

Issues identified in Faculty Annual Monitoring Reports for 2009-10 which require attention from the University

For the attention of the International Director and Head of Student Recruitment

1. Clarify to both staff and students the University's position regarding auditing of courses by International Students who are not doing the course for credit. (Faculty of Arts)
2. More purposeful leadership regarding GU use of student exchanges, both ways. More than one report commented on contradictory signals being given out about the value of exchanges to the Faculty/University, and a need for clarity around how these exchanges can and should operate (including in relation to the translation of marks from international institutions for home students who spend a year abroad). (Faculty of Arts)
3. Arrangements for induction of students starting in January should be reviewed in light of what is offered to students starting in September. (Faculty of Engineering PGT)
4. RIO needs to implement tighter entrance criteria and make greater efforts to ensure the student mix is more balanced on some programmes (Management, Economics).
5. RIO needs to extend its international work to increase the marketing of less established programmes to help Programme Convenors increase their recruitment numbers. RIO also needs to produce programme brochures (Sociology).
6. University needs to increase the number of places on in-session English classes (Economics).
7. Concern exists regarding the quality and accuracy of information sent by RIO to prospective students (Urban Studies, Management)
8. Greater efforts need to be made to improve the way the University monitors the conversion of offers into acceptances and attendance as this will enable convenors to improve course planning and avoid the room booking problems associated with unpredictable student numbers (Management, Politics). Convenors in Management suggest a fees deposit system should be created to facilitate the collection and communication of this data, and enable marketing activities to be targeted towards areas in need of attention. (Management)
9. MLitt in Victorian Literature (SCS) argues for **admissions decisions not being transferred from academics to RIO**. They write: "We have worked with RIO, and are eager to continue doing so, in terms of streamlining and enhancing the application and admissions process. However, it is imperative for the survival of the degree that decision making on applications remains with the convenor of the Programme. This is directly related to recruitment and marketability – the academic reputation of the Programme is the vital asset we have for marketing. The close relationship between the academics who run the Programme can build with prospective students through direct involvement in acceptances not only ensures best possible conversion rates (of admissions offers into admitted students), but also enhances the degree Programme and future conversion to postgraduate research. The decision to offer a place to a student on a literary-studies degree has to be on the basis of academic assessment of writing samples and references, and to hand this over to RIO, in the case of English Literature PGTs, would be gravely damaging, and indeed I anticipate would bring about the end of the Programme". (Faculty of Arts PGT)

10. Two SCS MLitts also request **better tracking of applicants**, since advance information about which students will turn up is required for planning for staff resources. (Faculty of Arts PGT)
11. Humanities request “a more efficient system of **online programme applications** ... particularly for the submission of **references**”. (Faculty of Arts PGT)
12. SCCA say that slowness and other **problems in the admissions process** at the beginning of 2010 affected their 2010-11 intake. (Faculty of Arts PGT)
13. Develop further and increase level of language support for International students. (Faculty of Education PGT)
14. Assistance with marketing of postgraduate programmes. (Faculty of Education PGT)
15. Computing Science focused on the issue of retention of control over intake by the school. This was prompted by the intake of students from the Glasgow International College which they claim had a negative impact on one of the programmes this year (MSc in Information Technology). They did not vet the students that were admitted through GIC, and were not given information about students previous educational history. They would want the University must to ensure that GIC to release the student files, so they have an understanding of the prior abilities of students. (FIMS PGT)
16. Responses from RIO have been “variable”. There seem to have no appreciation of our target market and our different time line, even though there has been considerable correspondence. (Vet Medicine PGT)
17. The quality of some overseas students and their English Language skills remains a concern. Rigorous screening by the RIO of applicants coming from Glasgow International College is absolutely essential: IELTS 6.5 *must* be enforced and the academic background of candidates be of the correct field and level for entry to a Masters programme. (Vet Medicine PGT; FBLs PGT)
18. Improvement of the admissions process to reduce turnaround times, and increase communication with applicants - Requested by MSc(Dent Sci) Primary Dental Care; MSc(Med Sci) Health Care; MSc(Med Sci) Medical Genetics; MSc(Med Sci) Cardiovascular Sciences (Faculty of Medicine PGT)
19. PGT Programmes to be notified of dates when RIO are visiting ‘target’ countries - Requested by MRes Molecular Medicine (Faculty of Medicine PGT)

