

ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE: SESSION 2010-11

School: History

Faculty: Arts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY																		
Aspect	National Student Survey						Undergraduate Programme Experience Survey						Postgraduate Programme Experience Survey					
	2010-11		2009-10		2008-09		2010-11		2009-10		2008-09		2010-11		2009-10		2008-09	
	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni
Overall satisfaction	91	86	96	82	92	84	92	83	93	84	91	82	100	82	94	78	100	80
Teaching	93	88	96	85	94	86	93	83	92	83	91	82	94	84	91	81	96	81
Assessment of Academic	81	65	79	61	76	61	73	56	76	57	72	54	78	68	80	63	80	62
Academic Organisation	80	77	78	74	82	75	72	68	71	68	70	66	87	79	94	76	84	76
Learning	91	82	92	79	87	79	82	83	91	73	85	70	70	77	85	73	89	75
Personal development	86	87	84	85	86	86	71	77	71	76	70	77	87	82	79	81	91	82
Personal development	77	78	79	76	72	78	64	65	68	63	65	62	73	70	75	68	79	67

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)

Impact of 2009-10 Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased digitisation of high demand resources has increased availability, accessibility, convenience, use and student satisfaction. 2. Increased uptake of individual assessment feedback. 3. Closer monitoring & thorough training of postgraduate tutors has improved confidence and ability of PGTs. 4. Increased contact time at level 2 has improved student perception of contact time.
Achievements in 2010-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% satisfaction in postgraduate programme experience survey – back up from 6% drop last year - Continued improvement in scores for Assessment and Personal Development in NSS feedback – 5% increase on 2008/09 - Steady and high performance for Teaching, Organisation and Learning in NSS - Steady and high performance for Teaching in UGPES

Main actions for 2011-12	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Examine possibilities for increasing contact hours at level 3.2. Examine the possibility of increasing intake into certain level 3 special subjects and option modules in order to meet student demand.3. Hold a Module Fair in order to provide students with more detailed information about the modules that the School has to offer.4. Communicate to the student cohort the value and competencies of PG tutors.5. Ensure that grade criteria are communicated to and explained to students.6. Elicit student opinion on issues relating to 'Academic support' and 'Personal development'.7. Encourage students in various ways to engage with the School's activities outside scheduled 'contact hours' so as to reinforce a sense of community.8. Consider the holding of an Away Day on issues relating to marking, assessment and feedback.9. Communicate more effectively to the students the value of the transferable skills developed through their studies, particularly in terms of their future employability.10. Make further use of the digitisation service offered by the Library in order to meet student demand for particular kinds of resources.
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Aspect	Progress with actions in response to 2009-10 feedback and indication of impact	Issues raised in 2010-11 feedback	Planned response in 2011-12
Overall satisfaction	<p>Personal tutoring is excellent at level 3; up until this point <i>problems with the system</i> remain. There appear to be some discrepancies between the PT scheme as advertised to students and the actual personal tutoring they receive. In response to a dip in scores for academic support, the School will review its Personal Tutoring provision.</p> <p>Refinements have been made to the system, including provision of a detailed timetable of PT meeting objectives for all Levels, a contacts list for Personal Tutors to use for careers and employability advice, and heightened use of Leeds for Life web-forms. However, consistency of provision across the School is still an issue, and the Director of Personal Tutoring will ensure that the LTC and associated Away Days will host forums on how to improve / change the structure of provision across the School, bearing in mind possible increases in personal tutee volume after Joint Honours re-structuring.</p> <p>The School holds two module review meetings per academic session in which student feedback is discussed in detail.</p>	<p>Compared to previous years the School has had a relatively disappointing return in the 2010-11 NSS, dropping five points in terms of 'overall satisfaction' from 96 to 91. Nevertheless, close analysis of the figures reveals that we have actually improved on our 2009-10 results in three of the sub-categories (Assessment and Feedback, Academic Support and Learning Resources) and dropped only marginally in others. NSS 2010-11 is thus still a very commendable and satisfying overall result showing considerable strength in all areas.</p> <p>We are obviously delighted to have restored postgraduate overall satisfaction to 100%.</p> <p>The main issues arising from the 2010-11 NSS relate to the perception of limited 'contact hours' that students have in studying History, particularly when compared, often not very usefully, with peers studying for degrees in the sciences. We have had a recurrence of responses about lack of advance awareness of the grade criteria and some</p>	<p>Action: The peer mentoring scheme has been re-designed, so that there are timetabled 'mentor events' throughout the year which focus on particular student issues at Level 1: acclimatisation, academic skills, exam preparation, module choice, career opportunities (and so on). We hope this will target student concerns more accurately, and also raise the sense of 'school community' felt at these events.</p> <p>Action: Encourage students to attend School events post-induction week (e.g. guest seminars). Some level 2 modules build in research seminar attendance to help develop this sense of integration with the School's research culture.</p> <p>Action: The School's Personal Tutoring provision has been updated to accommodate newly parented JH students. A rise in tutee numbers has been compensated for by newly appointed staff and a low 'research leave' ratio, but we will monitor the impact of increased PT loads on staff time.</p>

