

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LAW:
SCHOOL OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

Action plan in response to feedback on the student experience session 2017-18

<p>Headline achievement from 2016-17</p>	<p>Provide a single, concise headline achievement for the School from 16-17 which can be included in further communication to students.</p> <p>Ranked 4th amongst Russell Group universities for student satisfaction</p>
<p>Key strategic actions for 2017-18</p>	<p>List 3 actions – to be included on the posters to be produced for each School</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased opportunities for POLIS students to develop employment-oriented skills 2. Increased opportunities to take-part in POLIS Community activities and events 3. More opportunities for formative feedback
<p>Evaluation of main actions from 2016-17</p>	<p>Brief update on the 3 main actions identified from the previous session</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level one students are now given a reflective task to introduce them to the employability agenda; a series of alumni talks concerning relevant graduate professions (e.g. political journalism) has run. A new POLIS advisory board has been established and met twice, which includes alumni and invited appointees from a range of employers in private, voluntary and public sectors. Student participation on the Year in Industry has increased (17 to 25). 2. Large range of module changes during the 2016/17 session mean that many more modules now make use of mid-term module feedback to student's on draft work. This has brought success this semester (1 of 2017/18) e.g. on level one 'Freedom, Power and Resistance', 94% of students completed the non-assessed work and obtained mid-term feedback 3. Several well-attended POLIS Community Events were held during the session on topical issues e.g. Trump, Brexit, French election. Refreshments were provided and an informal, open and enquiring atmosphere enabled good staff-student interaction outside the confines of classroom teaching. In addition groups such as R2P held successful open events.

Good practice examples from 2016-17	<p>Innovative practice and developments, of wider interest across the University</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Employability example: Lata Narayanaswamy has been further piloting and developing the dissertation placement module which focuses on students working with NGOs in their MA dissertation projects for mutual benefit2. Impact example: Students on PIED 3310 “Britain and the EU” (led by Charlie Dannreuther) wrote reports on policy questions agreed with the House of Lords EU Select committee clerk Stuart Stoner e.g. on implications of Brexit referendum for notions of representation, with the best reports being presented to the full committee chaired by Lord Boswell3. Co-creation example: Kris Dunn published a joint research paper with four students on political psychology in a journal ranked in the top twenty of Social Psychology
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Aspect	Progress with 2016-2017 actions and indication of impact	Agreed Issues/Actions for 2017-2018 (from where did the action arise, i.e. NSS, module evaluation, programme review?)	Responsibility/Expected completion date
Overall satisfaction	<p>1. Three Teaching Enhancement Groups were established on i) Personal Development and Partnership, ii) Teaching and Research and iii) Diversity and Community. Some ideas discussed in each have subsequently been taken forward. i) notion that we should focus on broadening the cumulative skills students gain from our UG degrees fed in to the work of the Assessment Strategy Group; ii) plans are being made to brief students about staff expertise and research interests in advance of their choosing their UG dissertation projects, in order to help facilitate productive supervision; ii) we have 'badged' more POLIS activities as community events and increased the number of noo-academic social activities</p> <p>2. Staff were briefed to ensure that comparable details of both learning outcomes and assessment details were included in module handbooks (in some cases previously the learning outcomes listed in the module catalogue had not been included in the handbooks)</p> <p>3. Processes were followed to ensure consistency in assessment marking. This included DSE and AGL speaking to relevant staff if any significant inconsistency had been identified by moderators or external examiners.</p> <p>4. Skills provision has been reviewed as part of the Assessment Strategy review. At level one innovations have been pursued to enhance skills e.g. group presentation assessment and more use of formative assessment. At PGT level, the</p>	<p><i>With overall satisfaction levels from programme surveys for 2015/16 being high, our actions in this area are driven by the goals of consolidating and pursuing further iterative improvements in existing programmes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance monitoring processes will be tightened – student representatives and staff have commented that poorly attended seminars can detract from the learning experience of students in classes. Relatedly, new additional forms of aggregate and module level attendance data will be gathered and analysed. Staff will be given further opportunities for 'implicit bias' training. Although we are confident that our marking procedures are robust and have appropriate checks and balances, it is worthwhile to alert staff to pedagogical research on how unconscious biases can sometimes affect primary marking. Programme survey data suggests there is still a perception amongst some students that marking can sometimes be inconsistent. <p><i>Numerous actions to improve in areas such as student support, employability opportunities, assessment and feedback, community and student 'voice' are listed below</i></p>	<p>SESM, Student Support Officer; DSE (in progress)</p> <p>Equality and Inclusion lead (implement semester two)</p>