For the attention of the Director of Estates & Buildings

1. The need for an improved supply of large and small, well equipped rooms is an on-going concern (Mathematics).
2. There is a paucity of rooms that can be use for large group, non-traditional teaching. It is important that methods such as group work and other non-lecture based methods are catered for even for big classes (which we will always have in psychology). If we are to embrace more flexible methods then the appropriate physical spaces need to be provided. Traditional lecture halls are not conducive to these methods and small seminar rooms are too small. This limits the ambitions of the Department/School to innovate in teaching (Psychology).
3. Several Class Co-ordinators reported problems with obtaining suitable accommodation for small tutorial groups (usually about 10 students) and medium-sized workshops (usually 15-20 students). This was felt to be largely a result of the over-recruitment of students across the University, but there was a

general impression that Central Room Bookings had been over-stretched and unable to respond in a timely manner to requests from departments at the beginning of the 2009-10 session, adding considerable strain to departmental academic and administrative staff (Statistics).

4. Several AMRs noted the need for one or two LARGE lecture theatres to avoid need for so many lecture repeats. (FBLs)
5. To ensure that room bookings have facilities available for larger numbers of students (including the 25 extras from St Andrews (Medical School))
6. Lecture theatre upgrades were noted, but there are still poor designs (podia too far to one side), lack of AV instructions and poor trouble-shooting. Estates and Buildings are encouraged to consult widely when planning the refurbishment of teaching spaces. (FBLs)
7. Frustration about the lack of consultation with academic staff over the upgrading of lecture theatres (and the lack of confirmation that comments from academic staff in annual monitoring reports about problematic aspects of upgrades to learning and teaching spaces have been taken on board). This relates both to design (lecterns are not, now, universally provided and the poor redesign of some spaces make working with a laptop for a powerpoint presentation physically uncomfortable) and to scheduling of building/ repair works. (Faculty of Arts)
8. Ongoing construction works in the Modern Languages building (now Alexander Stone building) during term time meant not only noise pollution during teaching sessions, but also problems with dust and fumes which had Health & Safety implications. (Faculty of Arts)
9. There are repeated pleas for the nature of the teaching session to be taken into account in room bookings, in particular to ensure that seminar interaction is not impeded by inflexible, cavernous spaces. In addition, where classes have outgrown their booked rooms, solutions need to be found *during* the semester.(Faculty of Arts)
10. Please restore the photos of lecture rooms in the section of the CRB website dealing with equipment and layout supplied. This is particularly valuable when increased class sizes mean rooms need to be rebooked at short notice. (Hispanic.)
11. Seminar space continues to be at a premium in 65 Oakfield Avenue (Classics).
12. Improvements required to Central Room Bookings, in particular for timetabling to reduce the length of time required for courses to be allocated a room. (Faculty of Education)
13. Development of a new teaching block on the Garscube campus as per the submitted plans. (Vet Medicine)
14. Repairs to Cochno House and development of Cochno farm to bring it in line with modern farming practice. (Vet Medicine)
15. SCS reports that **limitations on teaching space** (as well as quality and diversity considerations) require evening teaching when insufficient staff are available. This problem, SCS argue, threatens the effort to recruit more PGT students. (Faculty of Arts PGT)
16. SCS also reports student complaints about the **size and temperature of teaching rooms** (MLitt in Creative Writing). (Faculty of Arts PGT)

17. Accommodation: Examine feasibility of booking University accommodation on Sundays. (University teaching spaces apparently cannot be booked on Sundays during study weekends. EdD programme hires Sunday teaching spaces at commercial rates). Better facilities for evening and weekend teaching were also requested (MSc PLE). (Education PGT)