	<p>The School feels that this system is robust enough to identify those areas in module organisation or delivery where a case has been made for changes to be implemented.</p>	<p>relatively isolated remarks in the area of feedback. Other than this we seem largely to have held our own in many areas.</p> <p>Students expressed some difficulty with settling in and making connections with course mates.</p> <p>Some adverse comments have been made by level 3 students about the non-availability of certain modules.</p>	<p>Action: The programme catalogues will be updated in order to give an accurate reflection of which modules are inactive / will not run again. It is hoped that this will contribute to the management of student expectations.</p> <p>Action: The School will hold a module fair in Semester 2 in order to inform students about the breadth of excellent modules which are on offer. The aims of this exercise are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To give students information about modules in a more accessible form than the UG catalogue. 2. To provide them with support and guidance in their study choices (as per the NSS - our score in this area being a little lacklustre) 3. To encourage them to think about a range of possible modules, including those that they might not previously have considered (with the hope that this will make them less wedded to a single choice, and thus less dismayed if they do not get it). 4. To contribute to a sense of 'community' in the school. 5. To give the students the opportunity to meet and talk to prospective tutors in an
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			<p>informal setting.</p> <p>6. To give the tutors the opportunity to 'sell' their modules to prospective tutees.</p> <p>The School will look also into the possibility of raising caps on the most popular special subject modules. If approved, this measure should ease things in terms of the demand for modules themselves and also in terms of dissertation supervision areas.</p> <p>The School continues to do some excellent work in WP. Staff are keen to participate in these initiatives and three important events have been set up for early 2012 involving staff participation in a series of workshops for Y9 and Y12 students.</p>
Teaching	<p>Level 2: Student opinion suggested that contact hours were too few, particularly at level 2. The School of History has therefore increased level 2 contact hours with an increase from 6 seminars to 9.</p> <p>Level 3: We are continuing to investigate ways of potentially improving student perceptions of contact time, for example through: a) extra-curricular activities & research seminars; b) a trial of group 'surgery hours' in addition to individual personal tutors' office hours in HIST3890 - if successful this may be rolled out more</p>	<p>The 2010-11 NSS statistics in this category still show us as performing well above the university average. The following areas have been identified for consideration:</p> <p>Lack of 'contact hours', particularly at level 3.</p>	<p>The LTC looked at increasing contact time for level 3 modules last year. On balance it was decided that this was not a good idea as it would inevitably compound the stress experienced by students who were already engaged in intensive work in their special subject and dissertation.</p>

