

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

School: Politics and International Studies

Faculty: Education, Social Sciences and Law

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	86	86	88	82	77	84	83	83	87	84	80	82	87	82	75	78	73	80
Teaching	92	88	89	85	87	86	87	83	87	83	82	82	86	84	80	81	78	81
Assessment & feedback	58	65	58	61	54	61	48	56	49	57	48	54	72	68	60	63	65	62
Academic support	71	77	70	74	69	75	62	68	65	68	58	66	78	79	75	76	71	76
Organisation & management	86	82	86	79	82	79	81	83	83	73	75	70	76	77	70	73	80	75
Learning resources	84	87	77	85	80	86	66	77	69	76	69	77	83	82	77	81	81	82
Personal development	76	78	72	76	71	78	58	65	55	63	53	62	66	70	63	68	47	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	The main actions in 2009-10 focused around Assessment and Feedback; Employability and Personal Development including Leeds for Life. It seems that in general the student experience is a good one. The aim of the school is to build upon areas of good practice and develop those areas where there is a sense of an uneven student experience (despite the efforts of staff and students) over the past few years.
Achievements in 2010-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent showing in student choice awards, including Feedback Champion award (Dr. Robinson) and Student Rep (Josh Saxby). The school also had representation on shortlist for inspirational teaching (Dr. Worrall) and student rep. The school was also shortlisted for overall best. UTF awarded to Dr. Robinson (school now has 2 UTFs) • Returned feedback to students within 3 weeks/ 12% increase in PGT satisfaction in this area • Increased support for students away from Leeds (up to 25% students take some sort of study abroad/work placement option in year 3). • Continued success of SLED
Main actions for 2011-12	<p>The qualitative comments highlight that the student experience can be perceived as variable. The key action for 2011/12 is therefore to aim for greater equity in the student experience across all areas of the school, but especially in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and Feedback • Employability • Personal Development including Leeds for Life <p>Implementing the POLIS Agreement and the Partnership underpins all the above and therefore needs to be embraced by all students and staff</p>

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Faculty: Education, Social Sciences and Law

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>Overall Satisfaction % change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSS 86 -2 • PGT 87 +11 • Level 2 85 +6 • Level 1 81 -5 <p>Generally pleasing scores, although we are a little concerned about the fall in satisfaction at Level One. Very pleased that efforts of the PGT team have been recognised in 11 point increase in satisfaction. Some concern about difference in satisfaction between Home/EU and International PGT students but we will continue to monitor this issue carefully.</p>	<p>Contact hours v fee</p> <p>Assessment and Feedback</p> <p>Access to tutors/social interaction</p> <p>Research/teaching tension although for every negative comment there is this type 'I really like that they are working on new research all the time to add to [their teaching]'</p>	<p>More explicit integration of extra-curricular activities into student experience to ensure benefits of being at a research-intensive school obvious to students</p> <p>Assessment and feedback a key theme for the POLIS Agreement which will be launched this year.</p> <p>POLIS Agreement has personal tutoring as a core theme. Continue to work with Politics Society to provide social events, especially for PGT students.</p> <p>Greater involvement of UG and PGT students in research activities of the school.</p>
Teaching	<p>Satisfaction with teaching remains high across all levels, although some modules and colleagues experience the marmite effect-they are either loved or hated.</p> <p>School shortlisted for Overall Best in Student Choice awards.</p> <p>Minimum standards for modules leaders introduced</p>	<p>The big issue appears to be contact hours rather than teaching quality. Some negative comments about staff enthusiasm visible at all levels but offset by generally more positive comments.</p> <p>Some mention of the use of Teaching Assistants and the quality of the TAs</p>	<p>Work with students to explore what type of contact they are asking for. Continued use of curriculum enhancement opportunities (Botany House discussion group, Film Societies; Teach ins). Support for UG students to attend research seminars. As a school we will continue to integrate students further into research groups, especially at MA level</p> <p>Continued action from last year to support TAs and new colleagues including clearer instructions as to procedures and assessment criteria. Increased focus on peer mentoring and support.</p>

