# Respondent 11 Interview Summery

Plant Path and Medicinal Plant Sciences

## Question 1 (1, 12, 8, 10, 7

* Yes
* Issue isn’t with third year and PG modules, there seems to be a sense of direction in students
* Problem is with first- and second-year modules
* Enrolment for BSc Plant Science is very low, especially for straight out of school enrolments
* Learners are not exposed to plants at school, it’s not really part of the curriculum but the bit that is, isn’t taught well
* Focus at school is usually people and animals
* Exposure at university really only starts in second semester other than one or two things in first semester
* There is just generally a lack of exposure to how interesting plants are
* We need to start focusing on the importance and relevance of plants

## Question 2 (1, 8, 11

* Yes
* Coming out of school it is a problem
* Marketing our degrees better might help a bit
* Especially having PG students visiting schools and speaking to the students about plant science
* Once they are at university it is up to us to get them excited about plant science, then it becomes the lecturers’ responsibility

## Question 3 (1, 12, 11, 6, 8, 9

* Plant’s science is diverse and has many fields within the discipline
* Should be incorporated into other modules like microbiology and genetics
* First years should be exposed to the fundamental concepts of the different disciplines in plant science, knowing the basics of ecology and diversity etc.
* More specialised fields like medicinal plant sciences can be touched on but more focused on in second year
* Would rather go for a broader understanding of the fundamental concepts of plant science and not be too narrow for first years
* Teaching students the basic concepts can be a bit boring,
* Important to make examples relevant so when you touch on the broader aspects, we can link it to everyday life
* Using more relevant examples and linking narrow fundamental concepts to everyday life can actually make it interesting for the students

## Question 4

* All of them are important
* Diversity should be included
* Top two: structure and function and systems
* Don’t redo things that have been done in prior modules

## Question 5

* Process of science is important
* Interdisciplinary nature of science is important, they need to be able to relate plant science to other sciences like genetics and microbiology
* Integration of science and society is very important because it makes it more interesting and relevant
* Comms and collab are important but maybe not as important as the others
* Data goes hand in hand with the process of science and that’s a practical skill
* Again, they are all important
* Written communication is important, the classes are too large to effectively work on oral communication skills
* Top two: understanding and interpreting data grouped with qualitative competency and process of science

## Question 6

* Concepts: pathways and information flow
* Competencies: collaboration

## Question 7

* Yes, Prof Uno’s workshop
* Think it’s a good guide for change

## Question 8

* Class size is a major barrier, influences admin processes on assignments, you don’t get enough time with the students
* Because of the increase of class size over the years we have lost time with the students, the content became crammed into the module, we lost time for practicals where they learn skills
* Plant blindness is an issue, students aren’t taking the module because they are interested in it

## Question 9

* Lower student numbers aren’t an option
* We need to use our time carefully, making careful decisions about what we want the students to know and linking it relevant and interesting and linked to everyday life and society
* We need to make sure the new curriculum fits the needs of the students in a particular environment
* We need to appeal to those doing the module because they have to by making it more relevant and interesting and having a dedicated and enthusiastic lecturer doing that
* Practicals are important because that’s where interactions happen and we can maybe improve how we do that
* Demi’s in pracs need to be trained better and be more enthusiastic

## Question 10

* The lecturers that are teaching first years need to be the ones who are very enthusiastic and engaging and want to be involved with the students
* Older staff might be used to the old way of doing things, especially teaching and therefore might resist the change
* It’s easier to keep it the same and less work than to change it
* You just need to approach people resistant to change in the correct manner, you need to have conversations with the lecturers
* Don’t tell them what’s going to happen and then expect them to fall into place
* Provide support and details of the benefits of the change

## Question 11

* At the end of the day, it will benefit the students and change their perception of plants and help with plant blindness
* It’s a good investment for lecturers because the second third and hons students will be more interested and so even if you aren’t involved with the first years it will benefit you too

## Question 12 1,9,5,4,8,10,11

* Critical
* Big problem that they only get exposed to a microscope once
* Not enough expertise in the prac room with demies not being trained well enough
* In any science field, practical science skills are critical
* Should run alongside the theory to try teach it in a better way
* Students learn more by doing than just sitting listening
* Class size does have its restrictions
* A basic lab skills course would be wonderful because not all schools are on the same level and they don’t all come in knowing the same things and some students are lacking very basic skills
* Practical skills are what employers want
* PG studies want students with skills
* Suggested that 3-year degrees become 4-year degrees because of the unpreparedness of students