University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 28 May 2010

Report from the Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Officers Group on Annual Monitoring for Session 2008-09

Prof. Martin Beirne (Convener)/ Mrs Catherine Omand (Clerk)

1. Introduction

The Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Officers (FQAEO) Group oversees the Annual Monitoring process, ensuring effectiveness, promoting responsiveness, reviewing progress, facilitating dialogue and identifying key issues and areas for attention at both Faculty and University level. For the 2008-09 exercise, a new Faculty summary report was introduced to improve reflective analysis and promote consistency across the University. This has assisted the Group in identifying common issues and sharing good practice.

2. Consideration of Annual Monitoring Reports by the FQAEO Group

The FQAEO Group considers Faculty overview reports for undergraduate provision in March and those for postgraduate taught programmes (PGT) in April each year. A consolidated overview of outcomes and engagement with the Annual Monitoring exercise is then submitted to ASC in May.

Following a successful pilot event last June, the Senate Office had hoped to offer additional workshops on "getting the most out of Annual Monitoring" to promote consistency and the sharing of good practice, and also to enhance staff engagement with the AMR process. These slipped down the priority list as a result of workload commitments linked to the restructuring exercise, though will be scheduled when the new arrangements are settled and appropriate revisions to the annual monitoring exercise become clear.

Few departments submitted the additional scrutiny reports that were introduced to demonstrate local engagement, active review and responsive decision making alongside the AMR process. Fresh thinking has been applied to the issues here as a result the restructuring project, with proposals for College scrutiny and formal reporting incorporated within a submission to VP Coton on viable ways forward for Annual Monitoring and quality enhancement from 1st August.

The pilot programme of joint evaluation and collegiate presentation of submissions by fellow quality officers (modelled on the approach adopted by ASC for the scrutiny of DPTLA reports) was not considered useful or more effective than personal presentations as a means of promoting dialogue and collective reflection. In part, this was due to the limited timescales involved and availability of colleagues to attend the key meetings.

From the reports, there appeared to be some confusion over the monitoring of engagement with Equality and Diversity matters at course and programme level. A large number of departments failed to complete this section or confused it with issues around Student Disability Services. Consequently, references to equality and diversity have been adjusted within the form for next session to encourage reflection as part of the regular agenda for review, rather than as a separate matter.

The Group regularly expressed the concern that programme leaders and conveners in some areas, especially those involved with PGT programmes, demonstrated a limited sense of engagement with the AMR process. There was also a certain degree of scepticism expressed on the value of the exercise since outcomes were not evident. The Group also identified that, although there was much positive practice, the process of how best to spread awareness of good practice was currently limited and that this required to be addressed.

The documentation may have contributed to a reticence on the part of some conveners (who expressed concerns about the detail required and/or complained about the arduous nature of the process). However, several reports were extremely thin and descriptive. It is hoped that the introduction of engagement workshops of the sort envisaged above will encourage wider participation and claim space for value and relevance to a greater extent.

3. Progress in addressing key issues from previous AMRs

The recurring nature of issues, themes and points for action identified in the annual reports captured regular attention this session. There were frequent calls for systematic feedback, regular updates and greater transparency about improvements secured, challenges confronted and action points listed for support services or academic committees as a result of the monitoring exercise. This was considered to be important for effectiveness, to demonstrate the value of engaging with the process rather than presenting it as a detached requirement, and to promote co-ordinated action and development across the various areas of University activity (see 10.1).

There is a consensus among FQAEOs that the addition of a formal feedback phase will enhance the process, connect programmes, committee structures and academic leaders in a more visible and attractive two way process. At a minimum, this would mean presenting summary reports and action areas for Faculty and central service attention, tracking responses and providing direct communications on progress to local quality officers and convenors so that those completing the AMRs are fully aware of outcomes and impact. Again, this is partly a matter of building confidence in the process, preventing slippage on enhancement and promoting co-ordinated coverage of key issues and areas for improvement.

Although progress is acknowledged on the accommodation and teaching technology front, some on-going issues are causing frustration, especially at the PG level where the absence of flexible space for extended contact with premium fee students continues to pose problems. Additionally, within the Faculty of Arts, the expressed need for adequate practice space for Music and Theatre Studies is focused and pressing, and has been repeatedly called to attention over several years (see 10.2.1).

Retention remains a serious issue for the Faculty of Engineering. Although various initiatives have been introduced to enhance mentoring and tutoring provision, only a moderate improvement is discernible. The Faculty is currently considering a shift in focus from pastoral support initiatives to a more basic review of programme structure and management during the first two years of learning and teaching.

4. Feedback from Students

Student satisfaction was evident in all of the reports. Where minor issues had been raised, appropriate steps were taken within reasonable timescales to address concerns. High levels of satisfaction were also evidenced by NSS data and the First Year Student Experience Survey.

There was also considerable evidence of student engagement with course content, including expressions of appreciation for staff expertise, teaching methods and

propensity for innovative delivery, especially via simulations, 'active learning' exercises, the use of guest speakers, and VLE/MOODLE enhancements. It is evident that many colleagues are committed to engaging with their students and supporting them by appropriate and innovative means.

Common examples of good practice are included in Appendix 1.

5. Feedback from teaching staff

Academic staff tended to focus on areas that required improvement, rather than calling attention to particularly effective and successful contributions. However, the following areas of satisfaction were identified by FQAEOs:

- Regular teaching team consultation about materials, delivery and dialogue about administration and course development. Clear evidence of strategic thinking and long term planning, and focused engagement with the discipline and students (Arts)

- In Dentistry, staff comments were generally positive. Participation in practical skill building and employability sessions were particularly valued by student groups

- Consultation arrangements with staff were successful in capturing year-related issues (Dentistry)

- Course Coordinators reported that the process of completing ACMRs encouraged reflection on both course organisation and individual teaching (Dentistry)

- The introduction and development of degree programmes during recent years has been intensive yet rewarding, with colleagues in Education and LBSS highlighting successes as well as resource pressures attached to sustainability

- Significant progress in improving communication lines between staff and students through focus groups and informal/social gatherings, notably in Engineering and Psychology

- The course teachers commented on the motivation of the students and their ability to engage in the teaching with discussion and questions. The range of student backgrounds helped promote this and made the teaching experience a good one (Nursing)

- All of the available submissions called attention to the essential role of administrative and support staff in providing a responsive service to students and an excellent, rounded experience

Academic concerns focused on resources, staffing levels, inadequate accommodation and the new structure of the academic year. Further details are provided in section 10.2.

Additional issues can be summarized as follows:

- Staff continued to be disappointed by the level of student attendance at lectures. The importance of lecture attendance is regularly emphasised, although this appears to be a pervasive problem. 'Latecomers' also tend to be disruptive

- There was concern regarding the level of preparation by some students (Dentistry) and there was also great concern amongst Engineering staff regarding the lack of basic mathematical skills possessed by entrants. Although some progress has been made in improving skills through diagnostic testing and extensive tutoring, poor maths skills remains a problem, and undoubtedly impacts upon retention

- In Psychology, staff noted concerns about the limited statistical and experimental design knowledge students had when entering the honours stream. A committee has been set up to review courses from Level 1 to 4 and propose solutions

- There was concern amongst some FBLS Level-3 coordinators that students were not well enough prepared for Honours level work by their experiences at lower levels. This was a particular concern in the more molecular subjects and also where numeracy skills were critical. Also, some students were not bothering to collect assessed coursework, including formative feedback

- In the Faculty of Education, comments were recorded about the inappropriateness of some University and Faculty level arrangements and regulations that are ill-suited to CertHE students, such as CR/credit refused for students who had stopped attending, lack of minimum attendance requirement, the 'declaration of originality' form, the short teaching year and the excessive gap between the end of the course and the exam

6. Feedback from External Examiners

Overall feedback from the External Examiner community is extremely positive, confirming that standards are broadly comparable with other Russell Group institutions, and exceeding many other institutions. Programme and course leaders have positive relationships with External Examiners who are considered to play a central role in the maintenance of standards and enhancement of quality (not least by commenting on strengths and areas for development). In general, teaching staff respond appropriately to the comments and suggestions noted in reports and feedback documents.

The External Examiners for Psychology were particularly concerned about the very short time available for marking due to the new timetable and the potentially negative impact on the quality of assessment. The department agreed that extremely tight marking deadlines may have a serious and unfair impact upon future marking of final examinations.

The External Examiner for Civil Engineering commented adversely on the effect of shortening 10-credit examination components to 90 minutes. This was consistent with the views of staff and students. This Examiner was also unhappy about the practice of holding Exam Boards in January, which effectively froze students' results. Consequently, the June Exam Board had less scope to make any adjustments on the basis of a student's full set of results.

7. Results

Extracting the relevant information from the Student Success Performance Indicators (SSPI) data available on the Planning Office website continues to be challenging for report compilers (some refusing to deal with this), and additional manipulation is frequently necessary to support reflection on trends. Staff completed the results section, though often with little detailed commentary. The Student Lifecycle Project might enable solutions to be explored.

In Dentistry, there were no major variations in the results, given that this was the first time that the entire 2004 Curriculum had been examined, although data available for comparison had been limited.

