

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

School: Civil Engineering

Faculty: Engineering

<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>	
	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni	School	Uni
Overall satisfaction	94	87	100	86	78	82	74	85	80	83	79	84	77	84	71	82	81	78
Teaching	90	90	95	88	78	85	73	84	75	83	72	83	80	85	75	84	80	81
Assessment & feedback	73	69	83	65	46	61	40	61	41	56	42	57	54	69	52	68	53	63
Academic support	90	80	91	77	74	74	63	72	62	68	61	68	74	80	71	79	70	76
Organisation & management	91	83	93	82	81	79	71	74	67	83	69	73	81	80	72	77	75	73
Learning resources	82	88	89	87	75	85	74	78	73	77	70	76	74	83	80	82	74	81
Personal development	89	81	89	78	75	76	65	68	63	65	65	63	63	71	69	70	64	68
Sector position	-	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>	<b>Improved communication between staff and students has continued; the school is seen as listening. Staff availability is greatly improved.. NSS ratings for assessment and feedback remain consistently above the national average.</b>
<b>Achievements in 2011-12</b>	<b>The school continues to perform well in the National Student Survey. External examiners have repeatedly commented on the quality of delivery, including the introduction of online allocation of research projects and online assessment, which has led to improved satisfaction and confidence in the school's assessment criteria. Staff recruitment has greatly reduced the student-staff ratio and brought all core teaching in-house, using external speakers for specialist teaching..</b>
<b>Main actions for 2012-13</b>	<b>The school hopes to increase its footprint by building a sixth floor, hopefully by the start of the 2013-2014 session. This will provide additional space for design work, relieve pressure on IT facilities and enable a more diverse range of teaching styles, e.g. small group discursive work. Signposting of feedback will be improved, promoting a plurality of feedback methods, in addition to written comments. This will be coupled with roll-out of assessment proformas for all coursework and measures such as making available examples of good and poor coursework to students. More formative assessment and a move towards equalising quantities of summative assessment across modules.</b>

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Aspect	Progress with actions in response to 2010-11 feedback and indication of impact	Issues raised in 2011-12 feedback	Planned response in 2012-13
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	<p>The introduction of more regular staff-student forums last year has continued, and communication has improved over recent years.</p> <p>A number of staff have been appointed, reducing the student-staff ratio and bringing all core teaching in-house.</p> <p>Similarly, whilst not showing immediate results, work has continued in planning for an extension of the school's footprint. Approval has been obtained from the University to proceed with the extension.</p> <p>Efforts have continued to improve student feedback, both by increasing its quality, but also by signposting "non-written" feedback where appropriate.</p>	<p>The NSS survey results were very pleasing; reflecting the growing confidence of our students as they progress through their course..</p> <p>However, there are recurrent themes occurring in all surveys;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of availability of IT facilities.</li> <li>• Lack of detailed comments given as feedback</li> <li>• Variability in assessment and expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has plans to increase its footprint through the construction of a sixth floor; hopefully in place by summer 2013. This will relieve pressure on open-plan teaching spaces, freeing up IT facilities.</li> <li>• Software provision has been improved, together with better communication of its availability across campus and via the "desktop anywhere" provision. Printing facilities are also to be made available to Arch Eng students for their level 3 and 4 projects.</li> <li>• Module changes will be encouraged in December 2012 to harmonise assessment loads across modules.</li> <li>• Staff will be encouraged to make available examples of good and poor coursework, plus annotated scripts where appropriate, e.g. using the review function in word to highlight common mistakes in dissertation drafts.</li> <li>• Discussions with students revealed that they liked to see a link between research and teaching. Therefore, "bringing research into the classroom" is to be encouraged.</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching</b>	<p>A number of academic staff were appointed, together with two graduate assistants. There were some delays in appointing lecturers in structures, but this was achieved by the end of the year.</p>	<p>The enthusiasm of many staff was recognised. However, there was criticism of external lecturers and of occasional lapses in communication when modules were shared.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues surrounding external lecturers have been addressed with the appointment of three lecturers and a senior teaching fellow. This should also address some issues regarding communication, although staff (especially module leaders) will be reminded of the need to communicate with staff as well as with students.</li> <li>• The value of enthusiasm has been stressed to staff during teaching sessions.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment and feedback</b>	<p>In the NSS we continue to perform well, with satisfaction significantly above national averages, (8<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> within Russell Group institutions). This is not the case with UGPS results, where we have underperformed.</p> <p>Online assessment of individual research projects has been introduced to improve consistency and transparency of project marking. This has also ensured that all dissertations are marked in strict accordance with the school's assessment criteria, as a consequence written feedback which specifically targets these criteria is provided.</p> <p>In levels 1 and 2 progress has been slow. Efforts</p>	<p>Compared to other departments, particularly when considering our size, we perform very well.</p> <p>As students progress through their degree programmes they better value the feedback they receive. The downside to this is that level 1 students do not feel that they receive adequate feedback, or that a grade is sufficient. Level 1 students in particular repeatedly complained that they did not receive detailed feedback, (some saying that they received NO feedback). This appears to particularly be an issue for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback proformas have been introduced for each piece of assessment, detailing the assessment, relevant dates, learning objectives and details of feedback to be received ("signposting").</li> <li>• Expectations need to be managed better. Staff will be encouraged to stick to the coursework timetable, especially with regards to feedback dates. The proformas should help with this.</li> <li>• Annotated dissertation drafts to be released showing staff comments regarding common mistakes.</li> <li>• Working party on assessment of group work is to be set up.</li> <li>• Use of online tools for peer assessment of group work to be investigated.</li> <li>• More detailed mark schemes to be encouraged, particularly for written</li> </ul>

