

**ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE: SESSION 2012-13**

Department: Classics

Faculty of Arts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY																		
Aspect	National Student Survey						Undergraduate Programme Experience Survey						Postgraduate Programme Experience Survey					
	2011-12		2010-11		2009-10		2011-12		2010-11		2009-10		2011-12		2010-11		2009-10	
	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni
Overall satisfaction	97	87	90	86	84	82	86	85	87	83	95	84	86	84	100	82	75	78
Teaching	97	90	97	88	82	85	90	84	88	83	93	83	85	85	83	84	92	81
Assessment & feedback	68	69	79	65	58	61	66	61	59	56	64	57	83	69	97	68	80	63
Academic support	86	80	91	77	78	74	71	72	70	68	83	68	90	80	94	79	75	76
Organisation & management	88	83	89	82	90	79	75	74	76	83	81	73	89	80	100	77	67	73
Learning resources	89	88	87	87	77	85	74	78	75	77	66	76	94	83	94	82	91	81
Personal development	68	81	83	78	58	76	62	68	60	65	64	63	92	71	100	70	67	68
Sector position	4/21	51/150	14/91	46/151	17/19	75/154												

Scores in each category are expressed as a percentage of the number of respondents who mostly or definitely agreed with a range of statements (score 4 or 5)

<b>Impact of 2010-11 actions</b>	2010-11 saw further developments in the department's use of innovative forms of assessment, and in particular the introduction of the ERIK initiative, which offers students opportunities to share their knowledge with the general public. In this year we also introduced optional 40-credit dissertations for the first time, representing a further step forward in our commitment to developing our students' research skills. We also launched a series of dedicated sessions on employability / careers for finalists. Together, these actions resulted in a considerable improvement in our NSS scores for 2010-11. Our headline score rose from 84 to 90, and we achieved increases of 20 or more percentile points in the difficult areas of Assessment and Feedback and Personal development.
<b>Achievements in 2011-12</b>	The department's achievements in the 2010-11 NSS were outstripped in 2011-12. Classics achieved an overall score of 97 for 2011-12: the highest in the University, and 4th out of 21 within its sector. This is a real endorsement of changes which we have been steadily introducing over a period of several years – e.g. the research strand at the heart of all our SH programmes; the use of innovative forms of assessment; improvements to assessment and feedback (3-week pledge, exam feedback, unlocking 1st-class work) and dedicated sessions on employability / careers for finalists. In 2011-12 we also introduced compulsory 40-credit dissertations for the first time, and both our NSS results and comments from our External Examiners suggest that this was a success.
<b>Main actions for 2012-13</b>	Despite our exceptional overall NSS result for 2011-12, our scores for Assessment and feedback and Personal development fell in this year. The UGPS also revealed dissatisfaction at level 2 and on Joint Honours programmes. For 2012-13 we will be working to: address problems which affected the prompt return of feedback on some modules in 2011-12; increase awareness of opportunities for Personal development (e.g. UGRS scheme, Industrial Placement year); improve our core level 2 module CLAS 2800 Evidence and Enquiry; revise our JH portfolio to improve recruitment and develop popular combinations; continue the development of our language programmes by introducing parallel pathway modules and a compulsory 20-credit research project for finalists.

