

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY																		
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	88	90	85	88	96	87	92	87	91	85	86	85			75	85	100	87
Teaching	92	92	88	90	94	89	90	86	90	85	88	85			100	86	100	87
Assessment & feedback	67	74	61	71	80	71	51	63	51	62	46	59			60	71	100	75
Academic support	84	85	83	82	87	81	78	74	76	73	72	72			92	82	100	85
Organisation & management	84	85	76	85	86	84	72	76	72	75	69	73			83	81	67	85
Learning resources	94	92	95	91	96	90	86	84	84	83	83	81			100	85	100	86
Personal development	79	85	72	82	90	81	73	72	67	72	60	69			50	77	100	77
Sector position	32/44	21/145	35/39	50/146	8/38	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)

Headline achievement in 2014-15	<i>An OPPORTUNITES DAY was created (to be an annual event) where students can attend talks and workshops from academic staff and employers, providing information about academic module choices, Year in Industry or Abroad, PhD study, applications and interview techniques and showcasing the variety of jobs undertaken by graduate physicists. The aim was to aid personal development and to enhance students' future prospects (both academics and in employment). The Inaugural event was held on 11th March 2015.</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. To find a way to incorporate better project preparation (particularly report and viva) into the Theoretical Physics programme, similar to the practice that other students get through laboratory modules.</i> <i>2. To look at the balance of optional modules in level 3 between semester 1 and 2, to see if a more equitable split can be achieved.</i> <i>3. More training to be provided for demonstrators who mark homework sheets.</i>

<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"> <i>1. Creating the 'Opportunities Day' as an annual event to provide personal development to enhance students' future academic and career prospects .This took the form of a day of talks, interactive sessions and a discipline based careers fair to provide information about academic choices in higher years, and further study or graduate jobs for after graduation.</i> <i>2. Using the Subject Organisation on the VLE to share information with all students/staff in the school (such as welcome and induction information, programme details, student support, SSF, social aspects and subject society, careers advice and activities, Year in Industry/Abroad, research placements etc)</i>
<p>Summary of student involvement in the production of this Action Plan</p>	<p>Following on from a SSF meeting the student reps were given this year's NSS data and last year's action plan, and were asked to comment on progress made, and any outstanding or new issues. There were no academic staff present, to allow more freedom in discussion, but school administrators were present to take notes and guide discussion if necessary. This was written up and circulated to the SSF, considered at the STSEC and then shared with all staff and students for final comment .</p>

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

School: PHYSICS

Faculty: MAPS

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>Recent appointments have raised the number of staff in the school considerably and this has helped spread the load and allow more optional modules to be created (E.g. Liquid Crystals, Theoretical Particle Physics)</p> <p>More rigorous processes for checking examination papers have been introduced.</p>	<p>Further appointment of new staff will allow continued development of optional modules.</p> <p>An Exams Focus Group has been established to oversee all matters relating to examinations. This will widen the number of staff overseeing the production of exam papers and will thus enhance the quality of examination preparation and assessment overall.</p>	<p>STSEC – Ongoing</p> <p>Examinations officer and DSE – for semester 1 and 2 examinations</p>
<p>Teaching</p>	<p>Computing is taught in years 1 and 2 using the language Python. This is still being developed to its full potential.</p>	<p>Further discussion between all staff involved in the delivery of computing skills will seek to provide a coherent rationale to better suit the diverse needs of our students.</p> <p>The split between semester 1 and 2 of optional modules offered at Level 3 will be considered to see if a more even distribution can be obtained.</p>	<p>Staff responsible for Computing modules – a.s.a.p</p> <p>STSEC – for 15-16 session – approval needed in Feb.</p>

Assessment and feedback	Marking of homework by demonstrators is still not fully refined, and more training should be provided.	More training will be devised for demonstrators who mark homework, so that a consistent approach can be followed in all cases, and more helpful feedback delivered to students.	DSE - ongoing
Academic support	Theoretical Physics students take many modules in the School of Maths, and further advice would be helpful to aid module choice taking into account the pre-requisites.	<p>More advice about final year projects and associated workload across the semesters to be offered to penultimate year students before they choose final year modules.</p> <p>The programme in Theoretical Physics to be revised to incorporate better preparation for the final year project, by introducing a report and viva in lower years, akin to that experience gained by other students through laboratory modules.</p> <p>More information will be provided to aid students choose suitable Maths modules, taking account of pre-requisites.</p>	<p>Project convenors – at cohort meetings within the Opportunities Day in March.</p> <p>Theoretical Physics programme leader and STSEC – discussions to take place immediately - approval needed in Feb for changes in 15-16</p> <p>DSE – School of Maths – to be provided at Opportunities day for modules in 15-16</p>
Organisation and management	<p>With more academic staff in post now, the school is starting to introduce new higher level modules, reflecting the new areas of expertise.</p> <p>More robust exam checking procedures are being implemented and students welcome this being fully operational.</p>	Before they take the survey, students would welcome more information about the NSS and how the questions relate to the procedures and delivery in the school,	DSE – meeting to be arranged for January
Learning resources	The school is embracing lecture capture for most modules, and students are responding positively. Where lecture capture is not used, students welcome good notes being posted on the VLE.	Lecture capture is working well, and students accept that not all staff wish to use it for various reasons. But in such situations they ask that good notes are posted on the VLE as an alternative summary of the material delivered.	STSEC - ongoing
Personal development	<p>LinkedIn is introduced formally to BSc students in the 3rd year, but students suggest encouraging the use of LinkedIn from year one. PAL could be used as a vehicle to get students to engage with LinkedIn, whilst remembering that it is a professional network.</p> <p>Numbers taking a year in industry have increased several fold this year. This is having a knock on effect providing more role models for future students to follow this path.</p>	<p>Devise the best way to introduce LinkedIn via PAL sessions to first year students, so they can start to build up their CV online, as they progress through their time at university.</p> <p>Do more to promote the School's Opportunities Day via PAL and the VLE organisation.</p>	<p>DSE – SSF - ongoing</p> <p>DSE – SES staff- ongoing</p>

	<p>An Opportunities Day was developed and run for the first time in 14-15 providing students with advice on academic matters, further study and graduate careers. This will be an annual event.</p>		
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