For the attention of the Senior Management Group

1. We are constantly under pressure to introduce changes in response to student feedback and to implement new University policies, all of which seem to increase staff workload and take away time for designing and delivering innovative teaching (the more interesting parts of our job!). To ensure the programme is adequately staffed/supported, the University should take this increasing administration into account in the workload model, or should look at ways of reducing bureaucracy. (Medical School)
2. Many course coordinators expressed anxiety over the future of their subject area as well as that of specific courses in Glasgow University as the full impact of the University re-structuring together with the forthcoming budget cuts are not known. This uncertainty, together with the current trends of increasing student numbers, decreasing staff and continuous — and often non-budget-related — wide-ranging changes everywhere create a stressful, sub-optimal teaching and learning environment. This is a serious issue in need of attention and many staff members emphasise in their reports that this is the single most important task for the university to improve our current delivery of teaching. Business side of things is obviously necessary but our business is research and education, lest we forget. (FBLS)
3. Most reports emphasised the importance of **dedicated Subject support staff**, whose numbers have been reduced by restructuring. It is essential that the College and University monitor this situation, which threatens to make staff less effective and to diminish the student experience. One report mentions the importance of clerical support throughout the entire PGT process, from admissions to aftercare. (Faculty of Arts PGT - SCS, SCCA, and SMLC reports)
4. A number of reports talk about the **pressure of restructuring** and the **pressure to provide new and revised PGT programmes**. Reports emphasise the **importance of consultation** of Schools and Subjects by the College and University on plans to make changes to PGT programmes (their structure, administration, or admissions processes), and concerns are expressed about these pressures diminishing the student experience. (Faculty of Arts PGT)
5. Continue to recognise the valuable contribution of staff whose main role is teaching, as well as research active staff within the University, with equal opportunity for career progression. (Dental School)
6. Ensure that staffing levels and skill-mix are maintained / increased to cope with the expected numbers of students in the coming years. (Dental School)
7. The **importance of websites** is also mentioned in many reports. Funds are requested to revamp postgraduate web pages, given how essential they are to prospective students. SCCA's report complains that restructuring has left the University's website "in a mess", undermining international recruitment. In this context, it is important to note considerable anecdotal evidence that **Subjects consider it essential that they retain clear and easily located identities** on

8. "It is essential to **maintain the full spectrum of modern languages** currently on offer in SMLC if we are to continue to attract overseas students who are mainly interested in studying European culture and cinema (as they are coming from a mainly North American or Asian background). So far the programme has attracted students from the USA, from Japan and from Canada (apart from EU countries such as: Greece, Spain, Belgium and France)." (School of Modern Languages and Cultures)
9. Flexibility with budgets: Some programmes requested budget flexibility as PGT programmes tend to run from September to September, whilst the University's end of financial year occurs at the end of July. The MSc (Dent Sci) Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery reported that the requirement for funds to attend conferences and fulfil the research project is greater in year two of this programme. As the Enhanced Fee cannot be carried over from one year to the next, it would be highly beneficial to have a smaller Enhanced Fee in year one, and the larger balance of an Enhanced Fee in year two. (Faculty of Medicine PGT)

For the attention of the Head of the Registry

1. Address concerns about after-hours (6pm and Saturday morning) exams (impacting particularly on students with childcare responsibilities). (Faculty of Arts) – *jointly with the Head of the Equality and Diversity Unit*
2. Address concerns about the late publication of the exam timetable (impacting particularly on international students). (Faculty of Arts) – *jointly with the Head of the Equality and Diversity Unit*
3. Facilitate the publication of *exam* results by Subjects. At present, students receive only an aggregate course mark and – short of contacting the course convenor (extremely impractical for a course with 100s of students) – cannot find out their exam grades. This doesn't help the overall performance in exams. (Faculty of Arts)
4. The Statistics 1C examination (for about 350 students) was scheduled for the Saturday afternoon of the May holiday weekend. This made it extremely difficult to recruit the large number of invigilators required to cope with the main examination as well as several students who had special requirements. It was suggested that Registry should urgently reconsider the advisability of holding examinations on Saturday afternoons, especially on holiday weekends. (FIMS)
5. Exam timetable: the May diet was too compressed, leading to some highly undesirable timetabling, too short an exam preparation period in some subjects, and some unsuitable rooms being used. There was also some suggestion of inequity in examination timetabling in Level-3: in some programmes, both papers were examined early and close together; in others, they were more spread out with more revision time and some evidence of better results in the second paper. One particular complaint was examinations next to the Department of Music's Studio where audible drum practice was in progress: this is not acceptable. (FBLS)
6. A lot of staff time is spent chasing students who have poor attendance only to find that the student has already withdrawn. An effective method for notifying

course coordinators immediately a student withdraws from the University would be very helpful. (Faculty of Physical Sciences)

7. Improve the process and efficiency of registration and fee payment for distance students. Difficulties with postal applications at Registry and systems and structures required to support part time students (noted MSc IE). (Faculty of Education PGT)

For the attention of the Director of the Equality & Diversity Unit

1. Address concerns about after-hours (6pm and Saturday morning) exams (impacting particularly on students with childcare responsibilities). (Faculty of Arts) – *jointly with the Head of Registry*
2. Address concerns about the late publication of the exam timetable (impacting particularly on international students). (Faculty of Arts) – *jointly with the Head of Registry*
3. Rethink the gathering of information from students and staff about how equality and diversity issues are dealt with in the classroom and curriculum. (Faculty of Arts)