	<p>widely; c) Trial e-lectures for HIST3710 – time previously spent in lectures is being used for extra seminar time.</p>	<p>Lack of understanding about abilities / competency of PGTs; and concern that they are not adequate replacement for ‘proper’ staff.</p> <p>Expressions of concern at the range of modules available.</p>	<p>However, we are closely monitoring the two pilot schemes currently in operation within the School. Both were discussed during our recent UGPR and the initial findings seem positive.</p> <p>Action: The School will explore means of increasing contact hours for level 3 students in such a manner as not to make additional demands on the students’ time or resources when they are already pressed in other areas. For example, instead of offering further compulsory seminars which involve a good deal of preparation, it may well be possible to offer ‘drop in’ workshops on essay writing / past examination questions / revision strategies, etc.</p> <p>Action: The role and competence to teach of postgraduate and postdoctoral tutors will be outlined at open days and at year cohort meetings.</p> <p>Action:</p> <p>As well as hosting the module fair we shall also be looking to the forthcoming new permanent appointees in the School to offer exciting and vibrant modules / options / special subjects in their areas of expertise, thus adding to what is, according to our external examiners, already a very wide-ranging and impressive set of offerings. New</p>
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		<p>A desire for revision classes or lectures close to examination time.</p>	<p>colleagues will also enhance possibilities for dissertation supervision.</p> <p>The holding of revision sessions close to exam time largely remains an issue for the decision of individual tutors, although most colleagues do seem to offer revision sessions. Additional lectures might be a problem in terms of equity between modules, but there is no reason why one of the scheduled lecture slots could not deal with revision.</p>
<p>Assessment and feedback</p>	<p>Tutors from the School completed the HEA Grademark electronic feedback trial, and disseminated a report via the HEA in June 2011. We showcased best practice in this area at a Faculty of Arts workshop in December 2010 and at a POLIS meeting in November 2011.</p>	<p>The School continues to do very well in this category and we have been pleased to see a further 2% increase on the 2009-10 figures.</p> <p>There were only a few isolated instances of criticism in the NSS on feedback; in the UGPS the level 2 students registered some concern about how useful feedback had been in terms of clarifying things they had not understood.</p> <p>There is a perception among some students that marking in the School is 'inconsistent' and that different tutors seem to want to see different things in written work.</p>	<p>Action: We will continue to provide advice about using 'Grademark' feedback as a School that leads innovation and NSS scores in this area. 'Grademark' is an online marking method which has been used by 3 tutors within the School, and has received very positive feedback from students.</p> <p>Action: Procedures will be put into place at TPG level to ensure that feedback is returned promptly. Although there will be subjective differences between colleagues in marking methods, we realise the importance of a fair and transparent application of the grade criteria across the board.</p> <p>Action: Staff will therefore be encouraged to make clear to students what they expect from submitted written</p>

		<p>The NSS again reflected that some students lacked advanced awareness of the grade criteria employed by the School.</p>	<p>work at an appropriate time in the course of the module. This issue will be discussed in the STSEC with the prospect of a series of broad guidelines being drawn up.</p> <p>Action: Our online record of selected First Class History dissertations 'Leeds History First' will be updated and placed in a more prominent position on the VLE in order that dissertation students can realistically measure their task.</p> <p>The School's DSE will consider holding a Marking / Assessment and Feedback themed Away Day.</p> <p>The grade criteria are published in the UG Handbook and on the VLE. In addition they are reproduced on the reverse side of every essay marksheet used by the School.</p> <p>Action: Given that this still appears to be an issue, however, colleagues have been asked to display and explain the grade criteria to students in the course of introductory lectures / tutorials.</p> <p>Interestingly the same confusion about the grade criteria does not seem to be reflected in the student feedback surveys on individual modules.</p>
<p>Academic support</p>	<p>The Personal Tutoring timetable has been further refined to allow PTs to direct relevant academic and module choice</p>	<p>Again, the School has done well in this category, increasing its overall score by 2%. We see this as the impact of the</p>	<p>Action: Reinforcement of the message about the transferable skills acquired through the study of History at the</p>

