

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

**Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences  
School of Physics and Astronomy**

<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>2012-13</b>		<b>2011-12</b>		<b>2010-11</b>		<b>2012-13</b>		<b>2011-12</b>		<b>2010-11</b>		<b>2012-13</b>		<b>2011-12</b>		<b>2010-11</b>	
	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Uni</b>
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	96	87	84	87	94	86	86	85	86	85	85	83	100	87	n/r	84	100	82
<b>Teaching</b>	94	89	86	90	90	88	88	85	89	84	87	83	100	87	n/r	85	78	84
<b>Assessment &amp; feedback</b>	80	71	62	69	78	65	46	59	48	61	51	56	100	75	n/r	69	27	68
<b>Academic support</b>	87	81	81	80	88	77	72	72	71	72	68	68	100	85	n/r	80	100	79
<b>Organisation &amp; management</b>	86	84	74	83	90	82	69	73	72	74	73	83	67	85	n/r	80	44	77
<b>Learning resources</b>	96	90	94	88	95	87	83	81	79	78	79	77	100	86	n/r	83	89	82
<b>Personal development</b>	90	81	83	81	84	78	60	69	65	68	61	65	100	77	n/r	71	67	70
<b>Sector position</b>	8/38	57/147	31/38	51/150	10/34	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)

<b>Impact of 2011-12 actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high (96%) overall score for this round of NSS has placed the school 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Russell Group and 8<sup>th</sup> out of 38 Physics departments nationally, and can be attributed to the hard work and partnership between students and staff.</li> <li>All categories of NSS have received increased scores with Assessment and Feedback showing a dramatic improvement.</li> <li>The Student Support Office is now well staffed with enthusiastic and engaging staff and students feel well supported in all activities and processes.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements in 2012-13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Stakeholder Advisory Board has been established and is steadily expanding its remit for the benefit of student and staff.</li> <li>Peer Assisted learning (PAL) groups have been established, which are mutually beneficial for 1<sup>st</sup> year students and mentors.</li> <li>Our student subject society (PHYSOC) has grown in capability and is enhancing the student experience in many ways.</li> <li>Level 2 academic tutorials with students' personal tutor were introduced to facilitate learning and personal development in year 2.</li> <li>Significant investment was made in the level 1 laboratory, to refurbish the room and enhance the student experience.</li> <li>A 'Careers for Physicists' module was introduced as an option at Level 1, and this was very well received by those who took it.</li> <li>The school's Summer Research Internship scheme continues to be highly valued by students and provides excellent employment and research experience.</li> </ul>

<b>Main actions for 2013-14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and enhance the newly introduced level 3 option 'Group Industrial Project' which links our Stakeholder Advisory Board to our students to provide direct experience of working with industry.</li> <li>• Ensure PHYSOC (student society) has good succession planning as it has developed excellent communication and activities with students and staff.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor and develop computing modules at levels 1 and 2.</li> <li>• A major investment is planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year laboratory to bring it in line with the enhancement made to the level 1 laboratory last year.</li> <li>• Work with our students to find the best way to encourage personal development and to enhance use of Leeds for Life.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan</b>	<p>Members of the student staff forum met to discuss the action plan from 2012/13 and to make recommendations for the Action Plan for 2013/14, particularly in light of the various forms of feedback that the School had received over the last year. Following on from the meeting, the action plan was drawn up and circulated to all that were present for comment. The student-led version of the action plan was then presented to the STSEC where it was considered by staff and the School Rep. The final version of the plan was then circulated to all staff and students in the school. All of this was facilitated by the faculty Student Education Enhancement Officer.</p>

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

**School: Physics & Astronomy**

**Faculty: MAPS**

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
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	<p>The excellent NSS results achieved this year (2<sup>nd</sup> in the Russell Group) can largely be attributed to the excellent dialogue that staff in the School have with students. This applies across all categories of staff and students, through personal tutoring and enhanced staffing in the Student Support Office.</p> <p>The school has successfully implemented a Stakeholder Advisory Board.</p> <p>Peer Assisted Learning was successfully introduced for all first year students to participate.</p> <p>PHYSOC has grown in size and level of activity over the past year or so. PHYSOC organised a successful visit to CERN, supported by the School.</p>	<p>This year, the students were on the whole very happy with their experiences at the University. A number of small, yet highly significant changes to the organisation of the courses has meant many of the issues that were identified had been addressed.</p> <p>Some students (and staff) were not aware of the Stakeholder Advisory Board, so work needs to be done to increase their presence in the school.</p> <p>There are some students who do not feel a strong sense of belonging to the Physics community.</p>	<p>The Stakeholder Advisory Board is entering its second year and is leading to changes in the school. This includes a new Industrial Group Project module and industrial involvement in the Summer Internships Symposium.</p> <p>Initial teething problems with the Peer Assisted Learning Scheme have been addressed and PAL appears to be working very well for 2013/14. PAL is being closely monitored with support from a PGR co-ordinator, in close liaison with staff. The success of PHYSOCS has also made a difference to the success of PAL.</p> <p>PHYSOC has made a major impact on the overall experience for students in Physics by breaking down barriers between year groups and improving the range of social activities on offer. The School is looking forward to working with PHYSOC to</p>

