

**University of Glasgow**

**Academic Standards Committee – Tuesday 15 April 2014**

**Periodic Subject Review: Report of the Review of Nursing and Health Care, held on 4 & 5 December 2013**

**Ms H Clegg, Clerk to the Review Panel**

**Review Panel:**

Professor Neal Juster	Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor; Convener
Professor Charlotte Clarke	University of Edinburgh; External Subject Specialist
Ms Jessica McGrellis	Student Representative
Dr Joanne Burke	Undergraduate Medical School; Cognate Member
Dr Duncan Ross	School of Social & Political Sciences; Senate Assessor on Court
Dr Mary McCulloch/ Dr Michael McEwan	Learning & Teaching Centre
Ms Helen Clegg	Senate Office, Clerk to the Review Panel

**Observing:**

Professor Tom Guthrie	School of Law
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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Nursing and Health Care School (hereafter, 'the School') is a sub-School of the School of Medicine which, in turn, is part of the College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences (hereafter, 'the College'). The College was formed in 2010, when a major restructuring exercise reshaped the University from nine Faculties into four Colleges, bringing together the former Faculties of Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical & Life Sciences.
- 1.2 As postgraduate taught (PGT) provision for the entire College had been the subject of review in 2012, it had been agreed that the PGT programmes within the School would not require to be reviewed again at this time. This review therefore covered undergraduate programmes within the School of Nursing and Health Care.
- 1.3 The previous internal review (under the DPTLA process) as the Division of Nursing and Health Care) took place in December 2006. It concluded that provision was of a high quality but identified a number of areas for development. It had been noted that the Division relied heavily on individual staff members for particular courses and more robust succession planning was needed. There were also recommendations surrounding the use of mentors and advisers to maximise the benefit of these roles to students. The Review Panel had noted the suggestions of students regarding the ordering of placements and the need for assessed essays. It had also been recommended that the importance of staff research time be emphasised, given the Division's aim to enhance its research profile.
- 1.4 Preparation of the Self Evaluation Report had been led by Ms Deirdre Moriarty (Bachelor of Nursing (Honours) (BN(Hons)) Programme Director) and supported by

Mrs Margaret Sneddon (Head of School). Other members of staff, students and key stakeholders had been actively involved, with weekly meetings of a PSR Working Group taking place with representatives from these groups. There had been opportunities for input to the document from all staff and students at each stage of preparation, as well as to the final document. This inclusive approach was noted by the Review Panel as being good practice. However, the Review Panel noted that student input was largely confined to class representatives, though all students were invited to participate in the process.

- 1.5 The Review Panel met with the Head of the Nursing & Health Care School (Mrs Margaret Sneddon), the BN(Hons) Programme Director (Ms Deirdre Moriarty), the Acting Head of the School of Medicine (Professor Alan Jardine) and the College Dean of Learning & Teaching (Professor Jill Morrison). They also met with 17 members of staff, 10 current students, two user/carer representatives, two service representatives, one hourly-paid staff member and one Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA). The two probationary staff members were unable to attend but had submitted written comments to the Review Panel.

## **2. Background Information**

- 2.1 In 2013-14, the School had a total of 28 staff (translating to 23.6 FTEs). This included 17 academic staff (12.6 FTEs), as well as 5 support staff, 4 research assistants and one GTA. There was one vacancy for a University Teacher/Lecturer.
- 2.2 In 2013-14, the School had 173 undergraduate students across the three undergraduate programmes, giving 157.5 FTEs.
- 2.3 The Review Panel considered the following undergraduate programmes offered by the School:
- Bachelor of Nursing (Honours), with an early exit award of Ordinary degree;
  - Graduate Diploma in Specialist Lymphoedema Management, with an early exit award of Graduate Certificate;
  - Graduate Certificate in Burns and Plastic Surgery Care for Adults and Paediatrics.
- 2.4 The School is based at 57-61 Oakfield Avenue. However, much of its teaching takes place elsewhere on campus, including at the Wolfson Medical School building. Clinical simulation facilities, including a wet laboratory and High Dependency Unit room, at the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), Hamilton Campus, were also used.

## **3. Overall aims of the College's provision and how it supports the University's Strategic Plan**

The Self-Evaluation Report set out the overall aims of the School's undergraduate provision, which were to prepare excellent graduate nurses, and to provide specialist courses for registered nurses and other health care professionals. The School aimed to meet a demonstrated need within Scotland, the UK and beyond. The Review Panel was content that these aims were in line with the University's Strategic Plan. The School's approach to curriculum design and development in response to the changing needs of health care professions was closely aligned to the University's Learning & Teaching Strategy, and aimed to ensure its graduates were sought after. As a result, several internationally-renowned hospitals in England recruited annually from the BN(Hons) programme, and the School was the only nursing school in Scotland visited by Kings College Hospital for recruitment purposes. The School also emphasised its commitment to a research and evidence based approach to teaching.