Low pass rates were identified in the First year courses shared by Aerospace Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. The two subjects cover important fundamental material, and weaknesses here had a bearing on retention and on the students' ability to cope with subsequent courses. In both cases, the class size is around 250 students, making tutorial provision difficult. As additional shared teaching

between Departments would be inevitable in the coming years, the Faculty will need to consider how these large classes can be supported, and important fundamental subjects taught.

One major area of comment raised by FBLS concerned the impact of the new Academic Year on timetabling and assessment structures at Level 2. Semester 1 courses completed and examined before Christmas generally had better results than the previous year, where a direct comparison was possible. Semester 2 courses had poorer results and lack of any staff-student interaction after the Easter break was considered to be the reason for this.

LBSS reports suggest that QA&E processes currently make it difficult to relate poor performance in formal assessment to questions about course design or delivery. However, some Examination Boards now actively review student performance against such basic matters, and this is beginning to provide benefits. Elsewhere, there was some indication that departments were addressing low performance by considering examiners' approaches.

8. Quality Enhancement

There is still significant variation in AMR reports, in terms of content, scrutiny and engagement with the process, with room for improvement in the quality of information provided. Some departments still fail to use the annual monitoring process as a tool for enhancement. In addition, some of the enhancement activity that departments observe does not appear to be reported. Enhancements resulting from DPTLA recommendations or from accreditation by professional and statutory bodies, or good practice identified in DPTLA reports, are generally not included in reports.

Heads of Departments generally failed to submit a report on local scrutiny of completed AMRs. This mechanism was intended to provide a vehicle for departmental comment on more general enhancements and to help identify key issues for the attention of the Faculty and the University. The announcement of academic restructuring at the beginning of Session 2009-10, and subsequent timetable, may have had implications for this part of the process. However, restructuring also heightens the importance of delivering truly representative views of the provision, and following this with co-ordinated and effective plans and interventions, both remedial and developmental.

There is strong evidence that many academic colleagues continue to update and enhance their programmes, in response to student and staff feedback, and also developments in the wider environment.

Examples of enhancement are noted in Appendix 1.

9. Topics of Current Importance

The information contained in Faculty AMRs is attached as a separate appendix (Appendix 2) for easy reference by those who may wish to promote further reflection or action on the findings.

10. Action identified for the attention of the University

10.1 Issues resolved from last year

- Instructions for IT equipment now provided in central teaching venues
- IT support framework established, including the centralised help desk

- Vice-Principal (Strategy and Resources) responded to issues raised regarding physical accommodation, and confirmed the various items included in the University's forward projections for Capital Expenditure
- Measures taken to improve accommodation for classes of 30-40 students (though not for numbers under 20)

Faculty of Arts

- Standard end-of-year questionnaire adopted
- Faculty of Arts UG Studies Committee initiated a review of double marking/moderation procedures. Impact would not be felt until 2010-11
- Course Enhancement Grants used

Faculty of Biomedical &Life Sciences

- A new Teaching Manager was appointed during the year and a replacement of a University Teacher. Some new procedures have been put in place to help with the workload problems experienced by BTC staff last year
- Improvements over the last year of rolling programme of centrally booked teaching spaces. Short-term upgrade of AV facilities on Level 9 of the Boyd Orr Building. However, a lack of clear instructions on use of equipment remains an issue and poor trouble-shooting **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**

Dentistry

- Progress towards development of new teaching resources with a view to changing the mode of delivery of microscopy from traditional to virtual
- A high resolution scanning digital microscope has been purchased with NHS funding, and teaching material will be developed over this next academic year, with a view to launching virtual microscopy in the academic year 2010-2011. This will have an impact on various teaching modules, such as oral biology and oral pathology. Further capital investment is required to refurbish the classroom in which teaching will be delivered **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**
- A strategy for feedback has been drawn up, which includes a commitment that Undergraduates will receive feedback within 15 working days from submission. The provision of feedback at the end of clinical sessions also being reviewed with a view to standardising procedures in all clinical areas
- Pre-Clinical Skills Facility upgrade. This project commenced in February 2010, funded though ACT (D0 from the NHS)
- An UG Patient Waiting List Coordinator has been appointed by the NHS to manage the waiting lists for UG treatment

Faculty of Education

- Review of scholarship arrangements (to include consideration of the position of international students from developing countries)
- Improvements for mentoring staff undertaking the New Lecturer and Teaching Programme
- Refurbishment of some teaching accommodation has been undertaken

Faculty of Engineering

- Difficulty students had with programming in *Matlab* addressed. A new programming element has been added to the 2nd year Engineering Skills module

where students now receive formal tuition in programming from Year 1 to Year 3, the aim being to give them confidence to write programmes independently as part of project and design work in the later years

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences

- Some upgrading of 'plug and play' technology in teaching accommodation

Faculty of Medicine

- Resource constraints regarding maternity cover were drawn to attention of the Gender Equality group
- A second diet of final examinations has been introduced

Nursing

- Clinical skills teaching has been increased across the programme with opportunities to shadow health care managers
- Issues in relation to one of the teaching venues (Turnbull Hall) have been addressed with the exception of the provision of blackout blinds, which are to be fitted this year
- Continued support for students in clinical practice has been maintained by the allocation of a link lecturer to each student

Faculty of Physical Sciences

- The Observatory, used as an Astronomy teaching laboratory space, was in need of improvement to cope with larger class sizes. This refurbishment is scheduled for Summer 2010
- The development of space for more laboratories has been implemented in Joseph Black Building for final year project students. The timescale for refurbishment was longer than anticipated and hence, in this session, space issues for final year project students were again a problem. However, with laboratory refurbishment now completed, this issue should ease in the next session and is being monitored
- The lighting and data projector issues in the Physical Lecture Theatre (Joseph Black Building) have been fixed

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

- A review of ethical use of staff/student pets and guidelines for their use is being prepared by the Faculty Ethics committee
- Development of the anatomy teaching space, to accommodate the increase in student numbers was included in the capital budget plan for 08-09
- Provision of increased teaching space for clinical skills and provision of a budget for equipment for the CSL and the provision of more small group teaching spaces currently under consideration as part of the review of the future use of the 'old' small animal hospital site and the proposal for the building and development of a new teaching facility
- The move to the new Small animal hospital was achieved prior to the start of session 09-10 with minimal disruption to teaching for either session 08-09 and 09-10
- Plans were submitted by the Faculty for the development of teaching and social facilities at Garscube, in the form of a new building. The design fees for the new building have been approved by the university

10.2 Areas identified for action by the University

The following points have been identified for action by the University (and, where possible, for the attention of specified individuals):

10.2.1 Ongoing Accommodation Issues

- Inadequate accommodation for practice-based work in Music and Theatre Studies. This is a major source of frustration and a matter of regular attention over the last 10 years. The lack of adequate response is undermining faith in the Annual Monitoring process and affecting staff morale

- Capital redevelopment at the Dental Hospital and School.   The lecture theatres and seminar rooms are now of a high standard and the lift and window replacement programmes are delivering positive results. However, the eventual outcome of the re-design project established by the NHS remains unclear, particularly in the current financial climate, and there is still significant major refurbishment required

- Problems with Central Room Bookings persist. In particular, these relate to communication issues, unsuitable allocations, and the serious shortage of small tutorial space across the University.   More flexibility over timetabling/room allocation is requested as well as the allocation of in-house teaching spaces for each department by CRB as far as possible to aid both lecturers and students

- A number of classrooms across the University are unsatisfactory on account of weak technology, occasional lack of cleanliness, and the absence of effective controls for temperature and humidity

- Lecture theatre 222 (Kelvin Building) is a key teaching space for P&A, yet the blackboards are unusable, the AV equipment has problems and there are several broken chairs

- C407 (Joseph Black Building) is cramped and suffers from poor sight lines

- Mcall lecture theatre electronic blinds systems are ineffective

FQAEOs propose that a refurbishment schedule for learning and teaching space is published (and updated) as a matter of routine on *MyGlasgow* so that staff can keep track of developments called to attention via annual monitoring **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**

It is worth noting that the Education Policy and Strategy Committee has recently established a working group to determine the future strategy for investment in learning and teaching space and the outcome of that Working Group is awaited with interest.

