

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

Faculty of Environment: School of Earth and Environment

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	89	87	89	87	90	86	85	85	87	85	86	83	83	87	90	84	80	82
Teaching	90	89	89	90	90	88	81	85	85	84	83	83	86	87	87	85	79	84
Assessment & feedback	60	71	68	69	68	65	51	59	55	61	52	56	59	75	60	69	49	68
Academic support	85	81	84	80	82	77	72	72	72	72	73	68	80	85	86	80	73	79
Organisation & management	83	84	81	83	85	82	69	73	68	74	64	83	79	85	82	80	70	77
Learning resources	86	90	89	88	89	87	79	81	75	78	75	77	89	86	90	83	81	82
Personal development	80	81	81	81	85	78	64	69	64	68	64	65	72	77	69	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"> Return Not Retain pilot leading to more annotated feedback on work but has extended return time in some cases. Student societies and chapters events funded by SEF (Student Experience Fund) have enhanced opportunities for students by running employability events, field visits and guest speakers Employability is better embedded in programmes and supported through cross-school and bespoke career events and established and well-used communication tools (e.g. LinkedIn group, SEE Career News),
Achievements in 2012-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Away day for staff to generate ideas for enhancement of teaching and opportunities to improve and share good practice across the School. Student experience investments embedded in school activities to enhance student engagement and academic community across the School, including students funded to present at British Conference of Undergraduate Research and attend other conferences; the SEE Slam event ('inspirational students, amazing experiences') and nurtured the development of a new cross-school student chapter (Geology for Global Development) Establishment of Programme Delivery Teams the core delivery mechanism for teaching enhancement Re-accreditation of Geological Sciences and applied for accreditation by IEMA of selected undergraduate and postgraduate sustainability programmes Audit of the range of ways in which the VLE is being used by teaching staff

Main actions for 2013-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater dissemination of good practice that is targeted at particular programme level issues and is based on VLE and blended learning audits through Programme Delivery Team and school events with efforts to enhance consistency • Share good practice in e-assessment to enhance feedback content and return times and explore student views on the most useful forms of feedback • Use assessment maps to start conversations about appropriate assessment formats and balance and link to development of skills • Increased experience budget to enable more students to participate in conferences and support for a new student-led research group
Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan	<p>Actions from the previous year's Action Plan with an update on progress were discussed at the undergraduate SSF on 22/10/2013 in the light of the NSS at programme level. Participants were organised into small groups in which they reviewed the NSS scores at programme, were asked if they agreed with the NSS assessment; they also reviewed items from the 2011-12 Action plan and were asked if we had done the right things and if they had further recommendations. These were incorporated into a draft of this document. At the SSF of 21 November 2013, students were asked to comment on the draft Action Plan and the 3 Student Education Objectives. At the postgraduate SSF, data from the PGT programme surveys were discussed.</p>

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School: Earth and Environment **Faculty:** Environment

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
Overall satisfaction	<p>We ran the "Return, not Retain" project, providing you with a feedback portfolios & returning all coursework</p> <p>Student experience and employability ambassadors have led innovative student-inspired events</p> <p>Students' participation in employability events enhanced, with great feedback from employer participants on students' preparedness</p> <p>Several innovative teaching projects were funded by the School (School Teaching Enhancement Fund - STEF) to enhance your experience</p> <p><i>Overall satisfaction in the NSS was 89% which was the same as the previous year, but this hides variation between programmes. In the programme surveys for undergraduates (UG) this was 85 (down 1) and for taught postgraduates (TPG) 83 (down 7)</i></p>	<p>Overall, you gave us highly positive feedback on your experience. As with last year three highlights were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Enthusiastic, friendly & helpful lecturers. 2) Interesting, high quality teaching. 3) Excellent field trips. <p>Your top three areas for improvement were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) You felt that feedback was delayed too frequently 2) You felt that sometimes comments given in feedback were not very useful, particularly in helping you to improve your next piece of work. 3) You felt that there was too much variability between teaching staff in terms of feedback, classroom practice and, tutorial support 	<p>Thank you for all the positive feedback; we have sustained recent improvements in satisfaction, but are aware of where we can do better.</p> <p>We will continue to share good practice and innovations in teaching such as showcasing School Teaching Enhancement Fund (STEF) Projects: development of Apps, employability videos, workshops with NGOs, improved rock specimen collections and database projects and good practice in assessment and embed these activities into an ongoing process through the Teaching Enhancement Scheme.</p>
Teaching	<p>We held a Teaching Away Day for Staff to generate ideas for enhancement of teaching</p> <p>We have established Programme Delivery Teams as the core delivery mechanism for teaching enhancement</p> <p>There is greater use of learning technology to enhance classroom, lab and field teaching</p>	<p>Overall you were happy with teaching, with several positive comments on the enthusiasm of our teaching staff and their passion for their subject, though there were some notable exceptions highlighted</p> <p>You said that programmes could be more 'joined up' with better links between modules and less repetition</p> <p>You said that a level 2 fieldtrip was poorly organised</p>	<p>We are implementing a Teaching Enhancement Scheme in which all teaching staff are required to be involved and we will discuss individual performance in annual academic reviews.</p> <p>We are exploring potential for 'synoptic' learning and assessment</p> <p>A new member of staff is redeveloping the level 2 social</p>