The restructuring of the University was considered by the Head of School to be beneficial in many ways, lowering barriers to the development of integrated provision and shared teaching. She described collaborative opportunities with various partners, in particular, the School of Life Sciences and the Institute of Health and Wellbeing. The School of Medicine Learning and Teaching Committee also offered opportunities to share good practice across the professional schools.

The Head of School advised that, since the last review, relationships with Greater Glasgow Health Board had improved, and there had been a good deal of effort made to implement joint working and various policies. There had also been improvements in mentorship, with the use of NHS Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs) who offered support to NHS mentors. However, she noted that Health Boards were reporting challenges relating to the availability of appropriate final clinical placements within the community setting.

In 2011, there had been a good deal of uncertainty surrounding the School's future when consultations took place to determine whether it should be retained. The Head of School reported that this had been unsettling for staff and students. Students had been unclear whether they would be able to graduate with a University of Glasgow degree. Although the outcome had been to retain the School, with reshaping and outcomes agreed to help the School meet the University's strategic priorities, the Head of School noted that there was still a perception of uncertainty, with many mentors unclear as to the current position. She stated that the School had wished to publicise the School's position but this had not been permitted by the College, meaning that the School was still perceived as being under threat of closure. The Review Panel **recommends** that the College give consideration to demonstrating commitment externally about the sustainability of the School, such as publicising 'good news' messages about the School to external audiences, in order to alleviate any perception of uncertainty surrounding the School's future and its provision.

The Head of School believed the School was in a strong position for the future, with the School being placed highly in league tables, with strong demand for the programme and its graduates being highly sought after. The Review Panel queried how the School, given the current uncertainty in Government work-force planning, would ensure it continued to receive funding for BN(Hons) places, and how it would adapt should these be withdrawn. The Head of School said that she hoped the University would support the School in its bids for funding, and that the BN(Hons) degree was the School's core business and produced highly sought-after graduates. She believed that staff would adapt as necessary, but that the heart of the School would be lost without the BN(Hons) degree. She added that there was scope to expand postgraduate provision in Health Professions Education with the new facilities at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. The Dean of Learning & Teaching noted that existing students would have to be permitted to finish their degree, which would allow staff several years to devise alternative plans should there be a significant reduction in nursing places. However, she believed that the BN(Hons) degree was strong, and much needed in Scotland. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School give consideration to how it might alter its range of provision, in order to strengthen its resilience to changes in undergraduate provision beyond the University's control.

Discussions were ongoing with Glasgow Caledonian University regarding greater collaboration, with possible scope to share resources. However, it was recognised that both Universities' nursing provision have unique strengths, and therefore a move to a merged programme would cause significant issues that would need to be addressed, and is not anticipated.

## **4. An Evaluation of the Student Learning Experience**

### *4.1 Aims*

4.1.1 The aims of the School's undergraduate provision were detailed in the associated Programme Specifications and programme handbooks. They were informed by the requirements of the relevant health professionals and professional bodies, and were broadly in line with the Learning and Teaching Strategy. Programme Specifications were publicly available through the University website.

4.1.2 Based on the Programme Specifications and supporting documentation, and guided by the views of the External Subject Specialist, the Review Panel was satisfied that the undergraduate programmes offered by the School remained current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the field and practice in their application. The standard and amount of science teaching within the BN(Hons) programme was considered to be of particular value by the Review Panel and by the students present.

### *4.2 Intended Learning Outcomes*

4.2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for all programmes and courses were provided in the Programme and Course Specifications and in programme information documents given to students in hard copy and on Moodle. They were also discussed at introductory meetings at the beginning of each year of the BN(Hons) programme. The ILOs were informed by the requirements of professional bodies and mapped to required competencies, as well as more general graduate attributes.

4.2.2 The ILOs were discussed in the development stage with students, external experts and potential employers. All courses were reviewed annually to ensure they remained current and met external requirements. Any required changes were considered by the Undergraduate Teaching Committee.

4.2.3 The student group reported that they understood course ILOs, and that each lecturer made these clear not only at the beginning of the course but by referring to them throughout the course and at assessment times.

### *4.3 Assessment, Feedback and Achievement*

4.3.1 The Review Panel noted from the Self Evaluation Report that a wide range of assessment methods were in use, based on the requirements of students and professional criteria. These methods included formal examinations, written coursework, practical skills, placements and online assessments. Students were provided with detailed assessment requirements and guidance in their course handbooks. Assessment was formative as well as summative.