10.2.2 Generic issues

The Group highlighted the following recurring themes for the attention of ASC:

- Staffing - major concerns were expressed about pressures on staff, including shortages (from positions not being replaced following departures or retiral), cuts in support/contract staff, and consequent workload for remaining teaching staff. Departments had limited ability to cover staff absence and there was reliance on retired staff to provide teaching. There was also a lack of demonstrators/support staff for practical classes.   Staff morale is particularly low in FBLS, Dentistry and Medicine

- New Academic Year Structure – colleagues are increasingly concerned about the structure of the academic year, and in particular the imbalance between the 1st and 2nd semesters. The first semester is considered to be too short with insufficient time for consolidation, feedback and revision. Lecturing staff had been forced to compress the course material to leave room for revision and tutorials ahead of the December exams. There had also been a reduction in turn-around time for marking the May exam diet due to changes in the exam timetable and earlier submission deadline to Registry **[Action: Academic Structures Implementation Group]**

- Examinations - difficult timetable arrangements mean that some examinations are taking place in the evening. Request for examination schedules to be adjusted to permit more time for marking **[Action: Academic Structures Implementation Group]**

- AMR form considered to be too long and overly complicated. **[Action: already taken by Senate Office]**

- More PGT scholarships to enhance programmes with low student numbers and support UK/EU participation to sustain interest, applications and participation rates from wider international groups

- Revision of PGT admissions procedures to include more thorough screening of applications before they are forwarded to Programme Conveners and the routine involvement of PGT programme staff in decisions regarding offers of places on PGT programmes **[Action: Director of Recruitment and International Office]**

10.2.3 Faculty-specific issues

Faculty of Arts

- Use of Turnitin software variable not universally helpful in Arts
- Difficulty in translating marks for study years abroad. Working Party set up to report to the UG Studies Committee during Session 2009-10
- Review underway concerning appropriate scrutiny of GTA marking
- Revision to the timing of AMR cycle: support for June submission date for departments but this would not include review of External Examiner reports
- Revision week - official status? If not, earlier start to the exam timetable **[Action: Academic Regulations Sub-committee**
- SMLC - stress caused by renovations to the Hetherington Building in 2008-09. Request for rethinking of how renovations are carried out during teaching weeks and staff using teaching spaces consulted about refurbishment **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**

Faculty of Biomedical &Life Sciences

- Refurbishment of Biology 1 laboratories and SCENE vital. 209 in the Graham Kerr Building also in urgent need of refurbishment **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**

Dentistry

- Rollover of centralised lecture theatre bookings did not happen this year, with the result that some of the lectures immediately preceding Anatomy dissection

could not be timetabled to take place in an Anatomy lecture theatre **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**

- The teaching laboratory on Level 8 of the Dental Hospital and School (Room K27) is in need of refurbishment to bring it into line with the other teaching facilities within the building **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**
- 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 **[Action: Vice Principal Teaching & Learning]**

Faculty of Education

- The current University Travel Agency is considered to be very expensive for students when booking field trips **[Action: Head of Procurement, University Purchasing Office]**
- Short semesters, and long gap between end of course and examination, are not appropriate for part-time students **[Action: Academic Structures Working Group]**
- A reduction in the size and complexity of the Annual Monitoring Report form would focus the reporting process **[AMR form has been revised for Session 2009-10]**
- No major changes in the organisation of administrative staff for programmes. However, further discussions underway due to the introduction of new Research and Knowledge Transfer groups within the Faculty and recent University restructuring

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences

- Psychology requests examinations schedules to be adjusted to permit more time to maintain quality in the marking process **[Action: Academic Structures Implementation Group]**
- The provision of careers advice tailored to designated degree students was suggested by Psychology to enhance the course for students **[Action: Director of Careers Service]**
- There is some concern that some students are not coming to the attention of the Disabilities Service through self-referral. With some students there does seem to be some misplaced concerns about confidentiality and also misunderstandings about the status of mental illness as a disability. Given the excellent and extensive publicity for this service it is not clear how these issues can be overcome. However it is clear that there are some artificial barriers that stop students getting prompt assistance from the beginning of their course **[Action: Director of Student Disability Service]**

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences

- A lead on Advising and Support is awaited and expected from the Centre **[Senate to receive a report on 3 June 2010)]**
- There continues to be a need for evaluation as to whether the new code of assessment is being applied effectively **[Action: Academic Regulations Sub-committee]**
- A need for greater 'reporting-back' to departmental QA&E officers of issues identified and subsequently referred to other Faculty/central committees or working groups for action **[Action: Faculty Quality Assurance & Enhancement Officers]**

- Management highlighted concerns as to the reliability of the University's IT infrastructure, particularly in relation to Turnitin at Levels 1 and 2: technical problems are stressful, add to administrative burden on support staff, and generate considerable increases in email traffic and work for teaching staff
- Law reports greater dissatisfaction over the timetabling of examinations, with more than ever being squeezed into a tighter time frame **[Action: Academic Structures Working Group]**
- Management requests further guidance and clarification of best practice in the translation of overseas grades attained by Glasgow exchange students **[Action: Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching]**
- Economic and Social History notes that the joint honours outcome data on the planning office website is confusing and unclear, making it impossible to obtain the figures with ease, confidence or accuracy **[Action: Head of Planning Services]**
- It may be desirable to consider whether external examiners can be assisted and encouraged to help identify enhancement themes, and possibly also comment upon assessment feedback arrangements **[Action: already taken by Senate Office – revised form for Session 2010-11]**

Faculty of Medicine

- Clinical capacity/teaching in hospitals – this was a key issue last year and continues to be an issue. In Year 3 there will be additional students from St Andrews, therefore additional capacity will be required. There has been some progress on this; however, more is required which will necessarily involve negotiations with the NHS **[Action: Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources)]**
- Both staff and students alike found the first term very long and tiring. Require a "reading week" in week eight of session one. Not all teaching can be fitted into the 11 week timetable given that many teaching staff have NHS contracts. It has been difficult to get rooms for exams in the assessment period **[Action: Academic Structures Working Group]**
- Loss of the September weekend was seen as not family-friendly and there were transport difficulties for staff and students due to the reduced service
- The process of obtaining ethics approval for student projects is unnecessarily lengthy and complicated. Simplification would enhance the learning experience for students and quality of life for staff as the project period is short in relative terms **[Action: Faculty of Medicine Ethics Committee]**
- Concerns about space shortages due to the closure for refurbishment of the Queen Elizabeth Building at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. Also the main lecture theatre (out with CRB) used for delivery of the programme was closed in November for refurbishment. This was meant to last three weeks but took nine months – CRB were unable to provide any alternative accommodation on several occasions. (Tennent Lecture Theatre, Western Infirmary) **[Action: Director of Estates and Buildings]**
- The timing of the IT updates to the Computing Clusters requires review. In light of the earlier start of the academic session there was insufficient time to ensure all necessary software was available, especially with software licences expiring at the end of August **[Action: Director of IT Services]**

Nursing

- Accredited CPD courses generate fee income for the University, but unlike UG or PG degrees, there is no support for admissions. It would be enormously helpful if applications could be logged centrally on DAS **[Action: Director of Recruitment and International Office]**

11. Conclusion

The Academic Standards Committee is asked **to note** the following:

- The need for revision of membership and management of Annual Monitoring following Academic Restructuring
- The proposal for additional workshops on "Getting the most out of Annual Monitoring" following Academic Restructuring
- Emphasis to be placed on the importance of scrutinising AMRs at School Learning and Teaching Committees
- The requirement to improving feedback mechanism to departments
- The need to improve PG involvement in the annual monitoring process
- The requirement to ensure that projects undertaken by Estates and Buildings are clearly communicated to the wider academic community, with regular updates and reports on progress, amendments and outcomes

Examples of Good Practice and Enhancement extracted from 2008-09 Faculty Annual Monitoring Reports[1]

Faculty of Arts (UG)

Assessment

- Use of guest lectures - utilising the expertise of colleagues from other departments and services. Given the Faculty-entry system and structure, students encounter a range of learning styles and varied opportunities for practical work. Very popular and requires on-going investment

- Fostering independent learning and interaction between students through autonomous learning group

- Embed PDP in the dissertation course

- GTA Involvement in redesigning tutorial programme

- Use of moderated 'self assessment' - students asked to judge their own creative work against published criteria and assign themselves a grade according to CoA

- Self-reflection - all submitted work in Level 1 accompanied by a self-reflection sheet where students identify (a) what they have done well (b) what they perceive to be the weaknesses in the work and (c) how this will impact on their next assessment

Feedback

- Use of MOODLE - Course questionnaires easy to analyse and act upon; course tutor post selected anonymised marked copies of diagnostic, optional assessments so all student can benefit from detailed feedback, dissemination of evaluation summaries and AMRs 'closing the loop' and alerting students to actions taken as a result of their feedback

Enhancement

- Much teaching underpinned by staff research - two-way relationship with colleagues also reflecting on instances where teaching informs research

- Use of MOODLE – used for discussion forums for tutorial groups, signing up for tutorial groups

- Invite former Level 1 students to attend course induction to answer questions s on what to expect

Student support

- Levels 1 & 2 seminar packs containing all the materials to support seminars on a semester-long course distributed at beginning of semester. Appreciated by both students and GTAs

- Course evaluations ask exiting students to provide advice for incoming students. Such info can then be included in course document for following session

Faculty of Arts (PGT)

- One-to-one progress reviews

---

[1] Examples highlighted are taken from within faculties and does not necessarily reflect wide-scale practice

Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences (UG)

Assessment

- Use of ICR (Intelligent Character Recognition) for course work processing

- Use of pre-lab quizzes in Level 1

- new Level 2 practical format, presented at LTDF conference

- Inclusion of a problem question in all exam papers with the course including preparation for such questions

Enhancement

- Guest lecture followed by a launch attended by many students allowing informal interaction with the guest lecturer

- progress interviews (one-to-one) which seems to have contributed to improved performance

- Set of VLE-based resources is being developed as learning support for field courses

Student Support

- Development of Moodle-based social forum in Level 1 to aid group work (LTDF funded)

