

ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE: SESSION 2015-16

School of History: Faculty of Arts

| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Aspect | National Student Survey | | | | | | Undergraduate Programme Experience Survey | | | | | | Postgraduate Programme Experience Survey | | | | | |
| | 2014-15 | | 2013-14 | | 2012-13 | | 2014-15 | | 2013-14 | | 2012-13 | | 2014-15 | | 2013-14 | | 2012-13 | |
| | School | Uni | School | Uni | School | Uni | School | Uni | School | Uni | School | Uni | School | Uni | School | Uni | School | Uni |
| Overall satisfaction | 92 | 90 | 93 | 88 | 92 | 87 | 91 | 87 | 90 | 85 | 88 | 85 | 90 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 87 |
| Teaching | 96 | 92 | 96 | 90 | 95 | 89 | 93 | 86 | 91 | 85 | 91 | 85 | 91 | 85 | 90 | 86 | 95 | 87 |
| Assessment & feedback | 80 | 74 | 84 | 71 | 84 | 71 | 73 | 63 | 76 | 62 | 72 | 59 | 76 | 71 | 80 | 71 | 77 | 75 |
| Academic support | 80 | 85 | 82 | 82 | 78 | 81 | 73 | 74 | 71 | 73 | 67 | 72 | 86 | 82 | 92 | 82 | 82 | 85 |
| Organisation & management | 83 | 85 | 90 | 85 | 88 | 84 | 85 | 76 | 81 | 75 | 78 | 73 | 76 | 82 | 79 | 81 | 92 | 85 |
| Learning resources | 82 | 92 | 90 | 91 | 89 | 90 | 82 | 84 | 81 | 83 | 75 | 81 | 72 | 87 | 87 | 85 | 95 | 86 |
| Personal development | 79 | 85 | 84 | 82 | 82 | 81 | 70 | 72 | 64 | 72 | 63 | 69 | 83 | 76 | 75 | 77 | 67 | 77 |
| Sector position | | 21/145 | | 50/146 | 66/98 | 57/147 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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)

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| Headline achievement in 2014-15 | <i>The School of History has consolidated exceptional standards of teaching provision, scoring 96% satisfaction for successive years</i> |
| Main actions for 2015-16 | <p><i>List 3 actions – to be included on the posters to be produced for each School</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. E-submission system introduced across the School; e-marking encouraged</i> <i>2. Refreshed Joint Honours support, led by JH tutor, in collaboration with other Schools in Faculty of Arts</i> <i>3. Newly designed Induction processes for teaching staff and PGT, emphasising Student Education priorities</i> |

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| <p>Good practice examples from 2014-15</p> | <p><i>List examples of innovative practice and developments which are of wider interest across the University</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> School of History Module Fair, an event featuring 'showcase' module presentations and module stalls 'Final Year Project Event' for Level 2 students, featuring a lecture from our Dissertation Tutor and a set of research presentations from University Special Collections and local archives History Society and Peer Mentoring contribution to the School: Award winning society, career networking dinner, academic field trips, 6 x peer mentor events for Level 1 students |
| <p>Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan</p> | <p>The Chair of the <i>Student Staff Committee</i> has attended the NSS Action Plan working group meetings, and we have presented versions of the Action Plan to the <i>Student Staff Committee</i> in November and December, for comment and amendment. Students reps also comment within the STSEC and Staff Meeting discussions</p> |