4.3.2 Most online assessment was formative, with the exception of a medications calculation assessment using the software Safe Medicate. Students were able to undertake online exercises set as guided study in preparation for summative assessment. Although not compulsory, most students chose to complete the online exercises and understood their value.

4.3.3 Students used online peer assessment. Aropä was used in BN(Hons) year 2 to assess a short piece of work on anatomy and, in year 3 to anonymously grade other students' essays on e-health policy. They also used Peerwise, an online quiz constructed and scored by students. Students were required to answer, and also set, questions, with their questions being rated by peers. The School found there was a strong incentive to write questions and that students found this challenging. The student group reported finding the peer assessments useful, but that it was difficult to maintain focus when reading several essays on the same topic. They also felt there

was the possibility of unfair marking. Peer assessment has also been used successfully in the Lymphoedema Programme.

- 4.3.4 Skills were assessed in a simulated setting, and in placements. Mini Observed Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) were used in the BN(Hons) programme, with students being assessed by a facilitator and a peer observer, as well as having the opportunity to self-assess. Given the close alignment of the simulation to real-life situations in BN(Hons) years 2 and 3, students reported increased confidence prior to undertaking placements though they found the OSCEs daunting.
- 4.3.5 Discussions were ongoing about how best to involve service users in the assessment process. NMC guidelines stated that users and carers should contribute to assessment processes but this had been interpreted in different ways. The School had implemented a mechanism whereby users and carers could offer views which would contribute to the mentors' assessment of student performance. The School noted there was little uptake initially as mentors were unfamiliar with the approach, but had since included the requirement in mentor training. Early indications since then showed greater use of user and carer views in mentors' assessment.
- 4.3.6 Mentors at student placements were required to give feedback to students on an ongoing basis. The student group expected to be given interim feedback at a mid-way point, and again at the end of the placement, but the service representatives made it clear that feedback should be ongoing, so that any issues raised could be dealt with immediately. They explained that the placement feedback should represent a diary of the entire placement, otherwise the full picture could not be seen. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School clarify with both students and mentors the nature and timing of mentor feedback, in order that students and mentors understand clearly what is to be expected.
- 4.3.7 The School had recently introduced the Turnitin plagiarism detection software for coursework submission. Students had received introductory sessions on the use of Turnitin, and reported that it was a useful learning tool. They reported that they had two opportunities to submit drafts prior to the final submission, so could easily see any areas requiring further attention. They stated that they received a good deal of information about avoiding plagiarism.
- 4.3.8 It was reported in the Self Evaluation Report that staff aimed to give prompt and detailed feedback to students. In the 2013 National Student survey, 83% of students were satisfied that feedback had been prompt, down from 93% in 2011. However, the number of students reporting they had received detailed comments had increased from 75% to 88% in the same period. The School had made some improvements to the feedback process since 2010, when it had participated in a pilot of an academic writing website. It now provided typewritten feedback, as students had stated it was sometimes difficult to read handwriting. A feedback template had also been introduced for consistency amongst the various markers. Individual verbal feedback was now given to all BN(Hons) students for their nursing courses, following the December examination diet. However, it was evident that the student group also expected this type of feedback for their science courses, which was not possible given large student numbers. In general, the student group interviewed by the Review Panel were satisfied with the quality and speed of feedback received. They explained that they could arrange one-to-one, or small group, sessions after the examination period to discuss model answers, which could also be uploaded to Moodle. The staff group added that, in some cases, students did not consider that certain items constituted feedback – for example, essay feedback or comments on formative exercises – as they tended to focus on examination feedback. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School produce a feedback policy focusing on managing students' expectations, and clarifying what constitutes feedback.

4.3.9 It was noted from the documentation that the cohorts generally performed well, and that the means of assessment fairly reflected their achievements.

#### 4.4 *Curriculum Design, Development & Content*

4.4.1 A review of the BN(Hons) curriculum had recently been completed, with the new curriculum being implemented in 2012-13. This was driven by the changing healthcare needs of society, commitment to person-centred care, and requirements for student entry to the nursing register.

4.4.2 The responsibility for reviewing and approving course and programme design and content lay with the College Undergraduate Teaching Committee and the College Board of Studies. Programme proposals were required to be approved by the University's Academic Standards Committee, via Programme Approval Groups. The staff group advised that they discussed development at Forward Planning days and at Undergraduate Teaching Committee. This involved staff members from other Schools besides Nursing and Health Care. The service representatives group confirmed they were invited to, and attended, the Undergraduate Teaching Committee and felt their contributions were valued. The GTA advised that she was involved in discussions about course development and that she felt part of the teaching team. The hourly-paid staff member reported that she was not involved in any School meetings, though stated that she could approach the year tutor with any concerns or suggestions.