	<p>Several classes have been recorded to aid student learning and lessons on how best to do this are being shared between colleagues</p> <p><i>Your rating for our teaching in the NSS was 90% (+1) & in the programme surveys was 81% (-4) for UG & 86 (-1) for TPG.</i></p>	<p>You said that field trip plans were not always communicated early enough</p> <p>Some of you really liked audio and video recording of lectures as this enhanced your learning</p>	<p>science fieldtrip, scoping a new location and linking it more clearly to the learning objectives</p> <p>We have asked programme delivery teams to look at field trips on a programme basis to ensure that they are co-ordinated and communicated more effectively.</p> <p>We have introduced a field trip embedded in the Introduction to Sustainability Module</p> <p>We will share best practice in recording lectures, including the promoting the technology to do so.</p>
Assessment and feedback	<p>We have reversed our improvements in feedback and assessment and so it is important that we review our strategy here.</p> <p>We ran the Return not Retain project for a second time, with improved communications to staff and students, but feedback is increasingly mixed with delays in return of work (partly due to the moderation mid-module to enable return).</p> <p>Reminders to staff about return times and good practice have been sent, but need to be more focused</p> <p><i>Your rating for our assessment & feedback in the NSS was 60% (8% down on last year) & in the programme surveys was 51% (-4) for UG & 59% (-1) for TPG.</i></p>	<p>You said you would like more consistent feedback; it was felt that some staff invest more time into providing feedback than others.</p> <p>You said that you would like annotations on work rather than cover sheet with tick boxes. Portfolios have rarely been used by students to facilitate learning</p> <p>Sometimes the return of marked work is delayed without explanation and too late to be useful for the next piece of work</p> <p>Some modules have a lot of assessment; deadline bunching is a lot better this year than in previous years and PGT students commended the responsiveness of SSO in ensuring limited overlaps</p> <p>Although many of you liked group work, you had some concerns about marking schemes</p>	<p>We will work with you to identify ways in which feedback can be made more useful and provide clearer guidance to staff on best practice and expectations</p> <p>We are exploring e-marking which will speed up the delivery of feedback and make it more easily available in vacation periods; we will explore alternatives to portfolios</p> <p>When it is likely to take longer than the university standard of 3 weeks in term time, clear explanations and date of return will be provided.</p> <p>We will use assessment maps to check we're testing the right things and to examine the volume and types of assessment. This is being rolled out to MSc courses.</p> <p>We will develop a new project to review group work in SEE to develop consistent guidelines on group assessment</p>
Academic support	<p>We now have a much better idea now of how each programme we contributes to employability and how to support this</p> <p>We have communicated to staff our Faculty expectations for academic staff engaged in learning and teaching delivery in induction and staff meetings.</p> <p><i>Your rating for our academic support in the NSS was 85 (+1), & in the programme surveys was 72% (same as last year) for UG & 80% (-6) for TPG</i></p>	<p>Some taught postgraduate students say staff have been difficult to contact</p> <p>Most of you appreciated the support you received for your dissertation from supervisors, but some of you identified inconsistent support.</p> <p>You identified some issues where programmes have had changes in leadership due to staff turnover leading to inconsistent support</p>	<p>We will remind teaching staff of their responsibilities to be available for students to consult on programme and project matters</p> <p>We have introduced a new system to ensure more consistent feedback and supervision for level 3 Geological Sciences mapping projects</p> <p>Our renewed focus on empowering programme leaders will help ensure greater continuity and consistency in academic support</p>
	We held an Away Day for programme leaders and key	A number of modules were discontinued at short notice	We will review pathways in our programmes to ensure

