

ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE: SESSION 2011-12

School: Mechanical Engineering

Faculty: Engineering

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	91	86	85	82	90	84	78	83	78	84	71	82	89	82	88	78	46	80
Teaching	85	88	84	85	87	86	79	83	69	83	68	82	89	84	95	81	57	81
Assessment & feedback	73	65	61	61	56	61	57	56	47	57	44	54	75	68	82	63	52	62
Academic support	84	77	75	74	74	75	63	68	62	68	56	66	82	79	84	76	57	76
Organisation & management	84	82	73	79	62	79	73	83	73	73	68	70	84	77	82	73	49	75
Learning resources	88	87	77	85	84	86	74	77	67	76	67	77	90	82	88	81	71	82
Personal development	84	78	85	76	85	78	70	65	59	63	59	62	76	70	82	68	55	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	<p>L&T priorities, as identified by the Programme Executive Committee’s list of 4 “Non-negotiables” continue to help prioritise and focus staff effort on our school’s priorities. They continue to be enforced by the DoSE and HoS where necessary, though non compliance is now very rare.</p> <p>A significant redesign of our activities in years 1 and 2 is now firmly embedded within our engineering curriculum and continues to be adopted and broadened within the school. Funded by an ADF bid it has seen a significant amount of practical “problem based” learning introduced. It has led to an improved curriculum, and greater engagement with a key industrial partner.</p> <p>The appointment of a director of PG studies coupled with the assignment of personal tutors, compulsory PDP tutorials and weekly project meetings at level 5 continues to impact very positively on the PPES (compare 2008-09 to 2009-10 and 11 data above).</p>
Achievements in 2010-11	<p>In the NSS, the school is proud that in all categories (with the exception of “Teaching”) we have improved and our overall score of 91% is our best ever. Though our score for “Assessment and Feedback” remains lower than other categories it continues to show significant year on year improvement. Compared to our competitor Russell Group HEIs (Mechanical, Production & Manufacturing Engineering) we are now ranked No.1 for “Assessment and feedback”, No.2 for “Academic support”, No.3 for “Teaching” and No.4 for both “Learning resources” and “Personal development”. Our position for “Aerospace Engineering”, to which we also contribute, is considerably stronger, with Leeds being ranked 1st in all but 3 categories.</p>

	<p>In the UPES we are pleased to see that significant improvement is evident in many categories for example “Teaching”, “Assessment and feedback”, “Learning resources” and “Personal development”, no category scores have deteriorated. We are convinced the introduction of new “hands on”, “problem based” activities into the curriculum is one of the reasons for these improvements.</p> <p>In 2010-11 our Taught postgraduate student numbers increased significantly. We are delighted that even with a significantly higher load on staff, “Overall satisfaction” improved slightly. We recognise however that in some categories the additional load of extra students perhaps resulted in our scores being lower than we would have hoped.</p>
<p>Main actions for 2011-12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Theme Team (a small working group of academics with a particular interest in a specific area), focussed on improving feedback, will be created with the aim of continuing to deliver improvements in “Assessment and feedback”. • A new mechanism for managing, coordinating and communicating deadlines (both submission and feedback) will be implemented with the aim of improving our scores in “Organisation and management”. • We will better coordinate industry engagement through the appointment of a director of external affairs. • Refurbishment of key teaching areas such as the dynamics and control lab and the thermodynamics lab will be undertaken to improve our Learning resources. • We will improve the prototyping area facilities to improve our ability to deliver more “hands on”, “problem based” activities. • New lab equipment for teaching thermodynamics will be commissioned to replace aging and obsolete equipment and allow better links with new modules being developed in this area. • We will significantly change the way in which we deliver the teaching of electronics, introducing more “hands on”, “problem based” work at levels1 and 2. • We will develop new software engineering teaching material at level 1, linking it with new “hands on”, “problem based” activities. • Mechanisms for improving the availability of information and teaching support for key software will be delivered.