AGREED ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE: SESSION 2015-16

| School: History | | Faculty: Arts | |
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| Aspect | Progress with 2014-2015 actions and indication of impact | Agreed Issues/Actions for 2015-2016 | Responsibility/Expected completion date |
| <p>Overall satisfaction</p> | <p>(NSS down 1% from 93% to 92%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightened support for Joint Honours students, including more joined-up Induction planning and a defined JH tutor role, has resulted in fewer negative NSS comments from the JH cohort, but there is still great room for improvement Student contentment with the School's improved module fair and module choice process is contributing to stabilising satisfaction in that area. Programme Survey results suggest that actions are not impacting on Level 1 as much as Level 2 and 3, so we need to focus on satisfaction at earlier stages of the student journey, and to heighten support for transition | <p>Issues: Minor drop in overall satisfaction, some concerns over equity of support across the School and efficacy of communication. Continued anxiety about 'contact time' issues and JH support and identity.</p> <p>Headline Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Role of JH tutor extended and JH support refreshed in collaboration with Faculty of Arts DSEs New head of Personal Tutoring, revived emphasis on this aspect of student support The broader meaning of 'contact time' to be articulated and disseminated to students Transformed process of assessment submission and a push on e-marking Lecture capture uptake revisited in the School in the light of student comments Introduction of 'Studying in a Digital Age' module for all incoming students <p>For detail on these actions, see below sub categories</p> | <p>Responsibility and time frame:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tutor for JH (ongoing) Deputy DSE (ongoing) DSE (January 2016) DSE (Implemented Sept 2015) DSE (December STSEC) DSE and selected tutors (module design, November 15 to August 16) |

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Teaching</p> | <p>(NSS Stable at 96%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 provision of extra <i>Final Year Project</i> support (dissertation lectures and workshops, and visits from relevant archives and Special Collections) has helped consolidate excellent satisfaction for our research-based teaching and learning, and the increased Level 3 contact hours have been strongly welcomed • Continued reform of our IHP programme, with greater module choice at Level 2, and more visible programme leadership, has led to notable improvements in NSS scores for that programme (+9% for organisation, +7% for personal support) • The recruitment of new academic staff to cover teaching areas in aspects of global and international history has enhanced our teaching offer, and energised the teaching team, leading to student comments about the intellectual diversity, enthusiasm and commitment of our teaching staff | <p>Issues: There are no major issues evident in relation the quality and enthusiasm of teaching. However, variability in teaching related support (use of office hours, accessibility of staff, levels of support and guidance outside teaching hours) arise in the NSS comments.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Postgraduate Tutor Induction and New Staff Induction have been redesigned to emphasise teaching standards, processes and priorities 2. A 'module guidance checklist' to be distributed to teaching staff, to help standardise high levels of essay, exam and development guidance 3. Appointment of new role 'Deputy Director of Student Education' to add emphasis and ideas to teaching enhancement within the School 4. Learning & Teaching Away Day to be revived after a couple of years' absence, in particular to showcase teaching innovations of new staff and PGT 5. Newly built Teaching Administration intranet for School of History staff | <p>Responsibility and time frame:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SESM and SES team (implemented Sept 15 onwards) 2. DSE (Semester 1 and 2) 3. Deputy DSE (appointed 15-16) 4. DSE (Semester 2 event) 5. MASS/SES team (implemented October 15) |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment and feedback</p> | <p>(NSS down 4% from 84% to 80%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no major innovations applied in this category last year, and after many years of progress, we have dipped in this category, suggesting the need for renewed attention • Our score is still higher than the institutional average (80% as opposed to 74%) so we continue to benefit from a legacy of innovation and effort in the School over the last 7 years • The School of History's mapping of assessment types was heralded as best practice by the Annual Review Committee | <p>Issues: Variations in satisfaction with <i>promptness</i> of feedback (despite enforced 2-week turnaround) and <i>clarity</i> of feedback. Comments about 'archaic' hard-copy submission process, inequity of tutor support given during periods of essay and exam preparation.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce e-submission system, and encourage tutors wishing to experiment with e-marking, in line with University's direction of travel in this area 2. Exam feedback given directly by module tutor in face-to-face sessions, rather than by personal tutor. We hope this gives a more informed and progressive quality to feedback. Personal tutor retains responsibility for 'panoramic feedback'. | <p>Responsibility and time frame:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exams officer, SES team, all teaching staff, all students (Implemented from October 15) 2. DSE (implemented September 15) 3. DSE and SESM (ongoing, |

