

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

School of Modern Languages and Cultures (Centre for Translation 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	N/A	57/147	N/A	51/150	N/A	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>Based on priorities identified from our experience and feedback in 2011-12, we: (1) secured the appointment of a dedicated Programme Manager for the MA in Applied Translation Studies (MAATS); and (2) sought to improve speed and quality of assessment feedback.</p> <p>Achieving (1) has delivered a remarkable improvement in the student experience, as evidenced in by overall satisfaction rates in the Programme Survey (94%) and comments from the External Examiner (Classification Board, 25/10/2013). Perhaps more significantly still, this appointment has contributed to a reinvigoration across the teaching team, with Programme Survey comments about staff enthusiasm being especially prominent. The 2013 Programme Survey indicates that our success in addressing (2) has been uneven – and serious work remains to be done in some areas, not least the cross-programme core module Methods & Approaches in Translation Studies (M&A). This said, feedback given by students and external examiners show that we have improved in other areas, e.g. the MAATS core module Computer-Assisted Translation.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the MA in Professional Language and Intercultural Studies attracted three native speakers of English, which suggests that moves to broaden the programme's appeal were successful. Following a period of extensive reorganisation, excellent relations among the teaching team and colleagues in the reconfigured Programme and Student Support teams are now also yielding tangible benefits – which impact directly on student experience.</p>
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Achievements in 2012-13	Our principal achievement is that another cohort of approx. 100 H/EU and Intl. students will graduate from our taught postgraduate programmes in translation, interpreting and intercultural studies in December – we share pride in the quality of work they produced during the past session and the contribution that they will make to the professions in the future. More specifically, in addition to the results related above, the MA in Audiovisual Translation Studies maintained an overall satisfaction rate of 100% (92% response rate). The MA in Professional Language and Intercultural Studies (MAPLIS) received overall satisfaction rate of 90% (response rate 71%). The MAs in Conference Interpreting and Translation Studies (2-lang & Bidirectional variants) received an overall satisfaction rate of 83%, albeit with a rather lower response rate (62% = 18 responses).
Main actions for 2013-14	In 2013-14 we are seeking to tackle head-on the relationship between the practical modules in Specialised Translation (ST) and the more theoretical Methods & Approaches (M&A) module in our cross-programme core provision. This becomes all the more crucial given that these modules provide key elements for an enlarged portfolio of PGT programmes offered by the School. In response to feedback, we have made M&A long and thin – in order that it might better complement the ST modules offered in both semesters. This enables us to look at theoretical issues of direct relevance to the text types under consideration at any given phase in ST. We have also sought to increase levels of student interaction, by introducing seminar sessions for M&A at four intervals across the teaching year. The other key issue to address in terms of cross-programme provision is feedback, the speed and quality of which remain serious issues. In particular, we have taken steps which attempt to ensure improvements in relation to both M&A and for those ST language combinations which were identified as concerns.
Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan	Given the 12-month cycle of our MA programmes, we necessarily rely on the input from the previous cohort to inform the current Action Plan. The intensive nature of our programmes requires a particularly close partnership between students and staff, which in turn allows a healthy level of dialogue throughout the year. In addition to the Programme Survey, we also benefit from relatively high response rates to our end of module evaluation questionnaires. Finally, we have worked actively with student representatives to develop effective structures and schedules for Student Staff Forums. Thus we have sought fully to involve students in the development of this Action Plan.

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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	We have seen a dramatic overall improvement in feedback for MAATS – up 33% to 94% (80% response rate). This is a direct result of the appointment of a dedicated Programme Manager.	Of the six MA programmes, only MACITS scored less than 90% – at 83%. From comments made by students, the main issue here was a perception of a lack of organisation and communication.	We have appointed an additional member of staff (100% FTE) to increase our in-house capacity for interpreter training. This is specifically intended to improve continuity and consistency.
Teaching	We now publish pre-lecture materials and in-session recordings for the cross-programme core M&A module. We also introduced team projects in the optional Computers & the Translator module.	Overall, the programmes received very positive feedback on teaching. Specific issues have been identified with two modules, which are key components of MAPLIS.	Ensure high levels are maintained. The module leaders for Rhetoric and Public Speaking and English for International Communication have identified actions which should improve experience across MAPLIS.
Assessment and feedback	The 2012-13 session saw a dramatic improvement in perceptions of fairness for the MAATS core module following substantive revision of assessment and feedback processes.	The perceived fairness of assessment for MAATS increased by 62% and comments make it clear that students are also finding feedback useful in improving their understanding.	Maintain the high quality of assessment and feedback for MAATS.

	We also introduced mock exams for Simultaneous Interpreting in semester 2.	The main issue raised was the slow return of feedback for the cross-programme core M&A module. Concerns were also raised about the speed of return and level of detail of feedback provided to MACITS students. For MAPLIS, there was some unevenness in the publication of module-specific marking criteria.	Put in place additional capacity for marking assessments for M&A to ensure timely return. While assessment of interpreting performance may happen almost in real-time, students need to be made aware that effective feedback cannot be delivered instantaneously. Module leaders to ensure that clear marking criteria are available across the programme.
Academic support	Students report good levels of academic support in the round, with increases in satisfaction for MAATS, MAAVTS and MACITS.	While very positive comments were made about the quality of teaching on the programme, MACITS students did raise concerns about availability of teaching staff.	The appointment of an additional 100% FTE member of staff will make a very significant contribution to the in-house team.
Organisation and management	Students were generally satisfied with the organisation and communication in their programmes, with MAATS notably up 32%.	Concerns were raised about the management and communication of changes in the timetable for MACITS.	The appointment of an additional 100% FTE member of staff will reduce our reliance on part time tutors and build additional in-house capacity.
Learning resources	While students of MACITS and MAPLIS report modest improvements in access to learning resources, with MAPLIS satisfaction at 100%, both MAATS and MAAVTS show significant decreases.	Despite longer opening hours and increased availability of specialist IT facilities, MAATS and MAAVTS students report dissatisfaction in this area.	We are working with the School to explore the possibilities to increase capacity and specialised teaching space for small groups, though this will not provide an immediate solution. In the current session, we will endeavour to communicate more clearly to students the opportunities that exist for using facilities outside of teaching time.
Personal development	We have broadened and enriched our series of extra-curricular Professionalisation Talks.	Students of MAATS and MAAVTS reported an increase in appreciation for their personal development, while modest declines were recorded for MACITS and MAPLIS.	We will broaden the range of students invited to our very successful Professionalisation Talks, to include undergraduates. We will also focus the efforts of colleagues who act as personal tutors and will introduce Career Development Plans to support students and their tutors in their discussions about prospects beyond graduation.

KEY: MA IN APPLIED TRANSLATION STUDIES (**MAATS**); MA IN AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION STUDIES (**MAAVTS**); MA IN CONFERENCE INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION STUDIES (**MACITS**) – AVAILABLE IN TWO LANGUAGE AND BIDIRECTIONAL VARIANTSL MA IN PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL STUDIES (**MAPLIS**); METHODS AND APPROACHES IN TRANSLATION STUDIES (MODL5001M – **M&A**); SPECIALISED TRANSLATION MODULES (MODL5113-5336M – **ST**).