4.4.3 Existing provision was reviewed regularly to ensure programmes remained fit for purpose and of the requisite high standard. Consultation with all key stakeholders, including user and care representatives, was undertaken via focus groups and curriculum team meetings. External Examiners' reports were also considered as part of the regular review of provision.

4.4.4 It was noted that there was a high degree of science teaching within the BN(Hons) curriculum, with this being taught by staff from the School of Life Sciences (IBLS). Such inter-professional teaching was considered to have a significant positive impact on undergraduate learning and teaching. There was evidence that students had viewed nursing and science classes as very separate in previous years. The Head of School stated that there had been a good deal of advancement in integrating subject matter and cross teaching with regard to core material, for example, through the use of clinical scenarios in which students could apply scientific knowledge to nursing. This allowed students to see the two subjects as being more connected. The Head of School also noted that this offered staff opportunities to translate their research into teaching. She noted the Graduate Certificate and Diploma students did not see science and nursing as separate, as they would experience both as being interconnected in their professional environments. The staff groups explained that they had improved teaching methods, using case studies and problem-based learning, in an effort to make science subjects more relevant to nursing, and that perceptions were changing. Staff reported that their graduates were highly sought after for critical care roles due to their science background. The student group reported that the amount of science teaching was one of the reasons they had wished to join the degree, noting that this was not available in all nursing programmes. They noted, however, that large blocks of science teaching were sometimes timetabled, and they found it difficult to maintain focus. They reported that they would like a better spread of science and nursing classes. The staff group noted that this had previously been the case, but that the move to teaching blocks had come about through student feedback from the previous cohort who had viewed the science teaching as 'bitty'. Staff stated it was difficult to find the correct balance.

4.4.5 At the last review, it had been recommended that consideration be given to re-ordering placements for the BN(Hons) programme, so that the Care for the Elderly

placement came later in the programme. This was because, as the first placement, it was challenging and appeared to have an impact on student withdrawals. The BN(Hons) Programme Director confirmed that this matter had been considered but that, after lengthy deliberation, it had been decided that this was an appropriate first placement. She explained that core nursing skills were best practiced in elderly care, and that the essential skills cluster required by the NMC were embodied in that first placement. She added that the induction to placements had improved significantly, particularly in emphasising the emotional impact on students, and that she believed this better prepared students for the placement.

#### 4.5 *Student Recruitment*

- 4.5.1 The BN(Hons) programme typically received over 800 applications for 40 places annually. It was noted that applications from overseas had increased, though they remained small. The entry requirement for the programme was high, and all applicants meeting the requirement were interviewed to assess their suitability for nursing. Senior students were involved in the interview process and received training and mentoring for this role. From the SER, it was noted that the School was processing over 800 applications per annum. In line with the School's suggestion, the Panel **recommends** that the School seek to reduce this burden by seeking support from the Recruitment and International Office in the task of filtering applications that do not meet the minimum entry requirement.
- 4.5.2 There were 150 funded places on the BN(Hons) programme, so admission figures had tended to fluctuate in order to maintain this number. In recent years, a reduction in intake was advised by the Scottish Government due to a lack of opportunities for graduate nurses to find employment. However, a shortage of registered nurses was now expected by 2017 and therefore intakes were rising again.
- 4.5.3 The School had links with Stow College, accepting students from its two Access courses, and also with the University's Centre for Open Studies, who offered an Access to Nursing course which provided the scientific background required for admission to the BN(Hons) degree.
- 4.5.4 The School marketed its provision through open days, schools liaison and the University International Officers. Students had proved to be a useful link with their former schools, with some returning to speak to potential applicants. The student group interviewed by the Review Panel described very positive experiences of the application process, reporting that staff had been helpful and had made them feel valued and welcome. They had not found this to be the case at other institutions to which they applied. They also said they were attracted by the small class sizes.
- 4.5.5 The Graduate Certificate and Diploma programme had only been marketed to overseas applicants since 2012, because the previous structure of the programme did not allow students to meet visa criteria. The Head of School advised that there was overseas interest in the programmes. She advised that the Graduate Diploma in Specialist Lymphoedema Management had an international reputation.

#### 4.6 *Student Progression, Retention & Support*

- 4.6.1 It was stated in the Self Evaluation Report that progression of BN(Hons) students was improving from year to year, with the majority of students progressing successfully between years 1 and 2, and 2 and 3. It was noted that progression was monitored by the Undergraduate Teaching Committee.
- 4.6.2 A small number of students withdrew from the course, mainly in the early stage of year 1, on realising they did not wish to work as nurses. It was noted in the SER that this realisation usually came after completion of the first clinical placement although, often, students would undertake another placement before finally deciding to leave.

