

ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE: SESSION 2013-14

School of Modern Languages and Cultures (German, Russian and Slavonic Studies)

Faculty of Arts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY																		
Aspect	National Student Survey						Undergraduate Programme Experience Survey						Postgraduate Programme Experience Survey					
	2012-13		2011-12		2010-11		2012-13		2011-12		2010-11		2012-13		2011-12		2010-11	
	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni
Overall satisfaction	92	87	87	87	91	86	82	85	86	85	86	83	91	87	75	84	85	82
Teaching	94	89	90	90	93	88	87	85	87	84	87	83	87	87	79	85	85	84
Assessment & feedback	77	71	71	69	81	65	65	59	64	61	64	56	70	75	63	69	67	68
Academic support	80	81	78	80	80	77	67	72	69	72	68	68	86	85	70	80	81	79
Organisation & management	89	84	84	83	91	82	75	73	79	74	79	83	84	85	69	80	79	77
Learning resources	91	90	89	88	86	87	79	81	76	78	81	77	77	86	79	83	87	82
Personal development	85	81	83	81	77	78	61	69	62	68	62	65	82	77	66	71	67	70
Sector position		57/147		51/150		46/151												

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 2011-12 actions	<p>NSS German: A rise in all areas apart from Q9, Q12, Q13. Russian: viable response rate; generally good levels of satisfaction in most areas.</p>
Achievements in 2012-13	<p>NSS Achievement of a high enough response in Russian for a viable data set, the first in three years. Very high levels of overall satisfaction both in German (95%) and in Russian (92%). Both subjects were rated third in the national rankings.</p> <p>UGPS 100% overall satisfaction for German SH level 2+. German JH level 2+, Russian SH Level 1, Russian JH Level 1 and Russian JH level 2+</p>
Main actions for 2013-14	<p>In Assessment and Feedback focus on the areas of explicating marking criteria and communicating opportunities to discuss feedback. In Academic Support press for ongoing staffing solutions in both subject areas to ensure stability of the programme. Communicate resulting changes to students so as to publicise the value and impact of their survey feedback and ensure equal or higher response rates for both subjects in NSS and UGPS.</p>

Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan	To be discussed at Student-Staff Forum on 19 November 2013. Focus groups on key areas of marking criteria, information and advice on module choice, and feedback to be held on 22 November 2013. Action plan to be revised in the light of these engagements.
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Aspect	Progress with actions in response to 2011-12 feedback and indication of impact	Issues raised in 2012-13 feedback	Planned response in 2013-14
Overall satisfaction	The policy of increased communication, transparency, explicitation and management of expectations has resulted in very high levels of overall satisfaction.	None	Maintain previous policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism and reliability in our practice. • Explicitation and transparency. • Management of student expectations through good communication at all levels of the student experience Seeking and maintaining dialogue with students; regular two-way feedback and willingness to explain the reasons for and benefits of activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek regular feedback during modules to check student satisfaction • Act on or explain reasons for not acting on students suggestions • In the week before SSC, brief check for issues that can be resolved at Module level
Teaching	Management of expectations has helped to counterbalance the effect of high staff turnover in German and maintain a high level of satisfaction with teaching.	Very high levels of satisfaction in these areas for both NSS and UPGS with the exception of Russian SH Level 2+ where there has been a decline in satisfaction, with Q2 'Staff have made the subject interesting' and Q4 'The programme is intellectually stimulating' scoring less than 70% agree. Of particular concern is Q4 where 50% of respondents	Continue to monitor German and Russian programme content for fitness for purpose in relation to the Curriculum Enhancement project, market needs, student interests and staff specialisms. Press for long-term staffing solutions in both subject areas.

		neither agree nor disagree. However, there were only 6 respondents for Russian SH Level 2+, so this figure represents the view of only 3 students. There was no PS5 Comments data available for this group to shed light on these responses.	
Assessment and feedback	Policy of increased communication and explicitation has led to a rise in scores in this area in NSS German.	Whilst NSS German indicated a rise in satisfaction in this area, NSS Russian scores were mixed and UPGS in both German and Russian SH and JH showed drops in satisfaction, particularly with regard to Q9 'Feedback helped me clarify things I did not understand.' In NSS and UGPS in Russian, and among Level 1 students in German, there was some dissatisfaction shown for Q5 'The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance.'	Manage expectations by explicating the nature purpose of feedback to be received, both in online and printed module documentation and during group or individual feedback sessions. Ensure all personal tutors offer academic audits where tutees can bring recently received feedback for discussion. Publicise availability of module tutors' office hours and designated module feedback sessions where available for clarification of feedback received. Ensure marking criteria for each type of assessment are available to students on the VLE, and that marking criteria and feedback forms correspond with each other. Support module tutors in explicating marking criteria as a regular part of assessment preparation.
Academic support	Unfortunately last minute changes to module availability due to unforeseen high staff turnover in German, and due to uncertainty in staffing in Russian, negated the impact of the actions in response to 2011-12 feedback.	In both NSS and UGPS for both subjects, Q12 'Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices' scored less than acceptable satisfaction rates. Changes to module availability at short notice were beyond the control of the subject areas. PS5 comments indicate that the students are sympathetic to the subject areas' position but nevertheless frustrated at module changes which have a knock-on effect on their ability to choose modules in JH subjects or elective modules.	Maintain programme stability via long-term staffing solutions. Involve students in planning for module availability in 2014-15, within constraints of staff availability and programme coherence, via Student-Staff forum or other consultation activities.
Organisation and management	Despite following a policy of clear communication, the changes at short notice in both German and Russian have impacted on perceptions of the smooth running and effective communication in the subject areas.	Results in this area were very varied across NSS and UPGS and across German and Russian with no discernible pattern. Russian finalists (NSS) and Russian SH L2+ are happy with the timetable but satisfaction with course organisation and communication of changes showed marked decline. In German, the NSS showed finalists to be happy with course organisation and communication of changes but dissatisfied with timetabling, whereas the UPGS in German showed the reverse.	Maintain programme stability via long-term staffing solutions. Continue with clear communication about any changes or events affecting students. Consistency of approach and standards across modules as well as co-curricular activities that foster a sense of subject area identity.

<p>Learning resources</p>	<p>We continue to support library staff in supplying resources for the subject areas, as well as supporting SMLC and Faculty initiatives in these areas. At the modular level there is increased use of the library's Online Course Readings service.</p>	<p>Results in this area were varied across NSS and UPGS and across German and Russian with no discernible pattern. Drops in satisfaction with access to library, IT and specialised resources however, tend to be due to students responding 'Neither agree nor disagree'.</p>	<p>Continue to promote timely communication with library staff in the preparation of reading lists for future academic years. Manage expectations as to what students should be able to access in the library or on the VLE via clarity in online and printed module documentation and clear communication at the start of modules.</p>
<p>Personal development</p>	<p>The policy of explicitation on transferable skills during feedback has helped to produce increases in satisfaction on the issue of presenting oneself with confidence (Q19).</p>	<p>In general across NSS and UGPS in both subjects there was no change or there were increases in satisfaction in this area. Both subjects in UGPS registered drops in satisfaction for Q20 'My communications skills have improved' but this was not as a result of students responding that they disagreed with this question.</p>	<p>Continue to promote opportunities for personal development both within the curriculum and in co-curricular activities. Continue to explicitate the presence of transferable skills in the programmes.</p>