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<b>School:</b>		<b>Faculty:</b>	
<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Progress with actions in response to 2010-11 feedback and indication of impact</b>	<b>Issues raised in 2011-12 feedback</b>	<b>Planned response in 2012-13</b>
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	Our NSS results for 2010-11 were considerably stronger than 2009-10, with increases of 20 or more percentile points in the areas of Assessment and Feedback and Personal support. Our response was therefore focused on sustaining our success, and continuing with the initiatives which we felt had contributed to it – i.e. further work on ensuring that all SH programmes had a clear central research strand and improvement to our mechanisms for assessment and feedback.	Our exceptional overall NSS results for 2011-12 represent an endorsement of the department's current efforts. We will thus continue with ongoing initiatives such as developing the research element on our language programmes. However, our scores for Assessment and feedback and Personal development fell in this year, while the UGPS revealed dissatisfaction at level 2 and on JH programmes. We will therefore work on satisfaction at level 2 and on JH programmes this year.	Major initiatives will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing problems with return of feedback.</li> <li>• Increasing awareness of opportunities for Personal development</li> <li>• Improving our core level 2 module, CLAS 2800 Evidence and Enquiry</li> <li>• Revising our Joint Honours portfolio</li> <li>• Introducing parallel pathway modules and a compulsory 20-credit research project for finalists on our language programmes</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching</b>	Teaching delivery is clearly a strength in Classics, and we achieved our highest score on the 2010-11 NSS in this category. The UGPS results also reflected the same high levels of satisfaction. Our response was therefore focused on enhancing and developing existing strengths – e.g. the use of innovative forms of assessment, close links between staff research interests and teaching activity, development of students' research skills.	Scores for teaching delivery remained exceptionally high in the 2011-12 NSS results and very strong on the UGPS. The department also introduced online Module Evaluation Surveys in 2011-12. Response rates were low for some modules, but three were identified as being in need of review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLAS 2800 Evidence and Enquiry</li> <li>• CLAS 3200 Major Research Project</li> <li>• CLAS 3510 Pompeii, past present and future</li> </ul>	As for 2011-12, our main efforts will be focused on sustaining our successes in innovative forms of assessment, linking research and teaching and developing students' research skills. Reviews have been completed for all three modules deemed in need of attention, and specific plans put in place to enhance their teaching delivery and content. Changes to CLAS 2800 in particular should help to address dissatisfaction at level 2.
<b>Assessment and feedback</b>	The department's use of innovative assessment, quality of written feedback and use of exam feedback forms were praised by external examiners. Students also expressed appreciation for the exam feedback forms. These factors help to explain a 21-point increase in our score for Assessment and feedback on the 2010-11 NSS. However, students remained dissatisfied with the promptitude of feedback. In response we decided to move to a three-week return time-frame for 2011-12, rather than five weeks as in 2010-11.	Our external examiners for 2011-12 said that our feedback was 'well ahead of the national standard', and the NSS and UGPS show general satisfaction with fairness, clarity and detail. However, while most staff met the 3-week return pledge, their efforts were undermined by delays to the return of work on two taught modules. The result was a score of only 45 for Q7 'Feedback on my work has been prompt.' Our external examiners also suggested revising our grade descriptors to clarify the characteristics of first-class work.	Our main focus this year is to ensure that <u>all</u> staff meet the 3-week return pledge. Weekly meetings between the Head of Department and the member of Classics staff who had difficulty doing this last year are ensuring appropriate support in efforts to improve this year. Other staff continue to be reminded of the importance of the return pledge. The Student Support Officer and DoSE reviewed all submission deadlines to ensure that no student had more than two on the same day this year. Our grade descriptors are being revised.
<b>Academic support</b>	Our NSS results for 2010-11 showed considerable improvement in the area of academic support, suggesting success in this area. UGPS results	NSS scores in this area for 2011-12 showed a slight fall on 2010-11, while UGPS scores improved slightly. There is now no identifiable dissatisfaction	We are addressing dissatisfaction at level 1 this year by enrolling onto our skills module CLAS 1025 some JH students who were not previously