<p>Organisation and management</p>	<p>teaching staff focused on enhancing the experience of students which led to the formalisation of Programme Delivery Teams which has already enhanced communications between staff on teaching</p> <p>We have tried to design timetables so that class time is distributed more evenly</p> <p>We have developed a formal agreement with Geography on information sharing and co-ordinating field work for the Geography Geology Joint Honours</p> <p>We have streamlined L&T information in VLE organisations for staff and students</p> <p><i>Your rating for our organisation and management in the NSS was 83 (+2), & in the programme surveys was 69% (up 1) for UG & 79 (-3) for TPG</i></p>	<p>for students on the MEnv programme, leaving students unsure what modules they were able to enrol on, and with a smaller number of modules to choose from.</p> <p>MSc Sustainability students felt that the second semester was too short at 8 weeks and limited potential for deep engagement with the subject matter</p> <p>Students feel that their timetables are too busy, with few or even no breaks in the working day</p>	<p>they offer a suitable range of modules, in line with Discovery Themes where appropriate.</p> <p>For all sustainability modules [except those associated with the MSc Sustainability (Environmental Consultancy and Project Management) which requires a longer project period] will have a second semester longer than 8 weeks.</p> <p>We will continue to review timetables to ensure they are more balanced and will ask lecturers to include more 'mini breaks' in longer lectures to help students maintain their concentration levels.</p> <p>Most Programme Delivery Teams have identified staff as level or pathway leaders to enhance coherence across programmes.</p>
<p>Learning resources</p>	<p>We enabled UG finalists to access computing facilities for longer hours but there remain problems with access to School computing facilities for some cohorts</p> <p>We included an introduction to the VLE other core learning technologies in induction</p> <p><i>Your rating for our learning resources in the NSS was 86 (-3), & in the programme surveys was 79% (up 4) for UG & 89 (-1) for TPG</i></p>	<p>By and large PGT students were happy with the library and computing facilities provided, though some raised issues of software availability.</p> <p>UG students are concerned about the restricted access to the computing labs during the day, due to their use for teaching</p>	<p>We will continue to review the software available and ensure that students where necessary gain access to specialist software according to need</p> <p>We will explore means to enhance access to school computing facilities and will review timetabling to enhance availability in the day time. We will remind you of which computing facilities are available to whom and rules for their use</p>
<p>Personal development</p>	<p>We ran training sessions to refresh personal tutoring, including a new Leeds for Life briefing for staff</p> <p>Our student experience programme offers a variety of co-curricular events to enable students to take advantage of opportunities across the school, university and beyond</p> <p>We have reviewed all programmes to ensure that they benefit from employability activities, especially those with fewer embedded employability skills and bespoke sessions.</p> <p><i>Your rating for personal development in the NSS was 80% (-1) & in the programme surveys was 80% (same last year) for UG & 72 (+1) for TPG</i></p>	<p>PGT students are keen to have more support on skills development and careers guidance.</p> <p>Social science students noted the dearth of UG research internships relevant to their studies</p> <p>There is some inconsistency in personal tutoring – some are great, others less so</p> <p>We recognise that in some programmes there is a 'second year slump'</p> <p>The PGT surveys highlighted continued low scores for personal development in some programmes</p>	<p>We will ensure that PGT students learn of employability events and Step to Masters online resource include more pre-sessional material</p> <p>We will introduce School undergraduate research internships to supplement Faculty ones and we will increase the experience budget to enable more students to participate in conferences.</p> <p>We are promoting more consistent personal tutoring including staff training on the new functionality of LeedsforLife</p> <p>We are planning events to ensure that second year students are better welcomed back and supported</p> <p>We will support the PGT representatives in their 'Cake and Consultation' sessions to identify specific issues and potential solutions</p>