			ensure that their activities (social, career-focussed and academic) are sustainable in the longer term.
<b>Teaching</b>	There is better synchronisation between materials covered in lectures and when the material is covered in tutorials. Students highlighted lecturers who used practical demonstrations within their teaching.	Issues have been identified with the computing modules, in terms of the method of delivery and pitching the course at the right level.  Over summer 2012 the 3 <sup>rd</sup> year Nuclear Physics option was removed due to staffing changes. However in response to student opinion a new version was delivered at short notice, which was well received.	The computing modules are being re-vamped for 2013/14, taking into account student feedback and required modernisation. Staff will continue to find opportunities to introduce practical demonstrations into teaching, where feasible.
<b>Assessment and feedback</b>	Revisions to marking criteria and enhanced demonstrator training has improved the quality and perceived fairness of marking for laboratory reports.	Students continue to identify a perceived unfairness due to some subjectivity in the marking of lab reports.  Students are not always aware that model answers for homeworks are available in the VLE.	Marking for laboratory reports is an area that the school is perpetually working to enhance. However, this year, there will be a strong focus on working with students to understand that there will always be an element of subjectivity. Analysis of historical marks has proved that this difference is statistically insignificant, so the school will work with students to help them to understand.  Remind students that model answers are available in the VLE for homework questions.
<b>Academic support</b>	The School spent more time on explaining option choices for later years of study, through year group meetings.  Newly introduced level 2 tutorials were very well received.	Some students still felt that more detailed explanations of the later year options, and the pathways through the degree was needed, although others stated that the meeting was good for "signposting" and it is the responsibility of individuals to find out more details, and ask staff if they need further help. Students should be made aware that the MPhys programme is considerably harder than the BSc programme.	Recommend to students that they do their own research on the module options in later years of study, and ask individual staff if they would like further information. Students and staff will also be encouraged to discuss module choices in more detail at personal tutoring meetings. Staff will provide more advice to students regarding the choice between BSc and MPhys, particularly emphasising the step-up in difficulty to the fourth year of the programme.
<b>Organisation and management</b>	The SSO is very well regarded by all students. Students say that the staff are always helpful, very friendly and really know what is happening in the School.	The main issue identified this year was that some members of academic staff had left the University, but the module catalogue had not been updated to reflect the changes to teaching staff on modules.	Improve timeliness of communication to students when key members of teaching staff leave the University.
<b>Learning resources</b>	A lot of investment has been made in the Level 1 teaching laboratory.	On the whole, learning resources for the courses are very good. Individual issues that arise are dealt with quickly and satisfactorily.	Investment is being made in the Level 2 teaching laboratory.

	Staff use of the VLE has greatly improved over recent years and students are very satisfied with the resources that are made available.		Continue to encourage staff to enhance the VLE presence for their modules.
<b>Personal development</b>	<p>Leeds for Life was actively promoted to students through personal tutoring and year group meetings.</p> <p>A new “Careers for Physicists” module was very well received by students who opted to take it.</p> <p>The vast number of summer research internships offered by the school is very well received by students.</p>	<p>Students still do not see the value of engaging in Leeds for Life. A lot of students prefer to build their LinkedIn profiles and see the Leeds for Life webforms as surplus to requirements. They would also prefer to have a conversation with staff than write it all down in the forms.</p> <p>Some students think that a careers module in level 1 is too soon – they are only thinking about academic achievement at this stage in their studies.</p>	<p>Engagement in Leeds for Life through personal tutoring is an ongoing issue for the School. Students are not keen to engage with it, and staff feel that as they see their personal tutees on a weekly basis (due to links to the academic tutorials) they have a very good personal relationship with their tutees and form-filling seems unnatural. The School will work with students to identify the best way to ensure that all students engage in personal development and career planning. This work will also incorporate the standards set by the Institute of Physics for professional recognition.</p> <p>More information should be provided to promote the careers module, particularly in relation to students finding industrial internships at the end of their second year.</p> <p>The School is offering an optional Group Industrial Project module for level 3 students to help enhance students’ commercial awareness and transferable skills.</p>