	show a decline, however, especially in the area of advice regarding module choices. This was addressed by improving the advice offered during our Induction programme for freshers and promoting our module choice event at the end of the academic year more heavily.	with the advice being offered on module choices, suggesting that our efforts in this area have been successful. However, our scores in this area could be improved, and the UGPS survey shows a considerable lag behind the NSS. Improvements are therefore needed at levels 1 and 2.	benefiting from its support in developing academic skills. FAQ sections have also been introduced on the VLE for providing academic advice in the context of individual modules. These proactively provide answers to common queries raised about the module and / or individual assignments.
<b>Organisation and management</b>	NSS results were strong in this area for 2010-11, but UGPS results were somewhat weaker, showing some dissatisfaction with the communication of changes. This may in part have reflected disruption caused by a temporary move to a different building for the summer term, which was beyond the department's control.	NSS and UGPS results were largely unchanged for 2011-12, with UGPS dissatisfaction again focused on communication of change. SSF also conveyed considerable dissatisfaction with the shift from a departmental office to a School office. This should have allowed for a better service, but students reported that non-Classics office staff were unresponsive and knew little about their studies.	Classics support staff have relocated back to the department. We have appointed a second student support officer, increasing our administrative capacity. We also now administer our own module and programme cataloguing, increasing control over our own teaching. The department is making greater use of VLE announcements, emails and notice boards to communicate changes.
<b>Learning resources</b>	The Leeds University libraries have excellent resources for the study of Classics, and the key to achieving student satisfaction is to make students aware of these resources and help them to use them effectively. We have been doing this for the past few years via dedicated library skills training in our L1 module CLAS 1025 Academic Skills and our L2 module CLAS 2800 Evidence and Enquiry.	Both NSS and UGPS results show an improvement in satisfaction with learning resources for 2011-12. Individual module reviews also show generally high levels of satisfaction with access to relevant resources. This suggests that existing initiatives such as the provision of dedicated library training at levels 1 and 2 and the growing provision of online course readings by the library are having an effect.	Further improvement is still possible here. We are extending the impact of our library skills training by enrolling more JH students onto CLAS 1025 and ensuring that language students take CLAS 2800. The Classics librarian has also identified uneven use of the library's online module reading lists, and (with support from the DoSE) has encouraged more staff to make use of these.
<b>Personal development</b>	A 25-point improvement was achieved on the NSS in 2010-11, and a more modest one on the UGPS. This seems to reflect the impact of the newly-introduced ERIK initiative, which allows students to present their work in local schools, and the introduction of level 3 development and employability sessions, which students reported that they had found enjoyable and helpful.	The NSS recorded a fall in satisfaction in this area for 2011-12, although the UGPS score improved slightly for ClasCiv students. Our provision at level 3 was the same for 2011-12 as for 2010-11, so the reduced score may reflect changing expectations. At UGPS level, the improvement can be attributed to a widening of the ERIK initiative. UGPS scores for language students also show particular dissatisfaction in the area of personal development.	In 2012-13 our language students will take parallel pathway modules (level 2) and independent research (level 3) for the first time, increasing the skills which they have the opportunity to develop. The introduction of independent research for our ClasCiv students saw marked improvements on our NSS scores, and we hope to achieve similar improvements for our language students, especially in the area of personal development.
<b>Postgraduate provision</b>	Programme survey results for PG students in 2010-11 were excellent, although the sample size of six responses means that the results must be treated with caution. Our aim for 2011-12 was to build on and enhance a successful established trajectory for PG provision. Initiatives included enhancements to the system of personal tutor meetings for PG students and improved training for PGs involved in teaching and assessment.	The role of PG tutor changed hands in this year. The new tutor made a particular effort to consult with students, holding a focus-group type meeting to discuss their experiences and how their work related to the research identity of the department. This allowed her to identify areas of dissatisfaction and plan improvements for 2012-13. The PGT PS results for 2011-12 were again excellent (though based on a small sample size of only seven responses), but with an identifiable weakness in the area of Assessment and feedback.	2012-13 has seen a reorganisation of MA taught modules. Multiple modules with low enrolments were grouped into larger 'umbrella' modules, creating a clearer structure with greater flexibility in study choices. Teaching and assessment on the core MA Research Skills Module have also been enhanced. The PG tutor is leading major improvements in organisation and management, including monitoring study choices, better student records and Annual Reviews for PGRs. PG Admin is now managed wholly within the department.

