

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

**Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences
School of Chemistry**

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	87	87	88	86	89	85	83	85	85	83	83	87	71	84	64	82
Teaching	82	89	85	90	85	88	86	85	82	84	82	83	86	87	90	85	85	84
Assessment & feedback	68	71	77	69	66	65	69	59	64	61	65	56	51	75	69	69	69	68
Academic support	79	81	80	80	80	77	74	72	69	72	70	68	94	85	81	80	88	79
Organisation & management	85	84	76	83	80	82	77	73	74	74	70	83	86	85	67	80	75	77
Learning resources	95	90	90	88	92	87	87	81	85	78	85	77	89	86	86	83	82	82
Personal development	78	81	75	81	77	78	68	69	56	68	66	65	77	77	68	71	75	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"> - Recent investment in laboratory equipment has reduced waiting times and access to specialised equipment - There is an improved timetable for Joint Honours students - We are providing feedback to students after Semester 1 examinations - We successfully introduced a study week in Week 7, Semester 1
Achievements in 2012-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open-ended investigations were successfully introduced in Year 3 practical classes and have been well received by students - We introduced employability modules at Levels 1 and 2 to enhance skills based activities and students' personal development - We introduced a topics module at Level 5M bringing current research into the undergraduate curriculum - We invested in laboratory equipment and technical support to enhance the student experience

Main actions for 2013-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define minimum expectations for the provision of feedback to students - Rationalise study skills at Level 1 - New Enterprise module at Level 3 and new module on Ethics and Society - Development of new Topics Modules at Level 5 for 2014/15
Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan	<p>A focus group that consisted of a subset of the Student Staff Forum was held to review last year's action plan, discuss issues raised, and make recommendations for the 2013/14 Action Plan. The subsequent action plan was circulated to the whole SSF and STSEC membership for comment and adoption. The first draft of the Action Plan was wholly led by what students thought the priorities should be, and the focus group was conducted by someone independent from the school.</p>

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	School:	Faculty:	
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>The Introduction of a "consolidation week" in week 7 of semester one has been very well received by students and will continue.</p>	<p>Students feel that it is their choice as to whether or not they turn up for lectures and other scheduled learning sessions. They have paid for the service, and should have the choice as to how they access the materials.</p>	<p>Staff will work with students to ensure that they see the benefits of being present in lectures. We will continue to work through the Student:Staff Forum to ensure that lectures have additional value besides the materials that are available through the VLE.</p> <p>There is also a new and ongoing initiative to meet regularly with a wide range of students on an informal (tutor group) basis.</p> <p>Peer Assisted Learning is being introduced in 2013/14. This should help with enhancing the sense of community and also addressing attitudes to learning. We will review the effectiveness of this by the end of 2013/14.</p>
Teaching	<p>A series of open-ended investigations that have been introduced into the Level 3 laboratories have been well received by students (even though students initially found them challenging).</p>	<p>Students would like better parity between assessments of the different options in the level 4 Advanced Topics module.</p>	<p>The consistency in workload between the various assessments in the Advanced Topics module will be considered.</p>

	Additional examples classes in Organic and Inorganic chemistry, in response to student feedback, were well received.	Some students find the open ended labs very challenging and stressful. Some students don't find some lectures very interesting. Relating the fundamental chemistry to applications would make the subject more engaging.	Staff will explain the value of the approach being taken, in terms of the skills developed, in open ended investigations via direct feedback to students on their project work. Through the TES staff will be encouraged to refresh lecture materials on a regular basis.
Assessment and feedback	All students appreciate the one-to-one feedback discussions on marking for the laboratory practicals. Feedback "stickers" are being used for all marked work, to emphasise that feedback is being given.	There is inconsistency in the apparent willingness of academic tutors to give feedback to students. Some students do not feel confident in asking for feedback from their tutors. <i>Inconsistent feedback available for PGT students</i>	A new feedback form was introduced and trialled for Year 2 tutorials. This will be rolled out to Year 1 students in Semester 2. The feedback template provides the minimum and consistent level of feedback required from tutors. <i>Addendum post TSEB Feedback: After the first semester exam results have been released we will conduct a detailed survey on the PGT students' experiences of feedback and assessment during the past semester so that a meaningful action plan can be implemented. All students will be given detailed criteria for how their projects will be assessed and return of feedback on initial reports will be monitored to ensure that it is given in a timely fashion.</i>
Academic support	Students feel that they have good support from their tutors and other lecturers when making study choices. However, the module choices are very limited due to accreditation requirements.	Students have different perspectives on what "good teaching" should be at university. Some students don't accept that there are many different styles of teaching at University.	Through PAL mentors, discussions will be held on the different styles of teaching used, and how students can make the most of all of their contact time. The Study Skills Personal Tutor materials have been refreshed for 2013-14.
Organisation and management	The teaching laboratories are very well managed and run smoothly. Students are coping well with the demands of the year in industry option. The level of work required has been emphasised from the outset.	There are problems with timetable clashes for joint honours programmes.	Continual improvements are being made to the joint honours programmes and timetabling issues. The issues regarding timetabling for JH programmes will be made clear from the application stage.
Learning resources	Staff are making good use of the VLE and students are happy with the way in which materials are made available.	Lectures need to be "value-added" compared to the material in the VLE. Otherwise some students don't always feel the need to attend.	Staff will continue to make good use of the VLE.

<p>Personal development</p>	<p>The “Careers for Chemists” module has been improved, with a much greater focus on chemistry related careers.</p> <p>The School held a successful “speed-networking” event for students with the Industrial Advisory Board.</p>	<p>Students don’t see the relevance of the new CHEM1600 module. They just want to do “pure chemistry” and some are disinterested in the bigger picture.</p> <p>Students only want to learn something if they are going to be examined on it.</p> <p>Chemsoc want to organise careers events.</p>	<p>Members of the Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) are especially keen to continue their involvement with the course and student development. The School, and the IAB, will work with Chemsoc on organising a series of careers events.</p> <p>PAL Mentors will help 1st year students to understand the relevance of the skills and materials being taught in CHEM1000. CHEM1600 has been redesigned and integrated into the mainstream Semester 1 course CHEM1000.</p> <p>The School, together with the IAB will consider other motivations/incentives for students to work on their personal development.</p>
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