<p>Assessment and feedback</p>	<p>We improved the timeliness of feedback meeting the 3 week rule in all but one case (mitigating circumstances).</p> <p>Work with students to identify other possible assessment periods during the semester-ongoing.</p> <p>Increase opportunities for formative assessment-ongoing</p> <p>We will explore issue of returning essays to students-essays will be returned to students in 2011-12 session.</p>	<p>Perceived bunching of assessment deadlines</p> <p>This comment sums up the negative view from students: "Feedback a major and persistent concern (but is starting to show signs of improvement)" yet we also get very positive comments.</p> <p>Calls for essays to be returned</p> <p>More support for exams</p>	<p>Assessment guide produced and distributed early in academic year (and available on vle) that outlines when assessments are due to aid time management</p> <p>All modules have formative feedback in some form. Staff working hard to communicate types of feedback available (POLIS feedback booklet; feedback sessions for all levels; re-introduction of feedback week)</p> <p>New feedback form introduced and provisional marks will be clear on the form</p> <p>Essays will be returned to students and feedback return dates are explicitly spelt out in assessment guide</p> <p>Audio feedback project will examine benefits of using this type of feedback</p> <p>Exam survival workshops run in conjunction with POLIS society.</p>
<p>Academic support</p>	<p>New academic skills induction for all new students, but with a particular focus on support for international students. These sessions introduced and some feedback from colleagues/externals that skill level of students has improved.</p> <p>Events held to ensure new assessment criteria made explicit to students (and staff). Externals examiners noted improved match between comments and marks.</p>	<p>Some comments about the availability of personal tutors</p> <p>Occasional comment about the point of personal tutor</p> <p>This comment summed up the positive view "The generous amount of academic support (for example, extensive feedback from assessments) given to me relative to my friend's at other universities" yet some felt 'that the feedback for my work has not provided me with enough information</p>	<p>Staff office hours publicised outside rooms. All staff inc TAs have office hours. Staff training in use of out of office assistant</p> <p>Greater focus on Leeds for Life agenda and more proactive approach by support and academic staff to ensure meetings take place, especially at level one.</p> <p>Moving up meetings and welcome back meetings continue</p> <p>Greater support for students returning from study</p>

		to effectively build upon previous work’.	aboard or work placement. Level 1/ 2 students performing well will continue to receive a congratulatory letter from Head of School
Organisation and management	<p>Full utilization of Leeds for Life and improved – functionality-still some issues re LfL functionality but LfL agenda employed by the majority of staff</p> <p>Moving up meetings by programme/welcome back meetings by programme-offered to all taught students but take up patchy</p> <p>All seminars running from week one to avoid confusion-enacted.</p> <p>Working with Joint Honours to ensure student satisfaction-transition seemed to have occurred without major problems but some comments about ‘differences between departments’ in the feedback still persist.</p>	<p>Some comments as to the organisation of the dissertation module and support for students away from Leeds</p> <p>Deadlines for MA assessment</p> <p>UG and PG offices generally praised for the support they provide to student experience.</p>	<p>Explicit communication of assessment deadlines via Assessment Guide</p> <p>Dissertation guidelines been simplified and improved</p> <p>MA assessment deadlines moved back to ensure smaller time gap between semester one submission and semester 2 start.</p>
Learning resources	<p>Increased use of digitisation where appropriate to provide readings on vle-ongoing</p> <p>More training for students on using the library, especially Level 2-level one and ma inductions continue to be very popular</p> <p>Academic staff to consider use of terms like key reading-ongoing</p>	<p>Some dissatisfaction with learning resources, especially access to key readings but many positives comments about provision.</p>	<p>Digitisation of key readings will continue where appropriate</p> <p>Increased focus on how staff label readings i.e if a reading is seen as key, can all students access it?</p> <p>Improved training for all new students on how to access to resources</p>
Personal development	<p>More explicit links built between POLIS and Careers (visible from results of additional questions). Development of a POLIS Careers Module-on books and full in 2011/12</p> <p>Better guidance as to module choices and career choices- Moving on up sessions aim to provide guidance as to modules choices but take up low</p>	<p>Occasional comment that careers advice was too ‘corporate’. We will continue to promote all careers events to POLIS students and continue to organise school specific tailored events, but in line with other revisions to the way we advertise careers events, we plan to disseminate these events more widely.</p>	<p>Personal tutoring high profile element of POLIS agreement (localised interpretation of The Partnership)</p> <p>Support staff developed excellent vle resources for careers, study aboard and work placement opportunities.</p>

	Full integration of Leeds for Life into personal tutoring model which should help clarify role of PT and clarify skills attained over time-ongoing		POLIS 4th highest in sector for employability-aim of the school is to ensure students aware of their employability skills via dissemination of results of ADF project and the 'decide, plan, achieve'
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