

**Summary of faculty responses to student issues and suggestion in  
Online Learning Readiness Survey, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,  
April 2020.**

Following closure of universities due to Covid 19 Pandemic, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya initiated a time tabled online programme for all the batches from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The above survey was conducted during the first week of April, 2020, amongst all students. The survey was delivered using the Medmoodle platform and two reminders were sent through batch mates to students within the week. Out of 1268 students, 761 students (60%) responded to this survey.

This report summarizes the faculty response to issues identified by students and suggestions made by them in the free comments sections of the survey.

ISSUES	RESPONSE
<p><b>Internet Access</b></p> <p>Some students do not have WiFi connections and purchasing mobile data cards is difficult for some.</p> <p>Signal strength is weak in some geographic areas and hence difficult to join with live lectures.</p>	<p>The Faculty has taken the necessary measures to provide financial assistance and support the purchase of data cards/pay interne charges of needy students. The Faculty appreciates that students too have organized some support by themselves.</p> <p>Moodle and Zoom access have been made data free. Moodle platform will be used for asynchronous teaching. All live sessions will be recorded and uploaded to Moodle.</p>
<p><b>Health Concerns</b></p> <p>Computer/phone screens cause migraines, headaches, eye stress etc. in some students.</p>	<p>A link for resource on ‘how to stay happy and healthy as an online student’ has been added to Ethics, PIF and SRL page in Medmoodle &lt;<a href="https://medmoodle.pdn.ac.lk/course/view.php?id=43#section-4">https://medmoodle.pdn.ac.lk/course/view.php?id=43#section-4</a>&gt;</p> <p>Students seek medical advice through students affairs committee. The link has been provided in the Medmoodle platform.</p>
<p><b>Moodle</b></p> <p>Slow/ time-consuming</p> <p>Disorganized (Requests that lectures be categorized according to semester, department etc.)</p>	<p>The Moodle platform has been restructured as requested and upgraded to version 3.8 to improve efficiency. Feedback will be requested to further improve the platform.</p>

<p><b>Technical Issues</b></p> <p>Sometimes the audio files do not work. This is caused by incompatibility of audio/video formats with phone operating systems. This has been observed to happen when PPT recordings are done using Apple products.</p>	<p>The Faculty has set up a help-line to obtain technical support from TRC. Links have been provided in the Moodle site.</p> <p>We are also aware that some students with technological knowledge have offered solutions to their batch mates.</p>
<p><b>Online Teaching</b></p> <p>Some students miss the student-teacher contact offered by traditional lecture based system. Some felt that there are a few opportunities to engage in discussions, ask questions, clarify issues etc. A suggestion has been made to add activities which require the active participation of students in learning.</p>	<p>PPT encrypted with audio will remain the mainstay delivery method for lectures and this is more user-friendly and consumes less data and storage space.</p> <p>But teachers also use other resources, such as videos, as required.</p> <p>Live Zoom/Facebook lectures and discussions are being delivered. Zoom offers opportunities for real time verbal and text based questioning, which has been used by students</p> <p>WhatsApp/Messenger groups are being used for both synchronous and asynchronous text-based Q&amp;A sessions and discussions.</p> <p>Assignments and quizzes followed by feedback have been arranged.</p>

<b>SUGGESTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>
<p><b>Schedule</b></p> <p>Make timetables/lecture schedules available through a platform like WhatsApp prior to online teaching.</p>	<p>Time tables for all batches have been made available in the Moodle platform.</p>

<p><b>Use of Social Media Platforms</b></p> <p>Some students suggest using different social media platforms like Facebook, Youtube and WhatsApp to deliver teaching programme. But there are other students who prefer one platform (some say that Facebook is distracting and YouTube consumes data).</p> <p>They also suggest using alternative platforms like Google meet, Zoom, Twitch etc.</p>	<p>The Faculty uses a restructured and upgraded Medmoodle as the main platform for delivery of the online programme. Access to Medmoodle is data-free compared to social media platforms. Audio encrypted PowerPoint presentations will remain as the minimum technological standard of the lecture delivered. This has many advantages such as low tech requirements, user-friendliness and easy download and storage.</p> <p>Zoom is being used by some teachers. Facebook live lectures are continued by some teachers. These are being uploaded to Moodle.</p> <p>WhatsApp chat discussions are conducted by several departments/ teachers.</p>
<p><b>Study Material</b></p> <p>Requests for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCQs</li> <li>Assessments</li> <li>Tutorials</li> </ul> <p>Students stress the need for active participation during teaching (interactive sessions).</p>	<p>Almost all Modules now add student activities. This will be further explored at the level of individual modules.</p> <p>All the live sessions conducted through Zoom offer interactivity.</p>
<p>Lectures must be available at all times on specific sites.</p> <p>Using a storage system like Google Drive may be advantageous.</p> <p>PowerPoint presentations are helpful but are too bulky - difficult to follow/download)</p>	<p>Lectures have been made available on a permanent basis under different modules.</p> <p>Moodle is a sufficiently large storage system and currently there is no need for use of a cloud based storage for the Faculty.</p> <p>Audio narrated PPT carries an acceptable volume. This may be an issue related to network quality only for few students. This will be explored further.</p>

<p><b>Other</b></p> <p>Request that attendance not be made compulsory.</p> <p>A wish to engage in clinical activities if quarantine is extended.</p> <p>Only some courses can be taught through online teaching.</p> <p>Students request that they be shown specimens etc. in lectures like Anatomy.</p>	<p>Yes. Attendance for live sessions is not compulsory.</p> <p>Possible online activities have been commenced. Physical engagement in clinical is not possible until decisions are made by higher authorities</p> <p>The Anatomy department has already started doing this and they also use high quality 3-D digital material as an alternative.</p>
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<b>ALTERNATIVES</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>
Upload PDFs of textbooks.	The E-library currently does not have access to soft copies of copy righted text books and hence are unable to upload those to the Medmoodle. Students are encouraged to look for alternatives.
Upload lectures to Moodle in the PDF format.	This will be communicated to teachers.

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