	<p>induction process has been expanded to include sessions on skills such as time management and voluntary employability training sessions have been provided.</p> <p>Student survey data suggests high levels of overall satisfaction i.e. NSS 80%; PGTPS 97%; UGPS 88% (level one); 97% (level two)</p>		
<p>The Teaching on my Course</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students were given the opportunity to give anonymous feedback to tutors on most modules mid-semester. Tutors were given a variety of suggested options for how such information could be collected. This process highlighted issues in some modules which were then able to be tackled by the module leader in consultation with students. 2. All levels of student were briefed and re-briefed about the Partnership agreement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The training given to teaching assistants (TAs) in POLIS will be reviewed, with a view to further increasing the support and guidance received by TAs. This should include consideration of ensuring the participation of diverse groups in seminar activities (as suggested by the Equality and Inclusion committee) 2. Moves towards less use of summative assessment and more use of formative feedback will be consolidated by more module reforms during 2017/18. 3. Ways of increasing capacity on some popular module choices will be explored, in the context of greater portfolio management. 	<p>TA Tutor (to be completed before beginning session 2018/19)</p> <p>DSE, STSEC. Relevant module leaders (on-going)</p> <p>DSE, HoS, Curriculum review Group (in progress)</p>
<p>Learning opportunities</p>	<p>This was not an identified area for actions within the 2016/17 School Action Plan template.</p> <p>However, during the session learning opportunities were enhanced in a number of respects, including implementation of the new Q steps (quantitative) programme and modules at UG level; pilot opportunities for some MA Global Development students to undertake an NGO linked dissertation. The level two module on American politics was run twice to enhance</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the case for establishing a Centre for Co-Creative Education in POLIS. This would build upon current curriculum innovations by staff in POLIS, and collaborative work between staff and students. 2. Disseminate findings of current teaching projects by POLIS staff (e.g. USEF, Discovery theme, LITE) and relevant wider university LITE projects on enhancing student opportunities, with a view to 	<p>SMT, wider academic staff</p> <p>DSE, project leaders</p>

	<p>student options to take the module during a time of heightened interest.</p>	<p>broadening innovative options (e.g. dissertation placement work)</p> <p>NSS data indicated that only 60% of students felt good advice was available on study choices. In response we will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Hold a module enrolment meeting for students before the process opens on the 8th May. It will cover the various path ways for module enrolment and explain how discovery themes, the module catalogue and the various processes work. 	<p>Robin Stacey</p>
<p>Assessment and feedback</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) New formative assessments were introduced in a large number of modules to secure more use of formative feedback. Relatedly, summative assessment loads were cut in a majority of modules 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Implement changes to summative and formative assessments (take-up of these opportunities appears to have been high thus far e.g. 94% participation rate in an S1 module) 3) Implement new forms of assessment in key modules aimed at addressing employability/skills (e.g. some level three modules have new workplace-oriented tasks) and also tasks aimed at increasing opportunities to work with other students (e.g. group presentation task in level one International Politics). NSS data indicates this is an area for improvement (70% satisfaction) 4) Seek to further increase the number of POLIS modules which include non-traditional employability-oriented assessments 5) Prepare new POLIS marking criteria for implementation of categorical marking in 2018/19 	<p><i>Relevant module teachers (on-going)</i></p> <p><i>Relevant module teachers (on-going)</i></p> <p><i>DSE, AGLS, Programme Directors (in progress)</i></p> <p><i>Assessment Criteria Working Group, DSE, Sheila McMahon (in progress, to be completed in summer 2018)</i></p>