For the attention of the Director of the Student Lifecycle Project

1. Ensure that within the new system subjects that are not taught at school do not get 'lost' and that complementary subjects (e.g. languages for History of Art students) are flagged appropriately when students are making their choices. (Arts UG)

For the attention of the Convener of the Chief Advisers Sub-committee (Clerk of Senate)

1. There needs to be an improved awareness amongst Academic Advisers of the differences between the two Level 1 Mathematics streams (1R/1S and 1X/1Y). There are too many students taking 1X who are actually planning to drop Mathematics beyond Level 2 (Mathematics)
2. Many students are confused about what a designated degree is, i.e. what it's worth and what they can do with it. It would be very beneficial for the students if more information was available explicitly explaining this (Psychology)
3. A number of students had to transfer from the Arts Faculty to do the Designated Degree in Psychology. This is because within Arts designated degree programmes do not allow students to take a full 120-credit L3 course. Whilst students praised their advisers of studies, this was still a confusing process for students and the process could be improved in future. (Psychology)
4. Computing Science outlined concerns for the support for the Academic Advising. They will be losing a number of advisers through retirement over the next two years. As the School prepares to accommodate this loss of experience, they felt it was unlikely that will be able to significantly increase their current advising provision (Computer Science)
5. Concerns were expressed that the University is preparing to cut back on the role of the adviser of studies by introducing a system whereby students will receive automated curriculum advice via Campus Solutions (a new campus-wide software system that will be deployed next summer). The School is concerned about the impact on students if such an important aspect of the advising role is undertaken by computer (Computer Science)

For the attention of the Clerk of Senate

1. The number of scholarships should be increased (Politics).
2. SCS urge the creations of **scholarships** “for the diversification of the student body”. (Faculty of Arts PGT)

For the attention of the Convener of the Education Policy & Strategy Committee

1. Consideration of effective ways of supporting distance education students (Faculty of Education)
2. The University has introduced a new student feedback questionnaire apparently without giving adequate consideration to the overhead involved in collating responses. The previous questionnaire that the School formerly used was certainly not ideal, but at least the responses could be collated via OCR. However for 2009-10, due to the lack of administrative support within the school, the task of collating the Likert-scale responses and summarising the written responses fell to (academic) course coordinators. The University of Glasgow aspires to be one of the top 50 research intensive universities in the world. This surely cannot be achieved if academic staff are spending their time on activities such as totting up student responses to evaluation questionnaires (Computer Science)
3. Statistics made use of the new university-wide student questionnaire in all its classes in Session 2009-10. This questionnaire had not been made available electronically, so the department had to return to using paper-based questionnaires. This seemed to increase response rates but hugely increased the workload of administrative staff in transcribing responses on to electronic spreadsheets (Statistics)
4. There were a number of negative comments concerning the new feedback questionnaire and its administration, with a few reports requesting that the university revise it (FIMS)
5. Student questionnaires need reviewed. Consideration should be given to finding ways to improve response rates and link comments made with the programme origin of respondents (Sociology, Urban Studies).

For the attention of the Convener of the Academic Standards Committee

1. The disparity between the length of semester 1 in comparison with semester 2, and the associated difference in the time available to prepare for exams, is a continuing issue both for staff and students. The University should consider whether the current structure of the academic year is providing students with the best conditions for learning, particularly given the compression of the first semester due to December examinations. (Faculty of Engineering)
2. Staff (and in some cases External Examiners) have commented on the use of 90 min exams. These are felt to be too short to allow proper examination for student’s understanding of the subject. (Faculty of Engineering)
3. Increased access to programme information for external examiners: The MRes Molecular Medicine has suggested that external examiners be granted access to a shared drive on the University server, to obtain documentation related to the programme and the Exam Board. Alternatively, a secure web site could be set up for this purpose. (Faculty of Medicine PGT)

For the attention of the Vice Principal Strategy & Resources

1. Most reports emphasise that the recruitment levels and sustainability of PGT programmes, which the University seeks, require funds for **adequate marketing**, dedicated to specific programmes and targeted at key markets (e.g. in North America). (The point is made, for example, by two SCS MLitts and a SCCA MLitt). (Faculty of Arts)
2. SCCA argues for maintaining suitable spending on **books for the Library**, since, for example, Art History still depends strongly on printed and expensive books that are not readily available in other libraries. (Faculty of Arts PGT)
3. SCCA speaks of the unsatisfactory conditions for music lectures—mentioned also in student feedback—as reported in previous AMRs, and asks the University to “fulfil its longstanding commitment to a **new building for Music**” (Faculty of Arts)
4. Computing Science requested that the University’s bring pressure to bear on the Scottish government to resume its previously successful separate support for the MSc in Information Technology degree whose graduates have always fed strongly into the technical infrastructure of Scotland. (FIMS PGT)