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

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Faculty: Engineering

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>We have implemented a number of events which encourage staff and students to engage with each other more frequently. This has improved communication and given a greater sense of community.</p> <p>A review of our new hands-on Design and Manufacture activities has been undertaken, showing it to have been extremely successful.</p>	<p>The school is proud to have improved our overall score in the NSS to 91%, our best score ever. In the UPES we are pleased to see that like last year, in all categories, we have either improved, or at worst, remained the same and significant improvement is evident in many categories. This year, for the first time ever, we have scores above the university average in 2 of the categories. In 2010-11 our taught postgraduate student numbers increased significantly. We are delighted that even with a significantly higher load on staff, "Overall satisfaction" improved slightly and our scores remain above the university average in all categories. By far the most prevalent negative theme within the written comments is the desire for the school to manage better its spread of deadlines for coursework submission.</p>	<p>The Staff Student Forum (SSF) is very active and is focussed on helping us deliver year on year improvements. We will examine the possibility of allocating an annual budget that the SSF can bid for money from to deliver change it feels will best improve the student experience.</p> <p>We will look at mechanisms to enable greater input from students and student reps in both the allocation of deadlines and the monitoring of the delivery of feedback from staff.</p>
Teaching	<p>New hands-on teaching activities were implemented in all our engineering programmes at level 2 and at level 1</p> <p>We have continued to promote our school's prize for "inspirational learning and teaching" In 2010-11 it was awarded to two members of staff.</p> <p>We have changed the way in which we review and evaluate our modules. This has made it easier to link module evaluation to programme surveys.</p>	<p>There have been improvements in this category in both the NSS and UPES and despite a small decrease in our PPES results, these too remain above the university average. Compared to our competitor Russell Group HEIs (Mechanical, Production & Manufacturing Engineering) we are now ranked No.2 in this category. An ADF project to introduce more "hands-on", "experiential" learning at level 2 has we believe had dramatic effects. In all 4 questions in this category a significant improvement has been seen. Numerous references relating to this were evident in the comments made by students in the UPES</p>	<p>We will significantly change the way in which we deliver the teaching of electronics, within product design, introducing more hands-on and project based work at levels1 and 2.</p> <p>We will develop new software engineering teaching material at level 1, linking it with new "hands on", "problem based" activities.</p>
Assessment and feedback	<p>A focus on ensuring feedback is timely via one of our school's non-negotiables has seen our performance in the question "Feedback on my work has been prompt" increase by 24</p>	<p>Though our score for "Assessment and Feedback" remains lower than other categories it continues to show significant year on year improvement. Compared to the Russell Group we are now ranked No.1 in this category. In the breakdown of questions,</p>	<p>A new Theme Team (a small working group of academics with a particular interest in a specific area), focussed on improving feedback, will be created with the aim of continuing to deliver improvements in this area. The team will identify</p>

	percentage points in the NSS from 46% to 70%.	it is still those relating to “feedback” rather than “assessment” where we perform worse.	and promote good practice and showcase innovative approaches.
Academic support	Where possible tutor groups now have approximately equal numbers of students from the same programme of study. Team working within Design and Manufacture modules is now focussed around tutor groups enabling better support from tutors in small groups.	In this category our NSS data show improvement across all questions and compared to the Russell Group we are now ranked No.2. At level 1 and 2 the question “Good advice was available when needed to make module choices” is a persistent problem, as there are, in general, no module choices. This results in the category “Neither agree nor disagree” being selected by the majority of our students with obvious consequences. In the PPES our results remain above the university average	Mechanisms for improving the availability of information and teaching support for key software will be developed and delivered.
Organisation and management	We have continued to simplify our teaching provision and have worked hard to ensure stability in our timetable by encouraging staff to only make changes if absolutely vital. Once published to students changes to the timetable can only be made with the consent of the DoSE.	In this category our NSS data show significant improvement across all questions and our scores are above the university average, however compared to our competitor Russell Group we need to improve further. In the UPES and PPES this area also remains one in which we feel we can improve.	A new mechanism for managing, coordinating and communicating deadlines (both submission and feedback) will be implemented with the aim of improving our scores in this category. We are also investigating ways of giving more power to the SSF to veto requests from staff to allow changes to the teaching timetable.
Learning resources	We made a significant number of changes in this area including; using a combined laboratory budgets to improve laboratory infrastructure and equipment, using the VLE to support all our modules, significantly increasing the number of PC’s supporting specialised software, significantly changing the way we teach all 1 st year CAD, improving the availability of key software, through the use of extended licence agreements and continuing to improve computing facilities within laboratories where appropriate.	In this category the school has seen significant improvement across all surveys. This has been achieved despite our introduction of more “hands-on” activities that have placed increased demands on our school’s UG learning resources and an increase in out PGT numbers. Compared to the Russell Group we are now ranked 4 th in this category. If we are to continue to be successful in the implementation of our more “hands-on” approach and make our school distinctive in this respect, we need to continue to improve our school’s learning facilities.	Refurbishment of key teaching areas such as the dynamics and control lab and the thermodynamics lab will be undertaken to improve our Learning resources We will improve the prototyping area facilities to improve our ability to deliver more hands-on problem based activities New lab equipment for teaching thermodynamics will be commissioned to replace aging and obsolete equipment and allow better links with new modules being developed in this area.
Personal development	We established a LabVIEW academy, to give students the option to improving their personal development, through the acquisitions of core skills offering the opportunity for students to sit an externally accredited examination. Leeds for Life is now be used for all PDP personal tutorials across all years and all programmes, entirely replacing our own PDP.	This is the only category in which our NSS results showed a (small, -1%) deterioration, despite this we remain above the university average and are ranked 4 th for this category amongst the Russell Group. Again we believe our recent ADF project is responsible for the significant improvement seen in this category at Level 2 in the UPES.	We will better coordinate industry engagement through the appointment of a director of external affairs to improve our student’s preparation for employment.