		<p>6) Innovate further in developing and using cutting-edge support systems for all assessment marking and recording of marks, through Grade Centre in Minerva. Specifically the new implementation of examination feedback using the Turnitin programme.</p>	<p><i>Assessment team, led by Sheila McMahon (in progress)</i></p>
<p>Academic support</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Staff office hours were renamed as academic support hours. Practical impact appears to have been mixed – sometimes difficult for staff/students to change from using the shorter more established title of office hours. 2) Many well attended POLIS Community Events were held on contemporary issue (see below under ‘Learning Community’). The aim is now to maintain these events as an ongoing feature of POLIS 3) A proposal to establish a Personal Tutor Champion unfortunately fell-through due to workload pressures. However, use of the leeds-for-life system, and personal tutoring more generally has been promoted by the schools new student support officer, Martin Pelan 4) A Diversity and Community Group has been established, which has considered issues such as the students awareness of, and involvement in, POLIS events as well as enhancing the range of activities within the School 	<p><i>Student satisfaction in relation to academic support generally dipped to an extent during 2016/17 e.g. NSS score of 75% compares with 83% in 2015/16. In order to help address this area, actions will include:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A substantially increased number of MA induction events - with a supportive and skill-enhancing emphasis e.g. new sessions on well-being and time management have been added. This has been enable with the support of the Mary Morris project, which particularly aims to support International students. 2. Examine ways to increase attendance at ‘moving-up’ events to support students as they transition to the next level of their UG programmes 3. Implement much wider opportunities for formative assessment feedback in modules during 2017/18, with the aim of offering more direct support from tutors to students 4. Review how effectively the new opportunities for formative feedback have been experienced by staff and students 5. Consult student representatives and staff-student forum on this issue, with a view to establishing key types of support valued by students 	<p><i>SES team (particularly Robin Stacey, Martin Pelan), DSE</i></p> <p><i>DSE, AGLs, Student support officer (summer 2018)</i></p> <p><i>General academic staff (in progress)</i></p> <p><i>DSE, AGLs (summer 2018)</i></p> <p><i>DSE, (semester two)</i></p>

		<p><i>Programme Directors also identified from student feedback that international students sometimes feel they need more support for their MA dissertation projects</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dissertation tutors to be briefed on the particular needs of international students in this area 	<p><i>Neil Winn (during semester two of teaching)</i></p>
<p>Organisation and management</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) PGT provision was reviewed, with one pathway in MA Global Development being removed, and plans for a new MSc Political Science being developed 2) Four new international partnerships with South East Asian institutions have been established in 2016/17, with: School of Public Policy and Management, Korea Development Institute (KDI) School; School of Politics and Public Administration, Shanghai University of Political Science and Law (SHUPL); Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Gadjah Mada University (UGM), Indonesia; School of Politics and Public Administration, China University of Political Science and Law (CUPL), Beijing 3) As covered above, many UG and PGT modules have been amended to decrease summative assessment and increase formative feedback opportunities 	<p><i>Internationalisation is a priority area for both the University and ESSL. In addition we are aware that success in the competitive PGT market will in part be driven by our ability to offer programmes in which student develop particular specialist skills; In view of this we aim to have two new programmes approved this academic year, to commence in 2019/20. These are:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) MA Global Governance and Diplomacy 2) MSc Political Science – which will have specialist streams in both Data Analytics, and Democracy & Media <p>Discussions with our student representatives have indicated that POLIS students feel they would benefit from attending workshops and information sessions that help them manage the transition from one academic year to the next level, thus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) We will be working with Skills@Library staff to organise “Step Up to the Next Level” sessions based on the new resources for Level 2 students (“<u>Second Year Success</u>”) and finalists (“<u>The Final Chapter</u>”). 	<p><i>Garrett Brown, Kaisa Hinkkainen, Jack Holland</i></p> <p><i>Jonathan Dean, Kris Dunn, Duncan McCargo,</i></p> <p><i>Student support officer, wider SES team members</i></p>
<p>Learning resources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Opportunities were grasped to make additional recorded resources available to students e.g. several video discussions as 	<p>Explore ways to integrate more use of digital content in regular modules (this action particularly responds to university employability agenda)</p>	<p><i>Blended Learning Champion, Programme Directors</i></p>

