

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

**Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Law
School of Sociology and Social Policy**

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	88	87	86	87	90	86	85	85	86	85	85	83	72	87	86	84	87	82
Teaching	91	89	87	90	92	88	87	85	90	84	86	83	79	87	91	85	89	84
Assessment & feedback	70	71	69	69	64	65	61	59	69	61	64	56	68	75	70	69	79	68
Academic support	75	81	71	80	74	77	69	72	66	72	63	68	76	85	83	80	84	79
Organisation & management	89	84	84	83	89	82	78	73	72	74	83	83	76	85	86	80	81	77
Learning resources	83	90	75	88	74	87	75	81	69	78	65	77	78	86	78	83	81	82
Personal development	75	81	69	81	71	78	59	69	62	68	55	65	52	77	64	71	65	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the UG SLSP dissertation modules were well received and have been rolled-out at TPG level. • On-line marking and feedback for Level 1 SLSP1022 Sociological Thinking module improved your ability to use feedback. • Following the review of current timetabled hours and module structure, increased contact time at Level allowed you greater access to research staff in the School and encouraged your development as 'early career' researchers. • We continue to work with you on our 'Partnership in Action' strategy to take forward student/school led initiatives.
Achievements in 2012-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved assessment and feedback to you by making greater use of on line assessment, marking and return of feedback • Your responses indicate that you appreciated the work carried out to better publicise career and personal development opportunities. • By more clearly expressing the role of your personal tutor you have felt better supported. Staff changes in the Taught Postgraduate Programme Team have had some impact on TPG satisfaction but we will work to improve this in 2013-14. • We have increased contact time for Level 2 students in core modules with particular emphasis on research methods to help write your dissertations at Level 3. • Following recruitment of our Student Placement Officer the number of students taking up work placement opportunities has increased by 50% for 2013/14.

<p>Main actions for 2013-14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TPG Programme Team will meet to look in-depth at survey responses and discuss options and initiatives to improve scores. • Meetings of all UG programme and Level directors will look at survey responses and discuss options and initiatives to improve scores. • The ESSL Personal Development week in March 2014 will impact all levels of students in relation to employability and personal development. • Development of a School Partnership Award for students and staff – nominations for outstanding students and key staff, in line with LUU Partnership awards but delivered at a local level in conjunction with End of Year Party. • Management of the transition between School locations and return to Social Sciences Building to minimise impact on students' experience particularly at Level 3.
<p>Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with SSP Student Interns for Marketing & Communications; Careers and Employability and UG Recruitment; • Consideration by Student: Staff Forum 4 December 2013; • Discussion at Student Focus Groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UG (7th November 2013) ○ PG (December 2013)

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School: Sociology & Social Policy

Faculty: ESSL

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
<p>Overall satisfaction</p>	<p>We have an expectation that staff will reply to emails within two working days. Where staff are unavailable 'out of office' messages have been used and if open doors are cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances students have been notified promptly. Additionally we have created a number of 'generic' inboxes, eg SLSP-Timetable@leeds.ac.uk.</p> <p>The appointment of a Marketing & Communications Intern in 2013-14 will contribute to working with students on how best to communicate. Social media and focus groups will help with this.</p> <p>We have increased the number of dedicated JHs tutors to provide specialist guidance and advice to</p>	<p>FY students reported concerns in relation to the Politics element of their programme.</p> <p>Level 1 students highlighted both Semester 1 and semester 2 'skills modules' (SLSP1143 and SLSP1144) as useful.</p>	<p><i>The FY programme has been developed and 'strands' have been identified so students have a clearer vision of the programme. Additionally the tutor for the politics strand will conduct both lecture and tutorials to provide consistency.</i></p> <p><i>The modules have been further developed to build on existing student satisfaction and to streamline some elements of the modules.</i></p> <p><i>The Level 1 Strand 2: Research Skills within SLSP1145 module will provide continuity and development for students going in to Level 2 and undertaking the Research Methods module. In addition both modules embed within the curriculum the core programme threads, including ethics and responsibility and employability.</i></p>