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| | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Emphasise A&F as School priority in new staff teaching induction sessions 4. Continue deep assessment mapping and reflection within School. Diversify assessment at Level 2 by introducing a new 'abstract writing' assessment to accompany the essay (subject to STSEC approval) 5. MA module tutors reminded by Directors of Taught Postgraduate Students to adhere to 2-week turnaround period for MA marking, or to explain exceptional circumstances clearly | <p>Semester 1)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. DSE and SES assessment specialists (ongoing) 5. Director of TPG (Semester 1, 2015) |
| <p>Academic support</p> | <p>(NSS down 2% from 82% to 80%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While scores have decreased slightly overall, there was a rise of 1% for the 'good advice for study choices' question, suggesting that the provision of sound module choice information – module choice talks, module fair and personal tutor meetings on the topic – is becoming embedded • Coherent information about Discovery Module options is being disseminated at all Levels and History student use of the Broadening website is growing, thanks to close links with the Discovery theme leaders and broadening sub-group • Equity of academic support is still something to improve, with student comments suggesting that Personal Tutoring, in particular, is variable in standard and process. | <p>Issues: Perceived variability of support and guidance outside of teaching. Variability of Personal Tutoring and patchy use of Leeds for Life. Lack of use and awareness of VLE academic and careers support resources. Issues posed by withdrawal of Disability Support Allowance funding.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refresh role of JH tutor, increased cross-faculty collaboration on JH support and community building, including a cross disciplinary 'FYP event' at Level 2, Semester 2 2. Extended induction activities for incoming JH students with involvement from JH student mentors and mid-term meetings with JH Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 students 3. Clarify levels and types of guidance expected from all teaching staff, communicated in Induction sessions, via email and at Student Education Away Day 4. Appoint new Director of Personal Tutoring and further use of Student Opportunity ambassadors to promote Leeds for Life 5. Re-design VLE organisation sections on academic support and heightened visibility of Skills@Library resources 6. Appointment of <i>Disabled Students Allowance Academic Liaison</i> to work with School Student Support Officer and colleagues from DSAS to | <p>Responsibility and time frame:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DSE and JH Tutor in collaboration with Faculty DSEs and Pro Dean for SE (ongoing 15-16) 2. Deputy DSE and JH tutor (ongoing 15-16) 3. DSE (ongoing) 4. Deputy DSE (ongoing, paper at December STSEC) 5. SES VLE specialists (Semester 1) 6. HoS (Appointment made, Sept 15) |

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| | | monitor the effects of, and suggest mitigation of, the withdrawal of DSA funding | |
| Organisation and management | <p>(NSS down 10% from 87% to 77%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst improvements were made to the process by which students swap tutorials in the event of timetable clashes, we did not follow up <i>practically</i> on last year's suggestions to improve the submission process for assessment. However, such change are now to be implemented (see next column) High staff turnover, both in academic and SES contexts, may have had an impact on the perceived and actual organisation of the School. There is some concern that SES mobility and career development is emphasised by the University but that wider University processes do not always allow for robust and rigorous SES handover arrangements and staff continuity. We did not communicate module withdrawals (due to staff departure, research leave and illness) as well as we should have done We need to communicate improvements to organisation, management and support, rather than just reacting to and emphasising difficulties. Our organisation of student support and disability provision has improved dramatically (something noted in the NSS comments) but we do not publicise this sufficiently to the cohort | <p>Issues: High SES turnover of staff, complexity of replacement / handover processes. Gaps in communication to students about staff departure, research leave or illness. Perceived 'stress' of hard-copy assessment submission days</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate module withdrawal / change more efficiently; new tutors contact 'Special Subject' module students to introduce themselves and their teaching before the end of Level 2 2. Stabilisation of History SES team in 2015-16, leading to less disruption and more 'business as usual' practices and capacity for innovation. Clearer handover guidelines to be written. 3. Introduce new <i>e-submission only</i> policy for essays to ease pressure and remedy 'disorganisation' of assessment submission days. E-submission guides written for staff and students 4. Place DSE, Deputy DSE and SESM on <i>Student Staff Committee</i>, to help communicate changes and enhancements to student cohort, 5. School student representative to distil and disseminate outcomes of <i>Student Staff Committee</i> to academic staff in a regular 'digest' 6. Enhance module choices at MA level with Introduction of new School policy to allow MA students to audit masters modules 7. Review of MA option modules to investigate feasibility of <i>team teaching</i> on some to ensure interdisciplinary richness and stability of provision in relation to research leave 8. Review of structure and format of Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate programme handbooks to improve clarity and presentation of information. | <p>Responsibility and time frame:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SES team (ongoing) 2. HoS, DSE, SESM, FESM and University SES support structure (ongoing) 3. DSE and SES team, Examinations Officer (Implemented) 4. HoS, DSE, (Implemented) 5. School Student Rep 6. Director of Taught PGT, DSE (ongoing 15-16) 7. Director of Taught PGT, DSE (ongoing 15-16) 8. SES team (ongoing 15-16) |

