

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

Faculty of Environment: School of Geography

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	86	87	88	87	90	86	79	85	86	85	84	83	94	87	93	84	82	82
Teaching	85	89	86	90	90	88	81	85	82	84	81	83	93	87	92	85	81	84
Assessment & feedback	65	71	63	69	58	65	46	59	57	61	47	56	82	75	77	69	59	68
Academic support	75	81	80	80	82	77	74	72	71	72	71	68	91	85	89	80	75	79
Organisation & management	86	84	89	83	91	82	64	73	77	74	82	83	90	85	93	80	82	77
Learning resources	88	90	91	88	89	87	82	81	75	78	80	77	85	86	80	83	79	82
Personal development	78	81	79	81	75	78	71	69	64	68	63	65	69	77	76	71	57	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"> • New BA/BSc Level 1 curriculums increased contact hours and small group teaching in a variety of formats. • Planned new Level 2 curriculum enhances skills training, and employability through a compulsory careers and employability module. • Increased Year in Industry provision and Level 3 work placement options, improved opportunities for career & personal development.
Achievements in 2012-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced new Level 2 BA and BSc curricula and planned the new Level 3 curricula. • We invested in the student experience via funding for new fieldtrips at all levels. • Formed an Industrial Advisory Board that meets annually to help us ensure that you have the skills that employers require. • We experimented with different ways to provide you with prompt and useful feedback (e.g. video feedback, generic feedback) • Planned new optional fieldtrips at level 3 to Mumbai and Miami. • Revised the 'geography organisation' area of the VLE to make this the key area where staff and students access information on teaching & assessment • Introduced an innovative fieldwork voucher system which gives BA students £500 to spend on level 2 or 3 fieldtrips. • Conducted a deadline mapping exercise to minimise UG deadline clashes.

<p>Main actions for 2013-14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall satisfaction: We will introduce our new L3 BA and BSc curricula, which will increase contact hours for L3 students. We will continue to work with Student Staff Forum to achieve an improvement in NSS and programme survey scores. Review BA Geography with Transport Planning curriculum. • Teaching: Develop a Teaching Enhancement Scheme initiative around 'blended learning' which will include encouraging the wider use of 'lecture capture'. Work with JH schools to ensure the smooth introduction of a compulsory final year project for all students in 2014/15. Devise a communication plan to explain the 'Broadening' initiative to staff and students. • Assessment & Feedback: Introduce assessment specific feedback criteria to enhance transparency in the assessment process. Introduce an e-submission system to minimise the imposition on your time and the financial burden of producing hard copies of assessed work. Raise awareness of the School's new COPA. Explore ways to improve assessment and feedback in Student Staff Forum and focus groups with students. • Academic Support: We will continue to employ numeracy and literacy fellows in response to positive feedback from you at Student Staff Forum. All staff will be encouraged to respond promptly to student emails, offer appointments to meet with students and publish office hours in response to your assessment of a key NSS failing. • Organisation & Management: Continue to make more consistent use of the VLE as a central place for information and communication. Introduce an online resource for recording deadline extensions that will be accessible to all staff to ensure fairness in the use of lateness penalties. Develop an online mitigating circumstances/deadline extension request form that will make this process easier for you. • Learning resources: Continue to investigate the potential of new learning technologies to support student learning in the classroom, practicals and the field. Explore ways in which the VLE can be used more effectively as a learning tool. Implement a standardised template for module handbooks to ensure you understand the learning objectives of your module and are clear about how the module is organised. • Personal development: Explore ways in which personal development can be enhanced through Student Staff Forum and focus groups with students. Review the effectiveness of the new compulsory careers module at Level 2 as a way to enhance employability skills. Explore the use of Leeds for Life meetings with TPGs.
<p>Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan</p>	<p>The qualitative data submitted by students as part of the surveys was scrutinised and helped inform the development of the draft plan. This was discussed at the Student:Staff Forum where feedback was sought from student representatives. A focus group was held with students prior to the submission of the final plan to FTSEC. The main areas of focus were personal development and assessment & feedback. As a living document, the Action Plan will continue to be provide a focus for discussion at future Student:Staff Forum meetings.</p>

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School: Geography

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
<p>Overall satisfaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to concerns that feedback was often not fast enough and lacked detail we held feedback workshops with all staff to think about what constitutes appropriate feedback (in terms of both quantity and quality). All staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, you gave us highly positive feedback on your experience, although overall satisfaction fell slightly from last year but is broadly in line with the University average. The major things that you highlighted as good were: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We plan to concentrate on 'Assessment & Feedback' and 'Personal Development' as outlined below as key means of increasing your overall satisfaction with our courses.