- Staff-Student journal club

Faculty of Biological and Life Sciences (PGT)

- One-to-one feedback with students

Dentistry (UG)

Assessment

- The use of LTDF monies in BDS1 to help enhance innovative teaching

- Small group work, including syndicated learning and peer assisted teaching has been both popular with students and improved the educational experience

- Presentations using flat screen computers rather than poster

- End of 4th Year, students have a 4-week elective period with opportunity to either travel abroad or remain in Glasgow. Small research projects completed during this period and students required to write a report on their experiences. Offers undergraduates a wide range of invaluable experiences, ranging from experience of how dentistry is practiced in other (often developing) countries to research and audit experience often culminating in experience of presenting verbal or poster presentations of the findings at local or national meetings

- Formative assignments set aimed to prepare the student for learning throughout their careers, researching topics and seeking an evidence base for clinical practice

Feedback

- Time allocated for feedback tutorials in outreach where problems encountered during treatment provision are addressed and discussed by peer groups of students

- A MOODLE forum established for each year. The forum is moderated by the Year representatives and used to collect spontaneous feedback or solicit feedback on specific issues

Enhancement

- The appointment of a dental team tutor has enhanced interprofessional education, as well as improving the instruction of dental students

- Continued integration of Biomedical Science and Dental Materials Science into the practical skills component of the course is proving to be successful and well received

- Communications skills teaching involving actors and group observation continues to receive excellent feedback and the clinical scenarios continue to be developed in order to match the students clinical knowledge and experience more appropriately

- Use of podcasts as part of lecture programme

- A hands-on course run over 2 days sponsored by a commercial company - sessions well received

- Partnership working with NHS colleagues in work-based placements broadens the patient base which can be established, offers educational research and joint audit opportunities and provides a wider pool of teaching staff

- The introduction of the electronic voting system (EVS) by the University - technology used for practice MCQ exams, at which immediate feedback was given to students about their (anonymous) answers, and comments about the question format

Faculty of Education (UG)

Assessment

- Use of rapid prototyping technology; innovative use of new software to develop teaching and learning resources for CAD/CAM packages; assessment tasks that are innovative such as website design, posters and online teaching materials

- Audio and video media used in some courses to support course assessment and feedback to students, which has proved successful with the students

- Introduction of an assessment schedule across courses which clearly indicates submission and return dates of assignments (within 4 weeks) has provided students with the opportunity to manage coursework more efficiently

Feedback

- Introduction of study groups within class and allocation of reading, presentations and tasks specific to each study group. The study groups are asked to provide written feedback from weekly critical reading tasks

Enhancement

- Partnerships with local authorities have allowed innovative delivery off campus

- Practice of visiting tutors, giving them a report on their teaching and inviting them to come and observe and critically engage in teaching

Student Support

- Availability of one-to-one contact with tutors to clarify any unclear issues and suggest strategies for students to improve

Faculty of Education (PGT)

- Use of peer assessment

- Partnership with local authority to enhance the tutor system

- Use of guest speakers

- Introduction of student conference days

Faculty of Engineering (UG)

Feedback

- Standard feedback forms attached to all assessed work

- Improved communication between staff and students through focus groups and informal/social gatherings.

Enhancement

- Use of Moodle as a source of teaching material

Faculty of Engineering (PGT)

- Strong industrial links, providing seminars and summer internship opportunities

- Group design work with students embedded into research groups

- Small student numbers allowing one-to-one feedback

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (UG)

Assessment

- Development of departmental web portal by Computing Science for allocating student projects. This complements the department's existing project management system for handling and marking projects. Staff can login and update project proposals, which students can then browse and rank in order of preference and optimal matching of students to projects

- Use of IT via integration of computer laboratories in the course. The use of computers allows students to explore ideas presented in lectures and was found to strengthen their understanding as well as provide them with new skills and experience of report writing

- Introduction of a new course '*Writing and Presenting Mathematics*' to help develop students generic skills, such as computing skills, report writing, oral presentations and group work

Feedback

- All Level 3 Honours courses set fortnightly marked work providing students with continuous feedback throughout the semester.

Enhancement

- Two day mid-week residential study trip

- The Department of Computing Science use of handsets to promote audience participation in Level 1 lectures. A new system of handsets purchased for 2009-10 will make it possible to develop more sophisticated interaction during lectures

- A Psychology Society ran by students which organises talks and social events which has a positive effect, particularly in fostering cross year interactions

- Podcasting of lectures has proved to be popular with students and is now extended across the four year programme.   This provides support, particularly at revision time, and supplements the online lecture notes

- In Psychology, residential event held for new Honours students, which creates immediate energy and involvement, designed to have a mix of academic and 'bonding' activities and allow students to get to know members of staff, fellow students and postgraduates within a positive setting

- Employability remains a core/compulsory and examinable part of Level 3 Honours Psychology curriculum and has been the only such example in the University

- Introduction of actual 'experiments' into the Level 1 Statistical practical classes so that students analyse data they have collected

Student support

- The Psychology student portal continues to expand and students use it frequently to access lecture notes, podcasts, downloads, help guides and links, as well as to post questions and comments on their forum

- An automated reminder used in Psychology for contacting students when tutorials were missed and used to inform students when they have failed to submit coursework

- Course delivered in Career Skills, which teaches students how to write CVs, letters of application, etc. which helps prepare students for the job market

- Drop-in workshops in the Psychology department providing extensive support for the statistical analysis of data for final year projects

- Development of Mind Maps with small groups as an aid to revision

- Use of diagnostic test in week 6 of the Level 1 course to indentify struggling students. Students identified offered a number of resources. Goes beyond usual practice of monitoring "at risk" students by merely measuring attendance and means that students who are present but struggling academically are visible. Also collection of data from a number of sources such as course work marks, attendance and tutor observations, all of which is used to monitor student progress

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (PGT)

- The use of an introductory week by Computing Science which offered a clear understanding of the learning requirements and gave students the opportunity to move between Masters programmes if a change was appropriate to abilities/interests. This flexibility had also increased completion rates

- Due to small student numbers, direct feedback provided

- Innovative research methods and techniques used in teaching

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (UG)

Assessment

- Use of wide range of assessment techniques including group work, formal examinations, student projects and assignments including a number of work-related learning approaches (in collaboration with employers and Scottish Enterprise)

- Sociology/Anthropology used group formative assessment at Level 1 involving students carrying out primary research with perceived potential benefit in terms of employability and involving opportunities for students who have learning styles which favour learning by doing and learning outside our seminars. Also used topics that promoted better relations and understanding between international and UK students and promoted dimensions of diversity

- Formative assessments being developed and delivered through Moodle in Accounting and Finance

Feedback

- Law posts all annual monitoring reports on course Moodle sites, and also makes these available on the departmental web site so that students can be made aware of outcomes of student evaluation processes

Enhancement

- Innovative projects to enhance employability. Management involved in two projects tailored to enhance personal development – a graduate employability project, and the use of diaries as a "learning skills code bookmark" by Honours students, enabling students to record where and how they gained knowledge throughout the academic year and thus to help embed awareness within the general employability initiative

- Central and East European Studies use of reflective diaries extensively within the Honours provision

- Social Work uses authentic case simulation material, involving users and carers, to allow students to engage with real live situations which they will encounter in practice. Development of a Simulated Practice Learning Environment (SIMPLE) a "transactional" learning environment as opposed to a virtual learning environment, bringing Social Work into partnership with a local authority in order to provide an authentic professional practice context

- Introduction of self-reflection exercises by Urban Studies: in the course *Social Research and Investigation*, for example, students are required to write a critical appraisal and to reflect on an interviewing exercise; or write a critically reflective journal after being on placement

- Law students on language programmes taken on study visits to German link universities, visits which have maintained interest in the subject (i.e., prevented some students from drooping the language component) and increased language confidence

- Development of an international committee by Social Work to consolidate and respond to the range of activities and developments with European and international context

- Many courses in Accounting and Finance using MP3 technology to support lectures

Student Support

- Law has instituted a programme of careers events designed for Law students along with support from the Careers Service and the Faculty Employability Officer

- Sociology/Anthropology introduced an orientation week for Honours students, involving organisation of sessions on IT learning, careers service, library, Faculty learning adviser and Faculty employability officer

- Economic and Social History Student-run society involving students and promotion of the Employability Agenda

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (PGT)

- Discount to graduates returning to study. The University has agreed to extend this discount to all graduates from Session 2010-2011

- Wide variety of assessment methods

- Strong link between research and teaching

- Use of field trips and practice oriented programmes

Faculty of Medicine (UG)

Assessment

- Use of mock examinations

Feedback

- Post examination questionnaire introduced to investigate students' views on their experience of the examination e.g. its fairness. Some student misconceptions came to light as a result this can address for next session

- Provision of model answers for mock examinations

Enhancement

- BSc (MedSci) Clinical Medicine introduced the statistics and the journal club (critical appraisal) considered most valuable for their future medical careers

- Peer- assisted learning scheme introduced

Faculty of Medicine (PGT)

- Peer learning sessions and rotation of student chairing

- Additional learning support as and when necessary

- Use of external practioners

- Sharing of core course and course content between disciplines

Nursing (UG)