It was noted that the School's retention figures for the BN(Hons) compared favourably to those of similar programmes.

- 4.6.3 While around 50% of nursing students progressed to the Honours year, this differed from the pattern of high progression to Honours in other subjects. The Head of School attributed this to various factors – for example, around a quarter of students already had Honours degrees before joining the BN(Hons). There were also financial implications of studying for an additional year. Finally, there was no clearly perceived benefit in completing Honours, as it did not lead to better employment prospects, at least in the short term. Graduate nurses would enter the profession at the same grade whether or not they completed Honours, though Honours graduates were likely to find themselves in a better position to apply for promoted posts earlier in their careers than those not completing Honours. The student group supported this explanation, and added that the prospect of writing a dissertation was also a deterrent. The students in the Honours year expressed the view that the extra year of experience and learning was extremely useful. They reported learning a good deal about health policy and leadership which they believed would be helpful for future career progression. The Review Panel noted that some institutions recruited only to Honours, and that English institutions were moving in this direction. However, the English Honours degree was three years in duration as opposed to four so, should the School wish to move in this direction, accelerated entry could be considered in order that students were not disadvantaged by the extra year of study. The Review Panel **recommends** that students be given full information about the benefits of progressing to Honours as early as possible, perhaps by inviting past Honours graduates to speak to students.
- 4.6.4 The School supported students in a number of ways. For example, an Induction Week introduced students to nursing staff, the various support services, and the Students' Representative Council. Programme Handbooks were distributed and discussed, and a number of profession-related activities were undertaken, such as NHS Education Scotland registration. Social events were arranged throughout the year to help students engage with other students and meet staff on a more informal basis. International students received ongoing support from the Admission Officer.
- 4.6.5 All students were allocated an Adviser of Studies in year 1 and remained with the same Adviser throughout their studies. All academic staff not on probation acted as Advisers, and the role was largely pastoral. The Advising system was tied to the tutorial system, which required students to meet with their allocated Adviser at least three times each year.
- 4.6.6 In addition to the Advising system, students were encouraged to speak informally with any member of staff for support or advice when needed. The student group valued this highly. The small size of the School meant that staff and students tended to know each other, and the open-door policy meant that students knew there was always support and advice available.
- 4.6.7 Students reported that a link lecturer was allocated for each placement to ensure students were supported, in addition to the support received from the mentor. The link lecturer would visit the student on the first placement. If students experienced problems on placement, including with their mentor, they knew support was available either from their link lecturer or from other staff within the clinical setting. They were confident that, should it be necessary, the School would support them in escalating any complaint.
- 4.6.8 All mentors underwent training which was run by GCU with contributions from University of Glasgow staff. The training had been highly commended by the NMC and included supervised mentoring and the production of a portfolio. The service representatives group advised there were many mentors within Greater Glasgow



Health Board, with newly-qualified practitioners being supported to apply for mentorship roles. The application procedure was robust and applicants were required to commit to time away from their clinical area to undertake training. This involved three days at GCU as well as two service days. Two reflective essays were submitted in addition to the portfolio, and five days would be spent supporting students. Once complete, mentors were required to support three final placement students. Practice Education Facilitators supported the mentors in their roles and acted as a link between the Universities and the clinical area.

#### 4.7 *The Quality of Learning Opportunities*

- 4.7.1 The School was found to use a number of traditional teaching and learning methods in tandem with more innovative ones, making good use of technology. Enquiry-based learning had been introduced for science subjects, with students being required to apply scientific knowledge to a clinical scenario. The student group described this as one of the most helpful teaching methods on the programme, and found it extremely useful in preparing for placements. The staff group reported that these developments had assisted students in making the connection between science subjects and clinical skills.
- 4.7.2 Students had the opportunity to experience peer assessment and problem-based learning to engage them with their learning. Course Moodles were used for interactive learning and teaching, and software such as Safe Medicate was used for online learning and assessment.
- 4.7.3 Practice learning was an integral part of the BN(Hons) programme, with students spending half of their learning time in practice settings. Placements were audited against ILOs, jointly by the University of Glasgow and Glasgow Caledonian University. Placements included guided study, online resources and a workbook to assist student learning. The student group reported that, in some cases, placements had been allocated very late, and that only a few days notice of the allocated placement had been given. The staff group explained that most placements were organised by GCU and that, two years ago, the allocation process had been extremely unsatisfactory. The aim was to provide allocation information to students three weeks in advance of the placement date. However, it was noted that there was a lack of NHS placement opportunities, and that sometimes last minute changes had to be made. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School encourage GCU to liaise with NHS partners in order to ensure placement arrangements are in place as early as possible, giving students the opportunity to research the placement in advance and gain an enhanced experience.
- 4.7.4 It was stated in the SER that skills teaching had developed significantly since the last review. The skill set required by the profession was fully embedded into the curriculum and professional representatives took part in Undergraduate Teaching Committee meetings to ensure skills teaching remained current. Two part-time staff members, seconded from the NHS, ensured the teaching team were aware of current initiatives in health care delivery. Skills sessions were taught by experienced nurses in a simulated setting.
- 4.7.5 Students received teaching from visiting lecturers from the profession. The Review Panel had noted some issues mentioned by students in Annual Course Monitoring Reports regarding punctuality and attendance. The BN(Hons) Programme Director acknowledged that timetabling of such lectures was very problematic, but assured the Review Panel that problems with punctuality and absence were very rare, with issues arising perhaps three times a year. The student group spoken to by the Review Panel supported this statement, explaining that there had been some issues with a staff member rather than a visiting lecturer, and adding that they very much appreciated the time and effort of visiting lecturers.