	<p>have continued to “signpost” feedback. We have also continued to look at rationalising assessment, with the aim of providing better feedback on fewer pieces of work.</p>	<p>written pieces of assessment.</p> <p>There are also issues regarding group assessment and variations in the amount of assessment across modules.</p>	<p>pieces of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posting of examples of annotated good and poor course work on the VLE to enable students to gauge their performance accordingly.</li> <li>• Graduate assistants are to work with staff to develop additional learning resources and feedback opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Academic support</b>	<p>We are proud that many of our students recognise the enthusiasm that many of our lecturers have for their subjects.</p> <p>Efforts have continued to ensure that staff communicate their availability to students.</p> <p>An introductory lecture was introduced for the final year project, together with greater use of the VLE to promote the need for student ownership of the project.</p> <p>Level 1 tutorials were made more focussed, with greater links to the Integrated Design Project.</p>	<p>Staff are seen as generally being available, but better signposting would be appreciated.</p> <p>A lack of guidance with large pieces of written work was highlighted. There is an element of overlap with comments regarding assessment and feedback here.</p> <p>Apparent lack of structure in Integrated Design Projects has been flagged across all levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annotated dissertations highlighting common mistakes are to be posted on the VLE.</li> <li>• Staff are being encouraged to show typical examples of good, bad and indifferent work, so that students can gauge for themselves what is expected of “divergent assessment”, such as IDP and dissertations.</li> <li>• Staff to be encouraged to indicate their availability. Students don't mind being told that a member of staff is unavailable, just so long as they know when they will be available.</li> <li>• Graduate assistants are to be used to assist with workshops.</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation and management</b>	<p>Increased communication between staff and students has continued, with regular staff-student forums.</p> <p>Issues with changes of rooms appeared to have been minimised this year. Similarly, aside from one or two instances during bad weather, there appear to have been fewer cancelled lectures.</p>	<p>Students don't like “too many 9 o'clock starts”, and some complain about the number of apparent gaps in the timetable.</p> <p>Lack of communication between staff on shared modules was identified as a problem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to be encouraged to indicate when they are available to students.</li> <li>• Better communication to be encouraged between staff when sharing modules.</li> <li>• Promotion of independent learning and use of faculty study zones during “free periods”.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning resources</b>	<p>There remains criticism of the availability of IT facilities available within the school. This has traditionally been addressed by making software available across campus, plus promotion of the MSc study room to final year MEng students.</p> <p>There has been more communication of the location of campus software availability, but the strong sense of community within the school makes students reluctant to travel across campus to access facilities.</p> <p>Work has continued in planning for a sixth floor extension. This will hopefully be in place by the end of the next academic year.</p>	<p>Whilst the IT facilities are often seen as adequate, the demand on open-plan learning spaces means that these facilities are not always available. This has been a repeated criticism.</p> <p>A lack of printing facilities for third and fourth year Architectural Engineering students was raised both within surveys and at staff-student forums.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The planned construction of a sixth floor on the school will help, but this is a long-term solution.</li> <li>• Signposting of “desktop anywhere” and software availability in clusters.</li> <li>• Level 5 computer suite availability, plus contact details, to be displayed outside the rooms each week.</li> <li>• Provision of A1 printing capabilities for third and fourth year Architectural Engineering students.</li> <li>• Feasibility of providing technical software support to be investigated.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal development</b>	<p>We are still well regarded in this respect, as such many efforts have concentrated on other aspects. LeedsforLife is used for monitoring student development over their programme.</p>	<p>There have been some negative comments regarding a lack of development of softer skills within the curriculum. This was more pronounced from lower levels, i.e. 1 and 2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff changes in level 1 and re-vamp of CIVE1706, with emphasis on skills development being brought into weekly personal tutorials.</li> <li>• Weekly employability sessions introduced for each year across the faculty.</li> <li>• Module descriptors now include sections on ‘Global and Cultural Insight’ ‘Employability’ and ‘Ethics and Responsibility’ in line with university threads.</li> </ul>