	<p>advice to students at different times of the year. Heightened use of 'Leeds for Life' web-forms, both by staff and students, is being facilitated, to improve the depth of PT provision.</p> <p>We will undergo a review of Personal Tutoring in Semester 2, looking at improving its consistency across the School, and ways of managing the workload of PTs (as the role now integrates so many academic, pastoral and employability duties) looking at ways the Personal Tutor can effectively act as a 'hub' for elements of support.</p> <p>Independent study at Level 3 continues to be supported by the Dissertation mentoring scheme, where PG students advise level 3 dissertation students on their research and progress. The School commits itself to funding this scheme in 2012-13.</p> <p>The School has timetabled a new, early Semester 2 'whole cohort' lecture for Level 3, to showcase the guidance that is available for academic progress and graduate opportunity, to give students a sense of structured support and advice in their final Semester, at a time (post-Christmas) of considerable student anxiety / urgency.</p> <p>Leeds for Life continues to be advertised</p>	<p>excellent work that has been done in re-designing the PT system and emphasising the importance and usefulness of the Leeds for Life initiative.</p> <p>There was some concern expressed about the lack of awareness of transferable skills for employment.</p> <p>Some desire was expressed for more structured dissertation assistance / clearer advice on deadlines.</p>	<p>general meetings held at the start of Semester one, early in Semester 2 (for level 3 students) and through the course of modules taught in the School.</p> <p>Action: Raise awareness amongst the students of the different skills they are acquiring and developing through the varied forms of modules / assessments they are undertaking (e.g. presentations / long essay / dissertation / group work). Tutors will be encouraged to incorporate these messages into their module documentation and administration.</p> <p>RJLH's UTF (University Teaching Fellowship) research on arts students & employability will develop, allowing students and staff to understand and articulate the subject-relevant skills that employers value and are looking for.</p> <p>Action: The School will make these skills more explicit in module descriptions and handbooks, as well as providing existing advice on this topic in Careers talks delivered each semester to year cohorts.</p> <p>Whilst reviewed in Semester 2, academic support was not discussed at 'away days' in 2010-11.</p> <p>Action: The School will hold a session in Semester 2, 2011 or Semester 1 2012-13 to consider the consistency and pressures on Personal tutoring as it takes</p>
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	<p>regularly to both students and staff as a way of supporting and recording PT provision, and uptake from both groups has increased. We are pleased to have a History student, Robyn Smith, amongst the 'Leeds for Life ambassadors', and she gives demonstrations of the resource at Induction and Careers meetings. We hope to consolidate this incorporation of Leeds for Life in 2012-13.</p>		<p>on more tutees</p> <p>The School is currently exploring the possibility of introducing a formal schedule of dissertation supervision. This will be the subject of ongoing discussion in the STSEC</p> <p>It is felt that the students might be unclear what 'academic support' actually involves. This might usefully be explained by tutors in introductory meetings.</p>
<p>Organisation and management</p>	<p>'Housekeeping' sessions in seminars have been replaced with a general introduction in HIST1050/HIST1817 lectures to ensure students understand School processes. This reinforces explanations of how the School runs and the role of the personal tutor, and serves to disseminate further advice and information about rules, policy and procedures including how to submit assessed work correctly. We also explain the student side of the partnership agreement.</p> <p>UG and PG handbooks have been overhauled to include only the most necessary information, enabling students to find information more easily. Extra</p>	<p>Some dissatisfaction was expressed about the availability and designation of level 3 option and special subjects.</p> <p>Continued approval of and praise for the School's administrative arrangements from the external examiners all of whom who speak very highly of our standards and processes</p>	<p>We are expecting the module fair to ease some of the problems and relieve some of the current student dissatisfaction about module choice and availability.</p> <p>Action: We shall also consider the raising of caps on the more popular special subjects in order to increase the number of places available.</p>