	<p>were reminded of the three week rule on returning feedback, with DSE/HoS following up on complaints of late feedback. Assessment and feedback scores have improved by 2 points in the NSS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact hours have been increased across the new curriculum, but especially at level 3. Academic support has improved by 3 marks in the programmes survey. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enthusiastic and helpful lecturers Great field trips Stimulating learning material Well organised School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific issues that you have raised for improvement were: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> You still felt that feedback was often not fast enough and lacked detail. You felt that deadlines often clashed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work with students to identify ways in which we can improve Assessment and Feedback Deadline mapping which took place at the end of 2012/13 should address the problem of bunching deadlines. In addition we are working with SEE to coordinate deadlines across the BSc Geography-Geology programme.
Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to concerns about the limited range of optional modules at Level 3, the new BA curriculum offers 20% more optional modules for L3 students. You indicated that you would like more contact time, particularly at Level 3. Contact time for students has been increased across all years in the new curriculum. Returning students from year abroad/in industry have commented in Student Staff forum and focus groups how much better the new Level 3 is in terms of contact time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general you acknowledged that most staff were enthusiastic and motivating and that tutorials were valuable for developing core skills (e.g. essay writing) Some of you raised concerns that some of the core modules in the BA and BSc curriculum were not as stimulating as they could be. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module leaders of relevant core modules have received your feedback and are looking at ways to refresh the course content and/or revise the teaching team to allow for different material to be incorporated within core modules.
Assessment and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You commented on the bunching of assessment deadlines, particularly at the end of each semester. Deadline mapping and the ongoing rollout of the new curriculum should lessen this problem. Assessment and feedback improved in the 2012-13 NSS scores but further improvements need to be made. You noted that feedback on your work can still take too long and our comments did not always help you understand how to improve your work. We held workshops with all academic staff to think about what constitutes appropriate feedback. We introduced specific marking criteria for different types of assessment to aid transparency of the marking process and to enable you to put your feedback into a broader context. We stressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were still concerns about clashing deadlines. You note that feedback on your work can still take too long and our comments are not always as detailed/useful as they could be. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above (overall satisfaction) for response to clashing deadlines. We will be employing a member of staff from the beginning of 2014 who will be dedicated to administering marks and feedback. This will allow the School to monitor the length of time it takes staff to return work and the quantity of feedback given, and to take action where needed. You are also being encouraged at Student Staff Forum to identify staff who are not providing speedy and effective feedback so that action can be taken more quickly.

	to staff the need to return marks within 3 weeks of the assessment deadline.		
Academic support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to feelings that we could do more to support you in your dissertation research, we are emphasising the support that our literacy and numeracy fellows can offer. In addition, the numeracy fellow is now participating in a more structured range of teaching activities focused around core needs identified by you. Increased contact time in the new curriculum also allows you more opportunities to discuss your dissertation work with a broader range of staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are concerns that staff are not answering emails quickly enough and are not contactable outside of the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to remind staff about the need to have (and publicise) their office hours. Office hours will be included as mandatory information in the new module handbook template. We are reminding students through Student Staff Forum to email or go to see staff if they feel that they need additional support in their studies. Numeracy and Literary fellows will introduce themselves to you at start of year meetings and explain the services they offer.
Organisation and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme leaders in the Schools of Geography and Earth & Environment now communicate more effectively about the BSc Geography-Geology degree. A memorandum of understanding has been drawn up and signed between the two Schools, which ensures that the Geography-Geology programme is more effectively organised and administered. Deadline mapping has been introduced to ensure that assessment deadlines are less bunched. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You commented that some modules could be better organised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should be improved by the implementation of a standardised template for module handbooks which will ensure that all modules have a handbook, which displays all key information in a clear fashion. We will revise some modules which were identified as being particularly problematic (e.g. the careers module) to make their organisation more effective and clear.
Learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure on library resources is being relieved by staff using the online reading list service to ensure that resources are available in plentiful supply at the beginning of the module. Improved distribution of deadlines has relieved short-term pressure on resources. Availability of computing resources (especially for TPG students) has been a key consideration in the design/kitting out of the new refurbished premises that the School will be moving to in December 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students commented that some staff had poor quality of handwriting, which made feedback difficult to read. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will be reminding staff about the importance of providing legible feedback. We will be holding workshops to enable staff to have the option to use gradebook.
Personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to feelings that you had not developed your personal and employability skills to their full potential while at University, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPG students feel that they were not receiving sufficient advice on employability and personal development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School will review the way in which we tackle issues of employability and personal development with TPG students. In particular,

	<p>we now have a section in the new module handbook template that specifically outlines the transferrable skills and knowledges that you will develop in each module and how this might be of benefit to future employers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have conducted a review of the careers module and we are working closely with the careers service to try and address issues with the feedback and support that you receive from them on the careers module.		<p>we will consider how Leeds for Life might be used to improve personal development amongst taught postgraduate students.</p>
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