4.7.6 The Head of School reported that good practice was shared at Forward Planning days and at Undergraduate Teaching Committee. The staff group agreed with this, and reported that the School was very quick to act on suggestions made by the student cohorts regarding the curriculum. They stated that staff members were willing to adapt courses and explore new ideas, and that there was an inclusive approach to teaching.

#### 4.8 *Resources for Learning & Teaching*

4.8.1 The School had a small staff which, whilst beneficial in terms of creating a sense of community within the School, presented workload issues. The number of meetings within the School also raised issues for staff, although it was noted staff were not under pressure to attend all meetings. External meetings created further issues, where it was important for the School to be represented. The number of internal meetings was considered important by staff, however, and they appreciated being involved in, and kept up to date with, activities in the School and beyond.

4.8.2 The Head of School reported that, since the last review, more staff members were research active, with most staff undertaking some sort of research. This research was then integrated into their teaching of core material through the use of exemplars. The staff group reported that members of staff supported each other in ensuring they had time to undertake research, and that the Head of School also gave full support. In addition to subject research, some staff explained that, as teachers, their research was educationally focused. This educational scholarship underpinned curriculum development, feeding into undergraduate teaching and learning directly. It was noted that there were 16 PhD students, which presented a heavy supervision workload for the 6 members of staff with PhDs. The Head of School reported that the School had lost its Chair through voluntary severance, and that this had disadvantaged the School from an external viewpoint.

4.8.3 The Review Panel was given a short tour of the School, and viewed its teaching spaces within the Oakfield Avenue building. Some excellent facilities were available, for example, the Simulated Clinical Skills room where students could practice skills such as CPR, catheterisation and, with supervision, injection. It was noted that a currently vacant room was to be redeveloped as a Dementia Skills room, where students could learn the specific skills required for caring for patients with dementia.

4.8.4 In 2015, facilities at the new Southern General Hospital (SGH) campus would become available. However, there appeared to be uncertainty about which teaching would move there and it was not clear whether nursing students would have access to these facilities. The Head of School advised that the School was no longer involved in discussions regarding the use of the new SGH facilities. The Acting Head of the School of Medicine advised that the SGH facilities would be for the use of all medical and nursing students. Facilities at UWS in Hamilton were used at present and, whilst excellent, the location was not ideal. There was also a belief that facilities at Glasgow Royal Infirmary were only available to PGT students, and no further information about how these facilities would be allocated was available. It was reported by the BN(Hons) Director that, although there were excellent facilities in the Wolfson Medical School building, there were difficulties in accessing them. She stated that BN(Hons) students required seven sessions per year, and that these should be able to be accommodated. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Undergraduate Medical School Administration be asked to negotiate access to the Wolfson Medical School facilities for Nursing annually, to accommodate the seven sessions required by Bachelor of Nursing students.

4.8.5 The School had one GTA, whose role was to give a nursing perspective on science topics, running approximately ten sessions per year. She advised she had undertaken GTA training, and also developed her knowledge in carrying out the role.

She believed there was scope for her GTA role to be developed, adding that she would be keen to be involved in assessment. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School explore ways of utilising research students in teaching, demonstration and assessment, in order to develop the role and assist in relieving workload issues within the School.

