

Making labs a better learning environment

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Summary

Many courses within the faculty of science require students to attend labs and these are very often viewed as highly stressful, especially for students with disabilities. This motion is to mandate the Education officers to work with schools with labs to make the sessions more accessible and a more positive learning environment.

Council Notes

1. Experiences in labs vary across the different schools, with many being positive
2. Students within the school of chemistry have raised concerns with how stressful they can be and how they are often very tight on time
3. Labs are normally a minimum of 3 hours long
4. Building 60 will be open in the 2019/20 academic year and has been designed to be more accessible for students with physical difficulties

Council Believes

1. Labs provide some of the best opportunities to learn practical skills as well as put theory to practice
2. They can be incredibly stressful for many students, but especially for students with anxiety
3. They should be environments where you're encouraged to learn and asked questions rather than simply trying to finish everything on time
4. You shouldn't be marked on performance within labs if you haven't had the opportunity to learn and develop the required skills first. This leaves students who have not had previous lab experience within schools at a disadvantage

Council Resolves

Mandate the education officers to work with the relevant school convenors and schools to do the following:

1. To have model data that can be easily accessed for every lab report
2. For summative marks not to be based on the quality or yield of products
3. Ask schools to review the time given for students to complete the labs set and to ensure there are sufficient opportunities for breaks
4. Where possible, students should be in pairs, but if this is not possible, to be able to work as a three, rather than alone
5. For schools to have a maths support session based on common lab scenarios run annually by the learning enhancement team