	information about careers prospects etc has dedicated space on the VLE.		
Learning resources	<p>We continue to promote good practice & encourage dissemination of new ideas.</p> <p>The academic staff have continued to identify/provide material for online course readings, especially for modules with a large student uptake. The School of History is the heaviest user of this resource.</p> <p>Most reading lists are now received via the VLE reading list tool, and a new reminder system is in place to chase up lists not received.</p> <p>Feedback on the new behaviour management policies and extended group work areas has been positive.</p>	<p>Computers too few and too slow</p> <p>Although we have very good levels of general satisfaction with Learning Resources reflected in both the NSS and the UGPS, some concern was expressed about the difficulty of accessing certain kinds of resources during peak times.</p>	<p>The School is in no position to do anything about this at the moment but we flag it up in case it has been reported across Schools/Departments.</p> <p>The School remains the heaviest user of the Library's digitisation service. Nevertheless, comments in the NSS encourage us to do yet more in this area. Action: Colleagues will be asked to consider digitising keys texts and other resources particularly for <i>seminar preparation</i> as this was an area mentioned specifically by students. There may have been a concentration on essay / presentation resources up to now. Colleagues will also be encouraged to incorporate relevant information and guidance on digital resources in their module documentation.</p>
Personal development	Several steps are being followed to maintain/ improve satisfaction in personal	The School has experienced a slight dip (2%) in terms of 'overall satisfaction' for	Action: The School has committed 'student experience' funding to a series

<p>development:</p> <p>The Skills section on the module catalogue has been updated to reflect skills learnt/developed through study of History modules.</p> <p>'Leeds for Life' usage by staff and students is being strongly encouraged and already shows a marked increase in Semester 1</p> <p>RJLH has designed and introduced the module '<i>Research Collaboration and Communication</i>' which gives students the opportunity to liaise with businesses, charities and heritage organisations, and improve their broader and more vocational skills. RJLH's UTF research project also concentrates on bridging the gap between academic excellence and professional success.</p> <p>We aim to foster stronger links with History Alumni students, through the work of an 'Alumni intern' and meetings with the Alumni Service, so that we can showcase recent student progression from University to Professional contexts, and increase personal development opportunities for our current students.</p> <p>One-to-one Careers appointments (provided in the History foyer by careers centre reps) have been increased for</p>	<p>this area in the most recent NSS; in the 2011 UGPS a high proportion of respondents answered with 'neither agree nor disagree'. As is the case with 'Academic Support', it is felt, and the point was expressed strongly in our UGPR, that the students themselves may lack awareness of how their studies are making a contribution towards their 'personal development' which, as one of the student representatives present commented, they may well conceive of as something entirely different to and divorced from their studies.</p> <p>There was some feeling expressed that the School might do more to integrate skills into its degree programmes.</p> <p>The development of self-confidence clearly remains an issue for a small minority of our students.</p>	<p>of 2012-13 workshops delivered by researchers within the public and private sectors. This series will be delivered to UG and PG students to showcase ways in which History students can use their research skills in professional contexts.</p> <p>The School is committed in 2012-13 to continuing its Internship project which employs 14 student interns as part of the school's administration, careers guidance and research.</p> <p>Students taking the CSER8000 work placement module have increased in number in 2011-12 and we hope to consolidate this uptake in 2012-13.</p> <p>Action: The School will make a further effort to encourage students to connect the actions of the School and student activities within it to the potential impact of both on their development and employability by:</p> <p>a) discussing the issue at introductory cohort / module meetings / lectures, and, on an individual level, during PT meetings;</p> <p>b) encouraging students to think of different challenges (e.g. group presentation / long essay / dissertation / enrolment on the School's innovative</p>
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	<p>2011-12 and will be sustained in 2012-13</p> <p>The module HIST2550 'Research Collaboration' successfully delivered public-facing research outputs in 2010-11. Student numbers on the module have increased for 2011-12, and will be raised from 13 to 20 in 2012-13. The module has attracted over 25 partners from business, heritage and community groups to talk to and advise students within the School.</p> <p>Our Leeds for Life intern has been trained in accessing and using the 'Raiser's Edge' Alumni database and uses it to attract alumni speakers to the School. We aim to make more systematic use of this alumni resource in 2012.</p>		<p>module offerings in terms of their ability to tackle unfamiliar problems;</p> <p>c) exploring aspects of The Partnership with the students.</p>
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