- 4.8.6 The hourly-paid staff member explained that she did not have a contract and that this made the role rather unsatisfactory. She was unable to feel part of the teaching team and found it difficult to see the overall work of the School. She made it clear that her teaching was valued, but she was not routinely offered feedback on her teaching. However, when she directly requested feedback from students and course leaders this was given readily. She advised she would appreciate interaction with the School outside of her teaching hours, and involvement in examination boards and the Undergraduate Teaching Committee in order to gain a fuller understanding of the working of the School. The Review Panel **recommends** that those on hourly-paid or atypical worker contracts be invited to attend relevant meetings within the School, including Examination Boards, Undergraduate Teaching Committee and any other meeting relevant to their roles, in order to improve integration with other staff. Other areas of activity that might assist in this regard should also be identified.
- 4.8.7 The probationary staff members reported that they were undertaking the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice and found it valuable not only in developing their own skills but also by allowing them to see other perspectives from across the University. Both felt well supported by the School in terms of their teaching and research responsibilities. One of the probationary staff members reported that she had a very high workload. The Head of School acknowledged this, stating that the School had a policy of reduced workloads for probationary staff; however, without a full complement of staff, the additional workload had been necessary in order to meet NMC requirements. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School take steps to ensure that the policy of reduced workloads for probationary staff is adhered to, for example, through seeking resource for an additional appointment or more effective use of research students.
- 4.8.8 The involvement of user and carer representatives was of key importance. The user and carer representatives greatly valued being able to tell their stories and provide insights to nursing students. This was, in their view, a significant strength of the programme at Glasgow and would like to see this area being developed. In particular, they suggested that their contribution could be focused around the idea of seeing the patient/user as a 'whole human being'. They reported some frustration relating to the obstacles to participating in the nursing programme, for example, cost and time of travel. The Head of the School of Medicine reported that at present this was organised in a rather ad hoc manner, but that a strategy was currently being devised which would lead to a more coherent process and involve users and carers in a meaningful way. The Dean of Learning & Teaching added that there had, in the past, been patient representatives on some committees, but they stopped attending as most of the committees' business was not of interest to them. Whilst the work being done with users and carers was commendable, the Review Panel **recommends** that the School continue to develop its strategy for the coherent involvement of users and carers, exploring additional ways of involving them, and ensuring that participants are reimbursed for any expense incurred in taking part.

## 5. Maintaining the Standards of Awards

- 5.1 Curricula were developed on the basis of required professional competencies and professional expertise, and then scrutinised via the usual University procedures. The Panel considered this was appropriate, and typical of other professional programmes throughout the University.

- 5.2 The BN(Hons) degree was validated by the NMC. Intended Learning Outcomes had been devised in line with required professional competencies.
- 5.3 In addition to professional validation, External Examiners played an important role in ensuring standards were maintained, through providing a means of comparison with other institutions. Comments made by External Examiners fed into the review process. External Examiners' reports had been generally positive about the School and its provision, and had praised the high quality of students' work.
- 5.4 It was highlighted in the Self Evaluation Report that the School of Medicine Learning and Teaching Committee played a vital role in the maintenance of standards, both in terms of reviewing and acting upon Annual Course Monitoring Reports, and in sharing good practice across the three Professional Schools.

## **6. Assuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Students' Learning Experience**

- 6.1 The Review Panel noted that there was a good deal of excellent teaching in its undergraduate provision and that quality assurance procedures appeared to be in line with University policy and were applied effectively. It was clear that the staff members the Review Panel met were engaged in excellent teaching and were committed to ensuring the student experience was of the highest quality.
- 6.2 It was noted that NSS results had indicated a drop in student satisfaction in 2013, although the results for Nursing exceeded the University benchmark. The Head of School noted two main issues which had contributed to this. Firstly, the wrong dataset was submitted to Ipsos MORI by the University, meaning that the wrong group of students were surveyed. Secondly, the group of students surveyed were those with the closest experience of the consultations about the future of the School, and were studying at a time when the School was short staffed and unable to provide the level of support they normally gave. The student group supported this explanation, reporting that they had been concerned they would graduate with a Glasgow Caledonian University degree rather than a University of Glasgow one.
- 6.3 The use of technology enhanced learning was noted to be a priority, with programmes now using Moodle, YouTube and Facebook to enhance provision and engage more effectively with students. Online, interactive sessions were beginning to be used and an enhanced version of Moodle could now host video and other teaching tools. These opportunities were being explored and implemented on an ongoing basis and student focus groups were being run to evaluate the use of technology in teaching and learning.
- 6.4 It was noted from the Self Evaluation Report that staff/student communication was encouraged (both formally and informally) and that a good deal of feedback was provided by students. The Staff/Student Liaison Committee was described as being valued, although it appeared there was no opportunity for the Committee to be chaired by student members. The student group reported that the School was swift in responding to issues raised. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School offer opportunities for student members to chair meetings of the Staff/Student Liaison Committee, in line with University policy.
- 6.5 The Review Panel noted that Annual Course Monitoring Reports (ACMRs), together with student feedback questionnaires, informed course and programme enhancements.
- 6.6 The student group noted that the BN(Hons) workload was heavy, and that the nature of shift work on placement meant there was often little time to be involved in extra-curricular activities or part-time work. They stated that they received bursaries and, without these, it was unlikely they would be able to complete the programme or attend placements.