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Learning resources</p> | <p>(NSS down 8% from 90% to 82%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student opinion on library resources and facilities was fed through a Library Consultation exercise in December 2014 • Some tutors chose to take up the lecture capture option but many opted out for diverse reasons, meaning that impact on student learning was sporadic • In the absence of a Subject Librarian, the dialogue with the library was perhaps less effective, even though we (and our Library tutor) are aware of the new Faculty role and have used that as a platform for exchange • The School continues to be a leader in digitisation and most VLEs are well furnished with digital material and internal and external links to information and guidance | <p>Issues: Continuing issues with e-book subscriptions and journal subscriptions. Weaker sense of contact with Library through Faculty (rather than School) point of contact. Low student engagement with some VLE 'History Organisation' resources. Low staff uptake of Lecture Capture. Student dissatisfaction with access to 'specialised equipment'.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Propose introduction of online, Level 1 module 'Studying in a Digital Age' for 2016-17 2. Arrange regular contact with Library to discuss History-specific e-book and e-journal requirements 3. Review lecture capture culture in the School: move towards positive understanding of benefits for students as well as respecting staff reservations 4. Re-design of History VLE Organisation resources (ongoing) 5. Use social media survey (through SSC) to find out what students understand 'specialised equipment' to be, and what they want more of | <p>Responsibility and time frame:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DSE and School Blended Learning Champion (Proposed October STSEC, designed 15-16) 2. DSE, Library Rep, Student Staff Committee Library rep 3. DSE (Debate in November STSEC) 4. SES team and School Blended Learning Champion 5. DSE and Student Staff Committee |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Personal development</p> | <p>(NSS down 5% from 84% to 79%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After a number of years of innovation in this area, we did not make great changes to this category of provision. We recruited student interns as usual as our main catalyst for Employability advice, and held whole-cohort talks on History & Employability • A drop in scores (even if from commendable levels) suggest we need to keep our eye on this category and continue to innovate to match a changing and increasingly prominent employability agenda • The Careers Service were no longer able to offer in-house, one-to-one appointments, so this | <p>Issues: Difficult to discern, but NSS comments reveal desire for History-specific employability advice, rather than just Faculty-based provision. Limited understanding of History-related career destinations. Perhaps School has 'rested on its laurels' a bit in this area, after a few years of progress.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deputy DSE appointment with new ideas to enhance Employability and personal tutoring 2. Specific allocation of roles for two SES staff to develop contacts with History Alumni via LinkedIn and Facebook groups (as well as Alumni Intern work) 3. Heightened use of and awareness of new | <p>Responsibility and time frame:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HoS, Deputy DSE (appointed) 2. DSE, SES team, History Alumni Intern (ongoing) 3. DSE, History Careers Interns (ongoing 15-16) 4. DSE, History Society |

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| | <p>may have impacted on the visibility and efficacy of Careers advice in History</p> | <p>'Qlikview' resource as a tool for tracing graduate destinations of History students, and of measuring the value of a work placement and study abroad year</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Heighten History Society contributions through Career Networking dinner and workshops 5. Work in a more co-ordinated way with Faculty events to avoid duplication and/or overlap 6. Enhance employability at postgraduate level with introduction of a new archive placement module (from 16/17) which offers students the opportunity to work collaboratively with partner archives and organisations | <p>(ongoing 15-16)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. DSE, Faculty DSEs 6. Director PGT, Module tutor, DSE |
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