteen is changing its menu.

Ad Yr 3: There has been a lack of community at LCC.

M&C Yr 2: Although there are cross-course units, students mainly stick with the people they know. There is little mixing of courses, even when tutors suggest it.

Action SC: suggest tutors find ways to build more icebreakers into collaborative units to promote cross-course mixing.

M&C Yr 2: The Media and the Environment is interesting, but some students don't feel it is relevant to the course. This is especially true of the session led by the Carbon Literacy Group and for the environmental science aspects of the unit. It feels like it would be a good optional module, rather than having it as compulsory.

Action SC: Share the feedback that Media and the Environment may be better suited to being an optional module.

YY: Highlighted how important this work is to some students and that the module should continue to be offered, even if as an option.

Ad Yr 3: UAL don't offer predicted grades and that can make it hard to apply for post-grad opportunities. Many ask you to submit this.

SC: Clarified why there is no predicted grade. An algorithm calculates final grades based on options, either using the grades from second and third year or just the third year. Whatever is best for the student is selected. This is as more academic subjects tend to benefit from the former and more creative subjects the latter. This process means that a predicted grade wouldn't be possible.