	<p>students and to liaise with other Schools. Additionally one of the Schools interns is a JH student who will be looking at further developing 'integration' of JH students.</p> <p>We have continued to work in partnership with SocSoc to develop and co-host social opportunities in the School. The creation of the SSP Film Club and the UG intern for Marketing and Communications will continue to contribute to this.</p>		<p><i>Some ongoing initiatives within the School to uphold and improve the overall student experience include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SSP Film Club;</i> • <i>"SSP Student" social media hub (Twitter; Facebook; Pinterest) – created by students for students;</i> • <i>ESSL 'Find Out About ...' Employability week in March 2014;</i> • <i>School Partnership Awards;</i> • <i>Top Tips;</i> • <i>Staff and student 'Who's Who' video interviews;</i> • <i>"What is a 'personal tutor'?" email and guidance;</i> • <i>Extended induction events.</i>
Teaching	<p>The School offered space and time for peer discussion groups to students in 2012-13 and there was some take up from TPG students. This will be taken forward in 2013-14.</p> <p>We have established Programme Leaders across Levels in the School and they will look together at the School's programmes and module choices in a Programme Review. Students will be consulted on the suggestions that come from this group.</p> <p>Contact time at Level 2 has been increased to help students develop their research skills further with the aim of positively enhancing your skills and to benefit your future dissertation work. Impact will be assessed in 2013-14 surveys and through the Student: Staff Forum.</p>	<p>Student surveys across all levels highlighted the enthusiasm, positivity and helpfulness of tutors and Teaching Assistants within the School.</p> <p>Some issues with administration of dissertation preparation raised by Level 2 students.</p> <p>Perceived lack of contact time at Level 2 & 3 highlighted.</p>	<p><i>Development of School Partnership awards, in line with LUU Partnership Awards, to recognise key members of staff.</i></p> <p><i>Review and coordination of module by Dissertation Tutor during 2013/14.</i></p> <p><i>Implementation of increase in contact time at Level 2 begins in 2013/14 within the Research Methods module. We will work with students to demonstrate 'real' contact time available for use beyond timetabled hours.</i></p> <p><i>The School is undertaking a full programme development and review.</i></p> <p><i>"Optional extras" will be introduced at Level 3 during 2014/15 and in the current year additional sessions are being run at Level 3 via the dissertation modules.</i></p>
Assessment and feedback	<p>The Level 1 Social Science Skills module has helped students use feedback effectively to improve their learning. On-line marking pilots</p>	<p>Improvement in feedback scores at Level 1 following on from on-line marking initiative in core modules.</p>	<p><i>The School Teaching Education Committee will request volunteers from Level 2 to take up online feedback as it is likely that students who</i></p>