	<p>were created during the 'snap' general election campaign (led by V. Honeyman)</p> <p>2) Further encouragement has been given to staff to take up opportunities to make digitisation or resources easier e.g. more modules now make use of the VLE reading list facility</p>		
<p>Learning Community</p>	<p>This was not an identified area for actions within the 2016/17 School Action Plan template</p> <p>However, several well-attended POLIS Community Events were held during the session on topical issues e.g. Trump, Brexit, French election. Refreshments were provided and an informal, open and enquiring atmosphere enabled good staff-student interaction outside the confines of classroom teaching. In addition groups such as R2P held successful open events.</p>	<p><i>Programme survey results indicate that further actions are needed to generate a sense of a shared community in POLIS (e.g. 64% satisfied on this in NSS)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek to establish more non-academic community activities in POLIS e.g. netball, football teams, organised social visits for students to subject-specific venues. "Student Events" is now a standing item at Student-Staff Forum, with SSF constituting a POLIS Community Group, which includes student reps, Peer Mentors and members of the POLIS Society executive. 2. Establish a POLIS newsletter for both current student and alumni, to share news relevant to staff/student research, community activities, employability events.... 3. Ensure POLIS involvement in a new proposed cross-disciplinary module: 'The Civic Researcher; Engaging the Modern City', which would enable MA students to work on research with a civic impact 4. Continue organising POLIS Community Events on topical issues. One of these will focus on inclusion issues 5. Provide school support for student-led learning community initiatives e.g. R2P group 	<p><i>Student Support Officer</i></p> <p><i>DDSE; Student Support Officers (in progress)</i></p> <p><i>Charlie Dannreuther (to be taken through QA processes in semester two)</i></p> <p><i>DSE and wider POLIS staff (events in both teaching semesters)</i></p> <p><i>HoS; School Support co-ordinator, DSE;</i></p>

<p>Student voice</p>	<p>This was not an identified area for actions within the 2016/17 School Action Plan template</p> <p>However, the staff-student forum functioned very effectively throughout the session. For instance, student concerns about lack of flexibility in switching modules in the early part of semester were addressed, both in the short-term by freeing-up more space on particular modules, and in the medium terms through creating greater capacity for the 2017/18 session. Also, student campaigns to increase the opening times of the social studies building during the exam period were met with an extension of hours over a period of several weeks. In addition a renewed POLIS partnership agreement was approved by the staff-student forum.</p>	<p><i>Programme survey data indicates that most students feel they have the right opportunities to give feedback on their course POLIS (82%, NSS), but it isn't always clear to them how their views are acted upon (e.g. in NSS just 54% thought it was)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek to find further ways to publicise work of student representatives and staff-student forum via a "You Said, We Did" publicity initiative, which seeks to highlight successful activities from across the School, including both student-led and student-staff initiatives. 2. Seek to find further effective ways of conveying how student opinions have been listened to and acted upon 3. Ensure quick management response to vocalised student concerns where time is tight e.g. module transfer 	<p><i>Student support officer, working with student representatives (to be implemented in semester two)</i></p> <p><i>Student support officer, working with student representatives; individual module leaders</i></p> <p><i>HoS, DSE, SESM</i></p>
<p>Personal Development</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A new post of Deputy DSE was created with particular responsibility for personal development, student opportunity and employability 2) Voluntary personal development sessions have been run at both UG and PGT levels, in the latter case Action Learning Sets bring together experiential and collaborative learning with reflective practice. Participation is through small group sessions where each individual takes a turn being the focus of questions from the group. The aim is to identify their own employability goal and the practical steps they can take towards it in the short term. 	<p><i>POLIS Student representatives have expressed appreciation of opportunities to both hear and network with people with established graduate careers. We aim to further extend these.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek to increase level of student engagement with employability opportunities e.g. Action Learning set sessions at PGT level 2. Provide series of alumni talks and invited speakers on careers and experiences in relevant employment sectors 	<p><i>Student Support Officer (employability and placements); (in progress)</i></p> <p><i>DDSE (in progress)</i></p>

	<p>3) The piloting of a 'group' approach to personal tutoring continues (Gordon Clubb is using this approach alongside one-to-one meetings). These have overall been successful to date but one area for reflection is ensuring worthwhile context/topics for the meetings</p> <p>4) A Teaching Enhancement Group on Personal Development and Partnership has been established</p>	<p>3. Establish Facebook page for current and former students to facilitate networking</p> <p>4. Seek to appoint an academic personal tutor champion to promote and review staff/students engagement with personal tutor system and Leeds for Life (workload space allowing)</p>	<p><i>DDSE (in progress)</i></p> <p><i>HoS; DSE, DDSE (by end August 2018)</i></p>
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