For the attention of the Vice Principal Learning & Teaching

1. Further promotion of continuing professional development in learning and teaching for academic staff to raise status of teaching within the University. Improve mentoring for probationary staff and clarify relationship between probation targets and P&DR (PGCert AP). (Faculty of Education PGT)
2. Technical support for programmes delivered via e-learning: Requested by MSc(Med Sci) Sport and Exercise Medicine. The programme has not received any technical support from the University to date, as the Faculty purchased the license for Adobe Connect, which is not centrally supported (Faculty of Medicine PGT)

For the attention of the Director of Corporate Communications

1. Search Engine Optimisation: The university websites and pick up by search engines need to be improved and monitored as several programmes have slipped down the list produced doing a Google search and the individual pages picked up by the search engine relate to old pages in the website and to not so useful pages. The programme prospectus pages are not being picked up by Google directly. (Faculty of Medicine PGT)

For the attention of the Director of the Senate Office

1. Increased support for staff detecting plagiarism: The MRes Molecular Medicine requested that Senate be more supportive of staff who detect and report plagiarism. The Programme Director of this particular programme wrote to the Senate Assessor for Discipline in light of a plagiarism issue but felt that despite devoting an enormous amount of work to this case that the outcome letter appeared to trivialise the situation. (Faculty of Medicine PGT)
2. Staff training required on student policies and procedures: The MRes Molecular Medicine felt it would be useful to have a training session on Codes of Conduct, to help determine when a particular policy or procedure would apply, to ensure that disciplinary matters were dealt with swiftly and appropriately. (Faculty of Medicine PGT)

For the attention of the Director of IT Services

1. Transfer of sound/audio to adjacent teaching room in Gardiner Institute - Requested by MSc(Med Sci) Cardiovascular Sciences (Faculty of Medicine PGT)
2. Problems with Video-Conferencing link quality – improvements required. (Dumfries Campus)

For the attention of the Acting Director of the Learning & Teaching Centre and the Head of the EFL Unit

1. Online resource for overseas students on scientific report writing: It has been suggested that it would be helpful if the Learning and Teaching Centre and EFL Unit could generate an online resource providing advice and guidance on writing scientific reports for overseas students. The information on the web site at the moment, seems to be predominantly aimed at essay-writing. (Medicine PGT)

For the attention of the Head of Learning and Technology

1. SCS reports student complaints about the **slowness of Moodle**. (Faculty of Arts PGT)

For the attention of the Head of the College of Arts

1. SCCA request **another lecturer in Popular Music Studies**. (Faculty of Arts)
2. Music requests that its **separate identity** be maintained in the new structure. (Faculty of Arts, SCCA)

For the attention of the Head of the College of MVLS and/or the Dean Learning & Teaching

1. Continue to increase clinical capacity to cope with the direct entry of approximately 30 additional students to Year 3 in 2010. (Medical School)
2. Discussion between University and NHS to facilitate the above by ensuring that contracts are appropriate, that teaching is included in Consultant contracts and that SPAs are not removed. (Medical School)
3. Ensure that lecture theatre & FRS accommodation is prioritised for Year 3 – numbers expected to be about 275 students in 2010-2011 but may be 290+ in subsequent years. (Medical School)
4. Increase resources for Year 3 – recruitment becoming difficult from NHS staff with full job plans, clinical academics are not all being replaced. (Medical School)
5. It would help to maintain good IT support within the Medical School to ensure efficient preparation of examiner data (Medical School)
6. To ensure that software is available to enable psychometric analysis of the OSCE data. (Medical School)
7. To ensure that room availability can be introduced for extra academic days during the final 2 years of the course (Fridays are a possibility) (Medical School)
8. Whilst the transition to a structure based upon Colleges and Research Institutes has apparently been successfully implemented there remains considerable uncertainty among those members of staff who deliver the Course as to their position within the University. (BSc MedSci)

9. It is also not immediately apparent as to how FTE's will be assigned within the College with regards to those with "School" or "Institute" (or joint) appointments. (BSc MedSci)