

# Report - MH2450 - 2024-03-20

Respondents: 1  
Answer Count: 1  
Answer Frequency: 100.00%

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Please note that there is only one respondent to this form: the person that performs the course analysis.

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**Course analysis carried out by (name, e-mail):**

Christopher Hulme, chrh@kth.se

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**DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS**

**Describe the course evaluation process. Describe how all students have been given the possibility to give their opinions on the course. Describe how aspects regarding gender, and disabled students are investigated.**

Students were offered the chance to select a representative during the break in the first lecture. However, they decided to not have a representative due to the small class size. Students were asked to provide feedback throughout the course, to complete an LEQ and they were invited to contact the course leader if they wished to discuss any aspects of the course.

Given the low number of students, it is unlikely that any statistically significant conclusions can be drawn on equality issues, although students were able to express opinions on such issues if they so chose.

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**DESCRIPTION OF MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS**

**Describe which meetings that has been arranged with students during the course and after its completion. (The outcomes of these meetings should be reported under 7, below.)**

No students asked or took the opportunity for a meeting with the course leader.

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**COURSE DESIGN**

**Briefly describe the course design (learning activities, examinations) and any changes that have been implemented since the last course offering.**

The course consists of six lectures on various aspects of project planning and scientific communication. All lectures are recorded and available to be watched later. Significantly more information is also available in the Canvas course room for the course. The students then undertake 120h project to practice the project planning skills, gain research experience and then present their findings in multiple ways (oral presentation to an international audience, written report, poster) to practice scientific communication. The students also act as an opponent for a student from another university.

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**THE STUDENTS' WORKLOAD**

**Does the students' workload correspond to the expected level (40 hours/1.5 credits)? If there is a significant deviation from the expected, what can be the reason?**

The overall workload should be 160h, of which 120h is in the project (including reporting) and managed by the student. 12h are the lectures, 16h is the seminar at the end of the course and the remaining 12h is self-study on lecture material.

The course ran for two periods, from the beginning of September to the end of November. This is approximately 12 weeks, so the envisaged workload is 12-14h per week. Two of the respondents claimed to work 6-8 hours per week and one 24-26 hours per week. This wide variety is to be expected, as the workload depends strongly on the projects performed by the students and their commitments to them. Some students see this course as a standalone 6-credit course and others see it as the start of a collaboration with a supervisor that will lead to a master's thesis project, so the commitment level varies significantly. Despite the instructions given to supervisors that the project should be 120h, some supervisors probably allowed the students to dictate the workload as long as the project goals were met. This shall be considered for future development, to improve control of the workload.

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**THE STUDENTS' RESULTS**

**How well have the students succeeded on the course? If there are significant differences compared to previous course offerings, what can be the reason?**

In 2023, the students achieved 4 grade "A", 5 grade "B" and 1 grade "C".

This is almost identical to the results in 2021 (5 "A", 5 "B", 1 "C") and similar to those in 2022 (3 "A", 5 "B"). The grades remain to be stable from year to year.

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**STUDENTS' ANSWERS TO OPEN QUESTIONS**

**What do students say in response to the open questions?**

The students like meeting colleagues from other countries (in this case, Norway and Finland), but one recurring theme is the failure of some students to work on their projects early in the course, so much work is left for the final weeks. The problem formulation seminar is scheduled early in the project and is intended to minimise this problem. Since only one student commented on it, no changes shall be made to the project structure, but an additional "half-time" feedback opportunity, either a submitted report or meeting, could be added to force students to deliver something early.

Students were asked in the LEQ if recording lectures in advance, asking students to watch them and then changing the lectures to discussion sessions would be useful. The two replies indicated that this would be welcome, although one cautioned that not all students would bother to participate actively. Not all lectures would be effective if pre-recorded, especially the lecture on oral communication. However, some of the lectures will be pre-recorded for 2024 as a result of this feedback.

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**SUMMARY OF STUDENTS' OPINIONS**

**Summarize the outcome of the questionnaire, as well as opinions emerging at meetings with students.**

The overall scores on the LEQ were high, with no question scoring less than 6/7, except for two:

Question 21, which is related to learning from others - this is a natural function of the students working on individual projects from the course time. The scores suggest the course is functioning well.

Question 15, related to receiving feedback without being graded. Supervisors should provide this feedback, but perhaps this is not entirely effective. Nevertheless, the response was 5.8/7, so still high. The option for an external progress meeting from a PhD student during the project might help improve this issue, as well as encouraging students to perform some work before this meeting. It would also provide another opportunity to give students practice at communicating their research.

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## **OVERALL IMPRESSION**

**Summarize the teachers' overall impressions of the course offering in relation to students' results and their evaluation of the course, as well as in relation to the changes implemented since last course offering.**

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Students performed in accordance with the expectation of the teacher and no supervisor complained about any student in the project. The students' evaluation of the course was welcome and shows the course is working well, although the students workload needs to be managed in a more effective way. Strategies to do this will be considered before the next course offering.

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## **ANALYSIS**

**Is it possible to identify stronger and weaker areas in the learning environment based on the information you have gathered during the evaluation and analysis process? What can the reason for these be? Are there significant difference in experience between:**

- students identifying as female and male?
  - international and national students?
  - students with or without disabilities?
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International students generally graded the course lower than the average result in the LEQ, although the difference was small. This may be related to the greater experience of Swedish students (in practice students who attended the KTH bachelor's programme) in accessing research infrastructure at KTH, e.g. the Library and talking with supervisors on equal terms to collaborate on a project, as the students are more familiar with the supervisors from previous courses and projects.

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## **PRIORITIZED COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

**What aspects of the course should be developed primarily? How can these aspects be developed in short and long term?**

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Pre-recording of lectures and implementing half-time feedback is prioritised for the next course offering.

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