Assessment

- Students submit 1,000 work essay which is peer assessed anonymously, providing an opportunity to learn twice. Students also encouraged to grade own work providing insight into marking process

Feedback

- One-to-one feedback on written comments from class exam

Enhancement

- Use of guest lecturers

- Inter-professional learning and peer teaching in skills preparation

- involvement of senior students in teaching junior students and student assessment

- Fourth Year students shadowed senior NHS managers offering unique experience

Student Support

- Fourth Year students provide a student overview of the academic and clinical challenges for junior students that would be encountered in forthcoming term

- Year 4 students take an active role in preparing first year students for their first placement

- In depth e-learning package

Nursing (PGT)

- Participation at conferences by students

Faculty of Physical Sciences (UG)

Assessment

- Field-based taught courses

Feedback

- Moodle-based quizzes (formative assessment) to provide instant feedback

- Linking feedback to weekly moodle quizzes: students have to complete a survey before the quiz, resulting in an increase in response rates

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UG)

Feedback

- lecture based debrief sessions, drop in sessions, use of moodle to provide electronic feedback. These methods supplement the open door policy operated by most staff for discussion of results with students. Students also have an allocated mentor with whom they can get additional feedback on their assessments

Enhancement

- Redesign of Moodle with Teaching and Learning Service. This has been showcased to the Faculty and University

Student Support

- Structured revision programme delivered via Moodle introduced for the second diet of assessment in Anatomy 2

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (PGT)

- Meetings held with all students at the end of each module

Topics of current importance

Introduction

The 'hot topics' for 2008-09 were:

- Feedback on Assessment;
- Obtaining and Responding to Feedback from Students;
- First Year Progression;
- Equality and Diversity

The following is an extract from Faculty Annual Monitoring Reports under each topic.

1. Feedback on Assessment

Faculty of Arts (UG)

- Most Departments operate a three-week turnaround on assessed work, although many (particularly languages) return certain categories of work considerably more quickly
- Engagement with markers' feedback is fostered through one-to-one tutorials (Celtic/Gaelic; History)
- The issue of feedback on exams is raised by Philosophy and Celtic/ Gaelic. Whilst colleagues are keen to provide such feedback, student/staff ratios do not always make this possible. Departments interested in developing 'generic' feedback sessions on examination performance might consider applying for a Course Enhancement Grant for this purpose: or, for a larger scale project, to investigate the possibility of funding from the Learning & Teaching Development Fund
- Theatre Studies (Honours) report that they will hold a 'focus group' on Assessment and Feedback in 2009-10 which will be led by a member of staff from the Learning and Teaching centre

Faculty of Arts (PGT)

- Prompt feedback is raised as an issue in courses relying on professional and/or sessional staff for marking (e.g. Professional Archaeology; Film Journalism) and steps have been taken to improve this for the coming session (e.g. by conducting first marking in-house, simplifying feedback sheets or more clearly communicating deadlines). Progress on these issues will continue to be monitored

- Ensuring timely feedback on work assessed in-house is identified in some other reports and the FQAEO is working with relevant course convenors to identify strategies for improvement here

Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences (UG)

- Feedback faster and more complete. In Biology 1 with its very large numbers, a standardised feedback form has been developed as a tool for encouraging common practice amongst markers, and this has been commended by the External Examiner
- In Level 2, there is a concern that the value of feedback in coursework has declined consequent to the New Academic Year for courses that last a single semester. Many such courses moved in 2008-2009 to weight the examination more and coursework less. Students commended this because they felt there was too little time in a parallel series of 10- credit courses to complete several pieces if coursework—but the result has been

less coursework feedback—and more uncollected feedback, because the assessed work is not ready for collection until the course has ended (when students are preparing for examinations)

Dental School (UG)

- Arrangements for feedback on UGs performances being formalised and a target of a 3-week deadline for feedback on assignments being introduced. Impact of these changes will be monitored via the Staff Student Liaison Committee

Dumfries Campus (UG)

- The mechanics in place to ensure that students become aware of the skills being developed are regularly reviewed. This ongoing activity seeks to identify further examples within the spectrum of courses

Faculty of Education (UG)

- BTech Ed: The teaching team have gone to considerable lengths to ensure comprehensive and timely feedback to students. Some staff now employ audio and video media to support their course assessment and feedback to students, which has proved successful with the students
- B.Ed: On many courses, students appreciated that they were now given prompt feedback and provisional grades prior to the Exam Board. Steps have been taken to ensure greater transparency with the introduction of an assessment schedule which clearly indicates submission and return of assignments dates (within 4 weeks)
- BA Community Development: Feedback to students is regularly commended both by students and the external examiner, this has been enhanced by emphasising the availability of one to one contact with tutors to clarify any unclear issues and suggest strategies for students to improve

Faculty of Education (PGT)

- Assessment and feedback continues to be an issue that provokes varied feelings amongst postgraduates, especially from some students who do not achieve grades that meet their expectations. Teaching staff continue to make efforts to ensure feedback is of good quality and work is returned in a reasonable time. Staffing on some courses does however have an impact on the timing of feedback provided

- PGDE: Students expressed concern that some class work that was done as group presentations requiring students to read and put together a presentation was not assessed. This is an on-going issue that the programme leader will take to the PGDE course committee for comment and discuss with externals

- MSc Adult & Continuing Education: ILOs incorporated directly into feedback sheets so that the comments relate to outcomes in a transparent manner. In the process of providing marking rubrics to students in advance of submission so that they are clear about the marking criteria and how they can be demonstrated

- MEd English Language Teaching: Mark electronically or type our comments so that students can read them, as reading handwriting can be challenging for students from languages with a different script

- PG Diploma in School Leadership and Management (SQH): this has been highlighted consistently as a strength of this programme with the combination of summative and formative feedback against each of the criteria. This strength is noted by external

examiners and candidates alike. The tutorials built into the work based components provide an additional opportunity for feedback and discussion

Faculty of Engineering (UG)

- Progress is being made in the Faculty, as is evident from improved ratings in NSS scores The main issue is to ensure that this improvement is maintained by effective dissemination of current best practice between the Departments

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (UG)

- Action was taken in response to the 2007 NSS results which highlighted that feedback on assessment was an issue for the department. A pyramid evaluation involving Level 3 and 4 students was conducted to try to gain a greater understanding as to the key issues surrounding assessment and feedback in a departmental context, and this was followed up at a departmental 'away day'. A number of proposals involving responsibilities on both the part of the students and staff were adopted. Although this was too late to influence the 2008 cohort, there is an improvement evident in the 2009 NSS results in relation to students' perception of assessment and feedback. It is recognised that there is still room for improvement and the department will continue to emphasise the importance of timely and good quality feedback on assessment
- In Computing Science Level 1, work is returned with formative feedback on a weekly cycle. In Computing Science Level 2, issues with feedback have never been raised by students at Level 2 (at least in the recent past), where the tutoring and laboratory regime ensures the timely return of all submitted work. The policy of feedback within 4 weeks is largely followed by teaching staff in Level 3 Computing Science leading to greater levels of satisfaction amongst students
- MathsBase sessions are available on a daily basis to students who wish to gain more feedback and help on their Level 1 coursework or skills test. Unified formative assessment provided in Level 3 Mathematics courses has improved feedback to students and improved student satisfaction
- Student satisfaction with feedback in Level 1 Psychology was noted as high. Feedback is given on coursework and then discussed generally in tutorials at the beginning of the second semester. In Level 2 Psychology, feedback on assessment continues to be monitored and students have commented on the useful feedback provided on their coursework assignments. Summative online multiple choice questions were the only area where feedback was specifically requested. Lectures are required to provide written formative feedback for every piece of continuous assessment work marked in Level 3 Honours Psychology. The first semester Critical Review has a necessary late hand-in date and in the past students could not benefit easily from written feedback for what is a new kind of written work for them. From this academic year, a new one-to-one feedback session will take place to enhance and enrich written feedback in the first week of Semester 2 thus allowing students to benefit directly as they are about to start their second Semester Critical Review (P, Level 3).
- In Level 1 Statistics the main mode of feedback is through the fortnightly lab reports which include further questions of an examination/tutorial type, students, therefore, continually receive feedback that will help them in their exam preparation. The reports are assessed and returned to the students within two weeks. In addition, the course operates with a small group tutorial system which runs weekly with 10-12 students. At the end of each lecture block (4 blocks in each semester), Statistics run a tutorial during the lecture hour using the Personal Response System. This provides instant feedback to students on their knowledge and understanding and indicates areas where they need to improve (S, Level 1). Although there has never appeared to be open dissatisfaction with the feedback given through lab reports, the new homework system in Statistics 2R and 2X in 2009-10 is likely to improve communication between staff and students in terms of common mistakes, the process of proof, etc

- The department's rule of feedback within two weeks is generally observed. Lecturers for the 'Analysis of Data' course were reminded to return grades and annotated reports to students within this timeframe

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (PGT)

- Psychology will from 09/10 provide full feedback of marks for all coursework to students

- Computing Science reported an improvement in the promptness of provision of feedback on student assessment. This had been an issue in the past and will continue to be monitored.

