

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

**School:** Graduate School      **Faculty of Biological Sciences**

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>																		
<b>Aspect</b>	<b>National Student Survey</b>						<b>Undergraduate Programme Experience Survey</b>						<b>Postgraduate Programme Experience Survey</b>					
	<b>2011-12</b>		<b>2010-11</b>		<b>2009-10</b>		<b>2011-12</b>		<b>2010-11</b>		<b>2009-10</b>		<b>2011-12</b>		<b>2010-11</b>		<b>2009-10</b>	
	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	91	87	89	86	89	82	83	85	83	83	87	84	75	84	76	82	71	78
<b>Teaching</b>	93	90	89	88	89	85	83	84	82	83	83	83	82	85	85	84	80	81
<b>Assessment &amp; feedback</b>	67	69	62	65	59	61	54	61	52	56	50	57	46	69	55	68	51	63
<b>Academic support</b>	81	80	80	77	81	74	73	72	68	68	67	68	75	80	79	79	70	76
<b>Organisation &amp; management</b>	84	83	83	82	82	79	69	74	69	83	68	73	67	80	69	77	67	73
<b>Learning resources</b>	90	88	91	87	91	85	78	78	79	77	79	76	77	83	90	82	87	81
<b>Personal development</b>	82	81	83	78	81	76	63	68	62	65	64	63	67	71	62	70	68	68
<b>Sector position</b>		51/150		46/151		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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our procedures were amended to improve the timeliness of feedback. This has been successful in the majority of cases with the scores for the question “my feedback has been prompt” increasing in all but one programme area.</li> <li>• We re-developed the content of the Human Disease &amp; Therapy MSc which scored the lowest in terms of the Teaching category in 2010-11. There was an improvement in the teaching score on this programme scoring marginally above the University average.</li> <li>• The scores for international students were noticeably lower in terms of Academic Support than the Home/EU students in 2010-11. We provided additional introductory/welcome sessions. The scores for international students improved for all three questions relating to academic support.</li> </ul>
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<b>Achievements in 2011-12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased interaction between the Bioscience group of programmes and employers through the introduction of industrial seminar speakers and research projects in industry.</li> <li>• A subset of the PGT programmes were reviewed by members (employers) of our Faculty Industrial Advisory Board in terms of skills developed. These will feed into programme development (see box below).</li> <li>• The high quality service provided by the Graduate School Office staff was highlighted by a number of students in their comments.</li> </ul>
<b>Main actions for 2012-13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Introduce scheduled feedback surgeries for Biodiversity &amp; Conservation modules to enhance quality of feedback received on assessed work. Expand feedback surgeries within the Bioscience suite of programmes,</i></li> <li>• <i>Continue to implement and monitor revised procedures for timely return of marked coursework.</i></li> <li>• <i>Implement and monitor changes to content, delivery and organisation of Conservation &amp; Genetics module.</i></li> <li>• <i>Review the MSc Bioscience suite of programmes to refresh the curriculum and align more closely with skills required by industry</i></li> <li>• <i>Monitor the effectiveness of the revised agenda for personal tutorials.</i></li> </ul>

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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>	<p>Our focus for 2010-11 was assessment and feedback and we introduced a number of initiatives within (primarily) the Bioscience suite of programmes. Scores improved in some programme areas but not all (see Assessment &amp; Feedback).</p>	<p>Overall satisfaction remained about the same as for 2010-11. There were programme specific differences with the bioscience suite of programmes scoring generally higher than in the previous academic year (highest score 91% for the Bioscience MSc). However, the Biodiversity &amp; Conservation MSc dropped by 11% in overall satisfaction.</p>	<p>Key actions to improve overall satisfaction are listed below.</p>
<b>Teaching</b>	<p>We re-developed the content of the Human Disease &amp; Therapy MSc which scored the lowest in terms of the Teaching category in 2011-12. There was an improvement in score by 13% on this programme (scoring 87% - marginally above the University average).</p>	<p>Teaching scored 82% just marginally below the university average of 85% (School score for 2010-11 was also 85%).</p> <p>Again programme specific differences with scores ranging from 100% (Biotechnology) to 76% (Biodiversity &amp; Conservation). Comments indicate dissatisfaction with one key module in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Conservation Genetics module has been reviewed and changes to content, delivery and organisation will be implemented when delivered again in semester 2 (2012-13).</i></li> <li>• <i>The MSc Bioscience suite of programmes is currently under review to refresh the</i></li> </ul>