	<p>have also proved popular with students.</p> <p>Encouragement for you to use Open Doors to gain further insight and clarification into returned feedback continues.</p>	<p>Level 2 students indicated a lower satisfaction score (down 10).</p>	<p><i>experienced Level 1 online marking will want equivalent level of feedback at Level 2.</i></p> <p><i>The successful 'F Word' leaflets for improving student's ability to interpret and recognise feedback are an ongoing initiative.</i></p>
Academic support	<p>The School has increased JHs tutoring and liaison with co-teaching Schools. Specialist induction sessions for this cohort were increased.</p> <p>Your personal tutor remained the same from Level 1 to Level 2 to provide consistency and clearer mechanisms of support. Guidance on 'what a personal tutor is' has been sent to all incoming students.</p>	<p>Satisfaction scores at UG level increased on 'Academic Support' and we believe that the ongoing work in the School and the use of the term 'academic advisor' in 2012/13 contributed to this.</p> <p>Scores at TPG level dropped significantly.</p>	<p><i>Feedback from current student focus groups however was extremely positive in respect of the name 'Academic Advisor'. The School has returned to the term 'personal tutor' in line with University policy and will continue to work with students and staff to highlight the efficacy of the personal tutoring system.</i></p> <p><i>The School has now established a new TPG team bringing together all the MA programmes providing a more cohesive experience for students and helping to establish a community.</i></p> <p><i>A review has already taken place in 2013/14 and the Student Experience Manager will invite TPG students to an informal focus group to discuss any issues that can be addressed quickly in Semester 2.</i></p>
Organisation and management	<p>From January 2013 the support staff within the School moved over to the Student Education Service. Further co-ordination and streamlining of processes will facilitate better communication and management of School functions to both staff and students.</p>	<p>Scores in relation to organisation and management in the School increased in the 2012-13 survey.</p>	<p><i>The School will continue to work with the Faculty and the University to review the Student Education Service structure with an aim to maintain and improve the management of the organisation of all programmes within current University procedures and policies.</i></p>
Learning resources	<p>The School has continued to work with the library to ensure readings are digitised where possible.</p> <p>Although proposals were put forward to the School Management Team for coordination and synchronisation of learning resources (module handbooks, lecture slides) during the Summer of 2013, it was not possible to take these forward</p>	<p>Learning resource remain a concern for students, particularly on modules where there are large numbers registered.</p>	<p><i>All module convenors have been reminded about the digitalisation of resources and to make these widely available where possible.</i></p> <p><i>All staff will continue to be encouraged to engage with blended learning.</i></p>

	due to limits in the Student Education Service staffing.		
Personal development	<p>The Level 1 Skills for Today and Tomorrow module helped students to develop personally by incorporating research and critical thinking skills in to the module. You were encouraged to look at how these skills can help you both during your degree and within future careers.</p> <p>The recruitment of a dedicated Student Placement Officer who works with your Student Experience Manager and your Careers Advisor, has contributed to the increase in the number of you taking up work placements during year 3 (an increase of 50% from 2012/13 to 2013/14).</p> <p>We have advertised and successfully recruited 4 student interns (3 within the School and 1 at Faculty) to consider Marketing; Careers; Recruitment and Personal Development. These are now in place and taking forward projects for 2013/14.</p> <p>We have recruited a new Careers & Employability Intern to work in partnership with the School and yourselves to increase awareness of existing opportunities to develop your employability and transferable skills.</p> <p>CIRCLE worked with the charity Carers Leeds to create 2 ongoing voluntary placements in Leeds city centre to offer you the opportunity to further develop research skills.</p>	<p>Despite continued efforts and initiatives from the School and the Careers Service, personal development remains low scoring on the surveys. Schemes and ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted lecture slides with employability information and events; • Coordination of the work placement and study abroad opportunities; • Graduation questionnaires asking graduates about the stage of their career-readiness; • CV Builder sessions; • Interview techniques; • Career centre sessions for social science students; • Employability focus groups with students; • Employability internship; • Careers Centre 'mystery shop'. 	<p><i>New in-School opportunities in the form of internships, research centre interns and Student Ambassador roles will improve personal development opportunities for students.</i></p> <p><i>The Employability Student Intern recruited in 2013/14 will work with students to see what areas they still require help with.</i></p> <p><i>The ESSL Careers Week, scheduled for March 2014, will assist students who are still unsure about where to begin with careers guidance and employability options.</i></p> <p><i>Statistics from the registration survey on students' stage of 'readiness' for careers engagement will be used to target more effectively opportunities already available.</i></p> <p><i>The core programme thread of employability has been embedded into the curriculum within the Research Methods module at Level 2 where students are encouraged to conduct a practical exercise via the Careers Centre.</i></p> <p><i>The successful Graduation employability questionnaire will be carried out again and used to help recent graduates to make use of careers information.</i></p> <p><i>Students will be encouraged to recognise skills embedded in curriculum as contributing to their personal and professional development.</i></p>