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (UG)

- Several departments clearly making efforts to address criticisms. NSS results suggest that there is a growing success in responding to dissatisfaction (but that such dissatisfaction continues). Much of this positive success may be attributable to helping students appreciate the constraints staff are under. Two departments, though, have highlighted an apparent discrepancy between NSS results and outcomes from course feedback results. Both Law and Economic and Social History note that questionnaires do not echo the general dissatisfaction with feedback. Several departments have indicated that they have introduced specific targets for return of coursework, but these targets vary considerably. The most responsive department is Economic and Social History which has a commitment to return course work within two weeks.

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (PGT)

- Students and external examiners were extremely satisfied with the quality of feedback given on assessments. Departments highlighted the introduction of administrative procedures in 2008/2009 to ensure the timely marking and return of assignments and feedback within 4 weeks as specified by Faculty policy. Students would, of course, prefer a faster turnaround but the 4 weeks target is generally adhered to although there were a couple of instances where return deadlines were missed due to unforeseen circumstances, such as staff illness

- Some departments also reported that they had redesigned their feedback sheets to improve the quality of feedback and have expanded their automatic assessment return policy to dissertations. In addition to written feedback teaching teams provide one-to-one feedback with students, if requested

- One interesting initiative reported, in light of recent survey results that showed students preferred assessments to be returned in 2 to 3 weeks, was the use of an alternative marking and feedback system in Economics and Social History. They have improved the speed at which assessment feedback was returned to students by returning feedback and a provisional mark before marks are confirmed by second markers and external examiners. Whilst it is acknowledged that the provision of marks before second marking and any subsequent adjustments to results may generate student dissatisfaction, the provision of pre-second marking feedback comments is worthy of discussion within the Faculty

Faculty of Medicine (UG)

- Year 1 - Year Directors have agreed to provide specific feedback on written exams not only to any students who fail the June diet, but to those students who are borderline passes.
- Year 2 - Matters raised by students in relation to learning, teaching and assessment are dealt with at Staff Student Committee meetings. 'Closing the loop' is taken very

seriously. When introducing the course at the start of the session, changes implemented in response to student feedback are always highlighted. A range of methods is used to collect feedback – electronic forms, paper questionnaires, staff-student committee meetings at both the Year and Faculty level.

- Year 3 - constant review by Assessment Working Group.
- Year 4/5 - providing appropriate information after assessing the observed long case record about areas that the students need to improve upon. This is an area of strength in the focus groups to be built on. Old question papers available for 2010 examination diet. Students given their marks and the station number and the subject that is being assessed will be passed on to the students who fail to provide more information to help students identify areas of strength and weakness. A generic information sheet has been developed for examinations so students are advised which questions they have performed well in and which have been a problem. This gives them an opportunity to obtain detailed feedback along with data about each question so as to guide their learning. The Preparation for Practice attachment now also gives staff and students a further opportunity to identify those candidates where there are issues that require further training to help build their confidence

Faculty of Medicine (PGT)

- The Master of Public Health has recently introduced the provision of typed feedback on coursework assessment, which has greatly improved the clarity and detail of feedback provided. The MPH has also further clarified the dissertation marking process where differences in first and second markers' scores are evident and this is anticipated to improve feedback. The provision of two opportunities for students to upload course work to Turnitin and receive originality reports has improved the detail of feedback on academic skills considerably

- The MSc(Med Sci) Clinical Neuropsychology, Doctorate Clinical Psychology and the MRes Molecular Medicine, all provide detailed written feedback to each student. Students in the DClinPsy are also able to have supervised access to exam scripts to review the examiners comments.

- MSc(Med Sci) Health Care – The dissertation support and feedback was considered exemplary by Dr Lorraine Ellis, and the research overall was commendable and impacted directly on patient care.

- In the Master in Primary Care, all course co-ordinators offer to meet with students throughout each course to provide formative assessment. In addition, they also offer to go over exam papers and essay assignments where their written feedback, which is delivered with each assessment requires further clarification. In addition, the programme co-ordinator meets informally with students every lunchtime to discuss progress and any additional support that a student might need. Students who attained a low grade on the Introduction to Primary Care were also offered an opportunity to re-write their essay question with the help and input of the course co-ordinator. Although these re-written essays were not assessed students appreciated the opportunity to develop and enhance their written and critical appraisal skills.

- To improve feedback on assessment, the MSc(Dent Sci) Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery took the strategic decision to meet the students and discuss the feedback forms with supervisors and with each other at a specifically allocated session. This gave them a unique opportunity to discuss and debate the components of assessment and reflect on the assessment philosophy. Carrying out this procedure in a group proved thought-provoking and a good learning exercise for all the students involved.

Nursing (UG)

- Students are given the assessment criteria prior to being given their assignment
- The assessment criteria on Moodle
- Marking criteria are discussed with the students
- Assignment feedback given by detailed written comments
- After each assignment or examination class discussion held looks at aspects of the exam which have been addressed well and where there could have been improvements. This ensures that every student understands the justification for their grading. Any specific points may be raised by individual students privately if not covered in these sessions
- Peer assessments are performed in Year 3 of the programme and proving very popular

Faculty of Physical Sciences (UG)

- Moodle-based quizzes (formative assessment) to provide instant feedback
- Agreed timescales with students for provision of feedback
- The quality or amount of feedback has been raised, particularly for lab work. Improved by *e.g.* marking once per week by lab demonstrators

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UG)

- Teaching teams have made a concerted effort to increase the feedback provided to students on assessment. This has involved increased written feedback in formative assessments, lecture based debrief sessions, drop in sessions, use of moodle to provide electronic feedback. These methods supplement the open door policy operated by most staff for discussion of results with students. Students also have an allocated mentor with whom they can get additional feedback on their assessments. A significant proportion of students, who could benefit from feedback, do not access the feedback provided which is frustrating for staff given the time commitment in 'feedback provision', but it was noted in a number of AMRs that there was evidence of improved performance in students who avail themselves of the feedback

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (PGT)

- The speed with which notification of grades for assignments was greatly improved on most courses, and this was appreciated by the students

2. Obtaining and Responding to Feedback from Students

Faculty of Arts (UG)

- Across the AMRs there is evidence of the multiple ways in which student feedback is solicited and responded to, and in most cases, the Code of Practice has been affirming rather than reshaping existing good practice
- Placing course questionnaires on Moodle is now relatively common practice: for staff, this makes results much easier to analyse and act upon. However the take-up among students remains relatively low. We will continue to monitor the efficacy of Moodle questionnaires in eliciting feedback

Faculty of Arts (PGT)

- Given the relatively small class sizes of most PGT programmes, there is regular communication between staff and all students and feedback is typically responded to quickly. The experiences of postgraduate taught students in the Faculty of Arts are overwhelmingly positive

Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences (UG)

- At Level 1, as well as a staff-student committee, there are course questionnaires, and focus groups
- At Level 2, staff-student committees for each 10-credit course were ineffective, and substituted a Level 2 Forum which met 1-2 times a year. This has proved much more effective as a means of obtaining student feedback
- At Levels 3 and 4, Degree Programmes run staff-student committee for the Level 3 and Level 4 classes together, allowing useful communication between the years. These provide many examples of course specific trouble-shooting that improves the learning experience

Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences (PGT)

- In general, many of the courses, while seen as completely worthwhile, operate with relatively small numbers (<10) of students who meet staff on a one-to-one basis regularly enough for formal questionnaires etc. to be perceived as unnecessary. Staff therefore are well in touch with students' views

Dental School (UG)

- At the start of the academic year, a workshop was held for the student representatives from all years to ensure that they understood their roles and that the training specified by the University had been given
- A MOODLE forum had been established for each year. The forum is moderated by the year reps and can be used to collect spontaneous feedback or solicit feedback on specific issues
- Each course has an end of course questionnaire. Appropriate questions from the NSS included to allow comparisons between the years. In addition, regular meetings of SSLC are held during which feedback actively sought from the students. The minutes of SSLC are published on MOODLE.

Faculty of Education (UG)

- BTech Ed: Staff have engaged with student comments and provide practical solution to specific issues
- CertHE/ACE: The pilot University student questionnaire was used for most courses this session. The qualitative data that it provides is useful and informative, although there is of course a noticeable decline in the quantitative data. It would be fair to acknowledge that the best way of engaging students, who normally attend the University for just 2 hours per week, in the Staff-student feedback process has still to be found.