		Biodiversity and Conservation MSc: Conservation Genetics. In the Bioscience suite of programmes; scores are higher generally amongst international students than home/EU students.	<i>curriculum and align more closely with skills required by industry.</i>
<b>Assessment and feedback</b>	<p>Our procedures were amended to improve the timeliness of feedback. This has been successful in the majority of cases with the scores for the question “my feedback has been prompt” increasing in all but one programme area.</p> <p>We introduced a number of post-coursework surgeries for the Bioscience suite of programmes on some modules to provide feedback on assessed coursework.</p> <p>Increased scores in some areas of the Bioscience suite of programmes indicate that this may have had a positive impact.</p> <p>Feedback from students via the external examiners was that the students were more satisfied in this area than in the previous years.</p>	<p>Assessment &amp; Feedback scores are lower than 2010-11 (55%) and lower than the University average (69%). However, between a quarter and a third of the respondents for questions 7 and 8 scored “neither agree nor disagree”.</p> <p>There are variations across programmes with scores ranging from 64% (Biotechnology) to 38% (Biodiversity &amp; Conservation). Scores increased in some programme areas (Infection &amp; Immunity and Human Disease &amp; Therapy) but dropped in others (Bioscience and Biodiversity &amp; Conservation). The main issue highlighted is the quality of feedback received.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Introduce scheduled feedback surgeries for Biodiversity &amp; Conservation modules to provide feedback on assessed work.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continue to implement and monitor revised procedures for timely return of marked coursework.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Academic support</b>	<p>We provide a series of induction activities to support the transition of international students onto our programmes. In 2010-11, the scores for international students were noticeably lower than the Home/EU students. For 2011-12, the scores for international students improved for questions 9-11 relating to academic support by about 10%.</p>	<p>The numerical School score is 75% (slightly lower than the University average of 80% and slightly lower than the School average from 2010-11 (79%). The scores improved for each individual programme but dropped for MSc Biodiversity &amp; Conservation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We have developed specific guidelines/agenda to support the preparation and discussion at personal tutorials (for staff and students)</i></li> </ul>
<b>Organisation and management</b>	<p>The lowest scores were for the Human Disease &amp; Therapy MSc in 2010-11. There was substantial reorganisation of this programme in 2011-12. The score for this programme improved by 36%.</p>	<p>The numerical School score is marginally lower than 2010-11 (which was 69%). There are variations in scores between the programmes; ranging from 93% for MSc Biotechnology to 57% for Biodiversity &amp; Conservation. The main issue identified from the comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>(see Teaching category above). The Conservation module has been reviewed and changes to content, delivery and organisation will be implemented when delivered again in semester 2 (2012-13).</i></li> </ul>

		related on the whole to a single module (Conservation Genetics) within Biodiversity & Conservation MSc	
<b>Learning resources</b>	We have a regular equipment upgrade programme with equipment requests being solicited and evaluated every September. Equipment for Masters teaching is fully represented in this process.	The numerical School Score for this category dropped from 90% (above the University average) to 77% (below the University average of 83%). Main issues identified were problems on-line journal access and lack of general IT facilities when required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Discussions were held with the Library in 2011-12 to discuss on-line journal access. Part of the issue was a pdf reader problem, which now appears to have been resolved with a different version of the software. The library is subscribing to 4 additional Biodiversity &amp; Conservation journals this year.</i></li> <li>• <i>The PGT students use the same University IT facilities as the UG students. Will highlight this to central University IT facilities.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Personal development</b>	<p>The Biodiversity &amp; Conservation MSc “careers day” continues to be well-received by students.</p> <p>Links between the suite of Bioscience programmes and employers were increased through industrial seminars/research projects in industry and additional careers training. The scores improved in this suite of programmes with the exception of one programme which remained about the same.</p>	The School score increased slightly from 62% to 67%. The scores improved or remained constant in all programme areas with a small drop in Biodiversity& Conservation MSc.	<p><i>There are many opportunities within our PGT programmes for professional development including core scientific and professional competency training and interaction with employers, alumni and careers. For 2012-13:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We have revised the agenda for personal tutorial sessions so that there is greater emphasis on discussions around future career planning, employability and articulation of skills developed.</i></li> </ul>