Faculty of Education (PGT)

- PGDE: has two full days dedicated to reviewing the course at the end of the academic year. Students are very much part of this process and are invited to this review along with staff, ensuring their voice (positive or negative) is heard. Staff have commented positively on the student involvement, finding their perspective both enlightening and constructive

- Masters in Inclusive Education: theory, policy, practice and Certificate/Diploma in Support for Learning/Special Educational Needs: All students were made aware of the importance the University places on student feedback. Part time students who are teachers in Scottish schools were not interested in being Student Representatives. The courses are run in such a way that any issues that arise are dealt with during the 5 day course. They were satisfied that their voice was given significance including in the

shaping of the content of the course. The fulltime Masters students also felt they had a voice through the core MEd courses they attended. They did however appoint a representative

- MSc Psychological Studies: It remains very difficult to get students to complete official feedback forms or to volunteer for student representative roles

- MEd/MSc Educational Studies: Students have indicated for several years now they prefer direct access to the programme coordinator rather than have contact mediated by a student representative

- MSc Interprofessional Science Education and Communication: The lecturer has concerns in relation to student course evaluation using the new procedure and standardised course evaluation forms. Most courses involved are taught as teams. The standardised course questionnaire makes it very difficult to assess whether the students make reference to individual staff member performance using this instrument. This is important for programme leaders to allow them to address problems appropriately

- MEd Academic Practice: As this course is essentially a Masters programme undertaken by academic staff, an informal reflective conversation is an underlying feature of the student experience

- PG Cert. Academic Practice (NLTP): We piloted the standard questionnaire last year and continue to use it this year and we are reasonably happy with the final instrument

- PG Cert Addictions: After meeting with the class student representative the tutor provides a written response to issues raised and in addition addresses the class about these matters. The class was involved in focus group discussions about development of a new programme

- Postgraduate Certificate in Primary Physical Education: There is a greater number of rated questions in the new University standard questionnaire than in the one previously used for the programme, where the emphasis was on providing specific written comment. The concern is that the shift to more numerical feedback will result in less specific written feedback than that previously gathered. The team will use the pilot phase to monitor the practicality of this and the usefulness of the information obtained

- MEd English Language Teaching: It is comprehensive and constructive. We usually give one questionnaire per course, but we will divide into two parts for the teaching and the assessment for next year to encourage students to reflect on their learning

- M Ed (Chartered Teacher Programme): Traditionally it has been difficult to get feedback from course members once the course has ended and also to have them participate in additional feedback events and committees. Adoption of an online tool may assist with this

Faculty of Engineering (UG)

- Focus groups are proving to be a useful mechanism for reflective discussion in addition to the existing staff-student committee. The less formal structure of the focus group encourages students to attend and participate. Without the reliance of individual year or subject student representatives attending and participating, it is often possible to have a much more meaningful discussion. The relationship between staff and students is an area which could be improved and informal events such as focus groups and social events involving staff and students certainly contribute. It is also worth noting that the Glasgow University Engineering Society are becoming more active again, and it is intended to involve the society in promoting the various staff-student activities.

- This year Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Electronic & Electrical Engineering using the existing machine-readable student questionnaire as the new standard form would have to be processed by hand. As an experiment, the new form is being used in Aerospace Engineering (and will be processed manually) with a number of course leaders implementing the on-line version in Moodle. Early results from use if the form indicates that both staff and students view it quite positively. The online version is very easy and convenient to use, and those students who have tried it certainly like being able to respond in their own time. Response rates for courses using the online form much lower than those using paper forms

Faculty of Engineering (UG)

- In general less of an issue for PGT as class sizes are smaller, and a greater proportion of a student's assessment is likely to be project based, therefore giving greater opportunity for direct feedback from the supervising staff. Where courses are shared between UG and PGT cohorts, the PGT students are likely to have additional course work, and again, more opportunity for feedback. Much of course depends on the student's willingness to seek feedback

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (UG)

- The University's new style questionnaires will be adopted in 2009-10
- Staff-student meetings were particularly successful in this year with articulate student representatives who were able to convey issues in a non-confrontational and helpful fashion resulting in good interaction
- The minutes of all staff-student meetings are made available to students on Moodle and representatives are encouraged to report back to their peers regarding actions agreed
- Psychology observed that online evaluations have a poor response rate. Staff-student liaison meetings, informal meetings, forums and the Psychology student portal is useful both for eliciting student comments and for disseminating information
- The department continues to use online questionnaires to elicit individual feedback for each course at Level 4. Also the department has used the forums on the VLE to elicit discussion about the proposed changes in Level 4 and this has proven very successful in allowing students to voice their opinions. Student representatives were allowed to provide an account of the Staff-Student meeting on the VLE and elicit feedback and comments on any ongoing actions. The use of the forums as a method of 'closing the loop' in terms of student feedback will be further examined over the year

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (PGT)

- Nearly all the departments have the luxury of relatively small classes that allow for the easy communication of students' concerns to each programme team. This is done through means both formal e.g. staff student meeting and informal e.g. individual discussions with students. There is an understanding certainly in psychology that increased class sizes will mean that these practices may have to be reviewed.

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (UG)

- Staff expected in course documentation and at the start of teaching to indicate what changes have been introduced as a result of student feedback.
- AMRs are now additionally posted on course sites on Moodle (as well as on the School QA&E website). Most emphasis is upon obtaining feedback from students via questionnaires (with certain departments indicating problems with on-line responses via Moodle – AccFin, however, indicates a return rate of 80%, achieved after a deliberate attempt to improve response rates).

- There is not much indication of use of complementary mechanisms, although Management notes the initiation of a report into all aspects of its undergraduate programme provision, employing focus groups and interviews to facilitate feedback and thus to generate additional data to that offered by annual surveys.

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (PGT)

- Staff-Student Liaison Meetings, informal discussions between students and the teaching team, class meetings and class questionnaires are the primary feedback mechanisms employed by departments, and evidence within reports suggest that many Programme Convenors employ these processes in an effective way that is consistent with the University Code of Practice.

- Departments have been adopting the standard questionnaire template supplied by the Senate Office although some colleagues report the inclusion of tailored questions designed for course specific feedback. A commonly cited problem was the lower response rates in the 2008/2009 academic session achieved when the questionnaires are posted on Moodle. Another concern reported by staff was the low response rates they received to on-line student questionnaires. Departments who experimented with these in 2008/09 are either reverting back to paper questionnaires in 2009/10 or using Moodle questionnaires in conjunction with paper-based versions.

- Departments report that student feedback reports are discussed as standard practice at staff meetings and Postgraduate Teaching and Learning Committee meetings, and resultant outcomes and actions taken are communicated back to the student body via class representatives and Moodle postings. Economics report plans to include postgraduate student representatives as members of their Postgraduate Teaching Committee in 2009/2010, and this is a practice that should be given serious consideration by other departments with large postgraduate student numbers.

Faculty of Medicine (UG)

- Block (course) Leaders/coordinators prepare summary reports on student feedback and these, including any action points, are posted on the student website. SSLC meetings are held three times per annum, plus reps attend the Faculty SSLC. Minutes are taken and specific action points attributed to particular staff (or students)

- Together with a member of Teaching and Learning, this year instigated focus groups which have concentrated on feedback and there are various action points raised from these being addressed (attendance from the year 4 students last year was poor)

- The learning experience is enhanced by ensuring students see the changes made in response to their comments. For example, results from the post-examination questionnaire were e-mailed to the cohort of students involved (now in third year) and also posted on the VALE webpage for current second year students to see. Changes implemented as a result of the feedback (e.g. dropping an item of coursework so that the mock exam could be taken more seriously by students) were highlighted to the current second year students at the start of the session. Student feedback on Fixed Resource Sessions and Plenary Lectures used to improve the course year-on-year. By flagging up how feedback has been responded to, reinforce the idea that we take student feedback seriously and so students are encouraged to continue to provide feedback.
- Build on positive student feedback and encourage such practices resulting from this. Where feedback is negative the circumstances are examined and if possible, difficulties are eliminated
- Strong culture of direct engagement i.e. talking to, and listening to, students informally and formally and trying to explain situations where negative feedback has occurred. For

example, with regard to travel to hospital and GP placements, travel itself is unattractive and seen as very wasteful and time-consuming by the students and travel expenses can cause hardship. However diverse experience in itself is seen as positive and in fact essential in preparing for work as doctors. Therefore the situation cannot be changed but can be explained

Faculty of Medicine (PGT)

- Each of the Faculty's PGT programmes places great importance on proactively obtaining quality feedback from students, in order to enhance the learning experience for subsequent sessions

- The majority of programmes invite students to either Teaching Committees or Staff Student Consultation Committees, in which feedback can be obtained and responded to. Student surveys and questionnaires are also widely utilised with the advantage that they are normally anonymous

- Both the Master in Public Health and Doctorate in Clinical Psychology are hoping to utilise audience response software during session 2009-10 to collect feedback on a more frequent basis

- The MSc(Med Sci) Health Care often notifies students of changes and amendments made to courses via the programme handbook. This lets students see that their feedback is taken seriously and has an important impact on programme delivery. Two students have also been invited to attend the Post Graduate Teaching Committee to further engage them in the overall experience and the Student Staff Consultation Committee

Nursing (UG)

- Feedback is received formally and informally from students on all courses.
- Written feedback is obtained on an individual basis from all students. The SSLC system (Staff Student Liaison Committee) is also used. It made explicit to students that their views, expressed through e-mail contact with staff, are welcome. The course team also makes clear that where pressing issues exist, these will be addressed by staff, and that changes will be confirmed to the student body
- The comments from feedback are examined and necessary changes to the programme are made. Findings of feedback are used to enhance the course and make it more interesting for future students. This also allows students to take part in the change process.
- It is proposed that result of feedback which is taken at the end of each course will be put on Moodle for students to access more readily

Faculty of Physical Sciences (UG)

- Linking feedback to weekly moodle quizzes: students have to complete a survey before the quiz, resulting in an increase in response rates
- Through the use of a numerical electronic voting system
- Development of GU-wide computerised objective tests bank (formative and summative assessment)

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UG)

- Feedback is obtained via questionnaires and focus group meetings. Best completion rates for questionnaires are achieved when students are canvassed in compulsory elements of the courses such as after practical exams. This practice is frowned upon by some but generally provide high quality feedback which due to its coverage is representative of class

views. In addition to the above feedback is often obtained through more informal means, e.g. a chat after a tutorial etc. Responses to feedback are provided by posted minutes and actions resulting from meetings, noted changes in course information documents and speaking with the class

3. **First Year Progression**

Faculty of Arts (UG)

- In a general Faculty, the provision of detailed, accurate and, where possible, bespoke, information to first year students remains vital in assisting them to make informed choices about their options. This is particularly crucial for subjects which students will be unfamiliar with from School
- Both in Gaelic and Italian, students have been offered additional sessions/ assessments over the summer period to help solidify their language learning
- Arts & Media 1 offer a specific class on progression at the end of the second semester and also offer level 1 students the opportunity to chat with level 2 students in an informal setting to find out more about the level 2 programme

Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences (UG)

- Extensive use of Moodle as a student support (with evidence of very positive reactions from students)
- Understanding of coursework encouraged through use of self-assessment exercises
- Identify "at risk" students to feed into the Science Faculties Early Warning System
- Biology Teaching Centre staff in collaboration with Effective Learning Advisers have developed a skills programme aimed at increasing student skills and confidence and resulting in improved progression
- For students doing well, the Dean's Group has been initiated to give the best students a feel for research going on in the Faculty

Dental School (UG)

- Progression was obtained into BDS 2 by 100% of students. May be due in part to close student contact and well defined support systems. In general, no problem with progression from the first year of the course, as normally only 1 or 2 students required to repeat the year. A very small proportion of students change to another course (less than 1 per cohort of students throughout the 5 years of their course)

Faculty of Education (UG)

- Many students use CertHE courses for progression into mainstream University education

Faculty of Engineering (UG)

- All of the Departments have issues with the progression rates from 1st year to 2nd year. The issue of poor basic mathematics and physics skills on entry may be helped by new entry standards coming into place for the 2010 entry. The likelihood is that the impact this has on progression may be minor as it is often the lack of confidence possessed by new entrants in using analytical techniques on new problems, rather than the level of skills that the H-grades (potentially) offer. It may be that managing the transition from the schools approach to mathematical analysis to the approach adopted in the University environment is the real challenge

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (UG)

- The Faculty's provision of a University Teacher to support Level 1 students welcomed in Computing Science. This provides support for extra tutorial sessions for students identified as at risk of failure.
- Current student FTEs suggest a higher progression to Level 2 this year up by 2.5%
- In Statistics, the main mechanism for enhancing students' progress to Level 2 is ensuring that information concerning second year options is available and well publicised

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (UG)

- Some positive action to address this issue. Accounting and Finance have established a retention working group whose 2007 report has driven the Department's efforts to address the issues, and suggestions that this has already led to improving retention and progression rates
- Several externals raised concerns that the introduction of December examinations as well as the shortening of examination times at Honours to two hours may have an adverse effect on students' learning experiences

Faculty of Medicine (UG)
- This is not seen as an issue for medical students

Nursing (UG)

- There has been good progression from the Common Foundation Programme with a retention rate of 96.6% of students. All students who completed the year were successful in both the theoretical input and clinical practice

Faculty of Physical Sciences (UG)

- Progression is high from L1 to L2 Earth Science
- In the Physics department, the analysis of retention and progression statistics for junior classes is being targeted specifically by the University Teachers, in order to highlight and address any potential issues

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UG)

- This is not a large issue within the BVMS programme as it is in some faculties. Biomolecular Sciences included the effective learning advisor in their assessment feedback session, to make students aware of assistance available to them within the University. This resulted in a 60% increase in 8 student referring for help with study techniques etc and it is hoped that this could have a positive effect on first year performance

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (PGT)

- During this academic session, two notable changes were introduced: Meetings were held with all students at the end of each module and; a student representative was appointed who can attend course meetings

4.   **Equality and Diversity**

Faculty of Arts (UG)

- The majority of convenors had had contact with the Student Disability Service, but very few with the Equality and Diversity Unit. As a Faculty, might want to consider how best to make colleagues aware of this service and how it might support work
- Philosophy noted that the current system for identifying the exam scripts of dyslexic students is inefficient and particularly ineffective for Arts subjects, assuming as it does that a determinate number of marks – deducted for poor spelling etc – can easily be reinstated at the exam board. It was questioned whether it possible to ask dyslexic students to declare their status on their exam scripts
-

[Clerk's note: Advice was sought from the Student Disability Service (SDS) and the following advise was received and distributed to staff

Students informed of the Policy of Anonymous Marking of scripts and that it is not appropriate to declare their status on exam scripts. Additional support (up to £20k per individual student) available for dyslexic students through the Disabled Students Allowanced (DSA) scheme and it was the student's responsibility to make the disability adviser aware that they need additional help, not the responsibility of the marker to compensate the student. Reasonable adjustments have to be made for the dyslexic student - but not by the marker. Students have to be reminded that they need to proof read effectively, even if they are dyslexic, using either their assistive software or a human helper.

Staff who are unhappy with the standard of written work from a dyslexic student registered with the service are encouraged to refer the student back to SDS for a review of needs. A marker can always check a student's status via Web surf if they wish, by following the instructions given on page 4 of the Staff Guide for Students with Disabilities. This is a quick and easy way to see if the matriculated number on the script correlates with the list of disabled students on that course registered with our service.

If a student has been referred back to SDS for a review of their support needs by a tutor then confirmation is sought whether the student is using their assistive software, has been for training, etc. If the student needs more help, they can have proofreader support arranged - this is usually done by tracking changes remotely and electronically and is paid for through the student's DSA award.

Staff should be reminded that if the anonymous marking system is not adhered to, then the University could be vulnerable to complaints from other equality groups about the fairness of the marking system. The anonymous marking system was originally introduced in response to concerns about fairness and favouritism raised by ethnic minority groups.]

- Comparative Literature note that the responsibility for taking into account medical and other certification uploaded onto websurf is not entirely clear and is potentially onerous for large classes. The procedures for dealing with medical absence and other mitigating circumstances (both during the year and at exam boards) might be usefully reviewed as part of the restructuring exercise.

Faculty of Arts (PGT)

- No issues of concern noted. As with the UG AMR report, there is evidence of fairly regular contact with the Student Disability Service but the Equality & Diversity Unit is much less regularly consulted

Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences (UG)

- Only 2 members of staff had consulted the Equality and Diversity Unit; 11 had consulted the Student Disability Service

Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences (PGT)

Generally around 50 nationalities represented among graduate students and the taught courses contribute significantly to this. Special needs or disability support depends on students self-referring to the Disability service. We have had no information on students failing to receive appropriate support

Dental School (UG)

- No areas of concern mentioned in any of the ACMRS

Faculty of Education (UG)

- There were no reported equality and diversity issues

Faculty of Education (PGT)

- No concerns regarding equality and diversity issues were reported

Faculty of Engineering (UG)

- There were no reported equality and diversity issues

Faculty of Information and Mathematical Sciences (UG)

- There were no reported equality and diversity issues

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (UG)

- No reported equality and diversity issues although Social Work involved in discussions with UHIMI with a view to developing a joint programme with would allow students to complete their first two years of training with the UHIMI and the remaining two years at Glasgow, in order to help promote widening access to training particularly in rural and outlying areas

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (PGT)

- All the departments felt that they had appropriate mechanisms for dealing with Equality and Diversity issues

Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences (PGT)

- Most Programme Convenors reported contact with Student Disability Services and/or the Equality and Diversity Unit to enhance the support they give to students. Although no issues or concerns were expressed in any report about these services, there appears to be some confusion over the question related to responding to feedback on equality and diversity issues. Respondents either left this section blank or referred to standard feedback mechanisms.

- The one related issue that did emerge was raised by colleagues in Urban Studies and the LBSS Graduate School. Accessibility to buildings remains a problem for disabled

students in wheelchairs. Urban Studies' requests for electronic door openers to heavy doors (T315 and toilets) in the Adam Smith building have been ignored. Further problems have been experienced due to poor signage to the disabled toilet in the Wolfson building and lack of door openers in the disabled toilet

Faculty of Medicine (UG)

- Students informed about the Student Disability Service (SDS) and Equality and Diversity Unit in course handbook and during induction. No instances where the Equality and Diversity unit had been required

Faculty of Medicine (PGT)

- 4 out of 18 PGT programmes requested advice from the Student Disability Service, and 2 out of 18 PGT programmes contacted the Equality and Diversity Unit

Nursing (UG)
- All available services have been used successfully for students' support on several occasions

Faculty of Physical Sciences (UG)

- There were no reported equality and diversity issues

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UG)

- The course leaders receive notification of any special requirements via the faculties TU. Any special requirements are dealt with on a one to one basis through liaison and recommendation received via the appropriate services e.g. taping of lectures, access and provision of extra time and or individual rooms during examinations etc

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (PGT)

- No issues noted