- 6.7 The student group appeared either unaware of the existence of Student Voice, or unclear as to its purpose. They described using class Facebook groups to keep up to date with events and student matters, and did not feel there was any need for another means of doing so.
- 6.8 The Review Panel noted that a number of items in the BN(Hons) Student Handbooks for Years 1 and 2 were out of date, particularly links to the University website. Senate Office will provide specific examples to the School. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the content of their Handbooks to ensure information is up to date, and that a robust review procedure for Handbooks is implemented to ensure these are properly maintained.

## 7. Summary of Perceived Strengths and Areas for Improvement in Learning & Teaching

### Key Strengths

- The commitment of staff to ensuring the student experience is high quality and engaging [Section 6.1]
- Good student support mechanisms, with helpful, approachable staff [Section 4.6.6]
- The commitment to excellent teaching and the willingness of staff to quickly adapt their teaching based on student feedback [Sections 4.4.4 & 4.7.1]
- The inclusion of a student representative on student recruitment panels for the BN(Hons) degree [Section 4.5.1]
- The use of innovative assessment methods, such as the use of Peerwise and Aropä [Section 4.3.3]
- Resourcefulness with regard to use of space, such as the Simulated Clinical Skills room and the planned Dementia Skills room [Section 4.8.3]
- The clarity of Intended Learning Outcomes and their relevance throughout the programmes [Section 4.2.3]

### Areas for Improvement

- The clarity of both student and mentor expectations relating to placement feedback [Section 4.3.6]
- The management of student expectations regarding course and examination feedback [Section 4.3.8]
- The meaningful involvement of user and carer representatives in the School's business [Section 4.8.8]
- The currency of information in Year 1 and 2 BN(Hons) Handbooks [Section 6.8]

### Conclusions

The Panel was impressed with the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff and students, and with the firm focus on person-centred care and readiness for entry to the profession. The student group were enthusiastic and positive, and a credit to the School.

The School demonstrated a number of strengths, as well as an awareness of the areas requiring improvement. The most substantive of these are reflected in the recommendations below.

## Recommendations

The recommendations interspersed in the preceding report are summarised below. They have been cross referenced to the paragraphs to which they refer in the text of the report. They are ranked in order of priority.

### *Recommendation 1*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School give consideration to how it might alter its range of provision, in order to strengthen its resilience to changes in undergraduate provision beyond the University's control [Section 3].

**Action: Head of School**

### *Recommendation 2*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the College give consideration to demonstrating commitment externally about the sustainability of the School, such as publicising 'good news' messages about the School to external audiences, in order to alleviate any perception of uncertainty surrounding the School's future and its provision [Section 3].

**Action: Head of College**

### *Recommendation 3*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School continue to develop its strategy for the coherent involvement of users and carers, exploring additional ways of involving them and ensuring that participants are reimbursed for any expense incurred in taking part [Section 4.8.8].

**Action: Head of School; Head of School of Medicine**

### *Recommendation 4*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School encourage GCU to liaise with NHS partners in order to ensure placement arrangements are in place as early as possible, giving students the opportunity to research the placement in advance and gain an enhanced experience [Section 4.7.3].

**Action: Head of School**

### *Recommendation 5*

The Review Panel **recommends** that students be given full information about the benefits of progressing to Honours as early as possible, perhaps by inviting past Honours graduates to speak to students [Section 4.6.2].

**Action: Head of School**

### *Recommendation 6*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School take steps to ensure that the policy of reduced workloads for probationary staff is adhered to, for example, through seeking resource for an additional appointment or more effective use of research students [Section 4.8.7].

**Action : Head of School**

### *Recommendation 7*

In line with the School's suggestion, the Panel **recommends** that the School seek to reduce the burden of processing over 800 applications by seeking support from the Recruitment and International Office in the task of filtering applications that do not meet the minimum entry requirement [Section 4.5.1].

**Action : Head of School; Recruitment & International Office**

*Recommendation 8* The Review Panel **recommends** that the School explore ways of utilising research students in teaching, demonstration and assessment, in order to develop the role and assist in relieving workload issues within the School [Section 4.8.5].

**Action: Head of School**

*Recommendation 9*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School clarify with both students and mentors the nature and timing of mentor feedback, in order that students and mentors understand clearly what is to be expected [Item 4.3.6].

**Action: Head of School**

*Recommendation 10*

The Review Panel **recommends** that those on hourly-paid or atypical worker contracts be invited to attend relevant meetings within the School, including Examination Boards, Undergraduate Teaching Committee and any other meeting relevant to their roles, in order to improve integration with other staff. Other areas of activity that might assist in this regard should also be identified. [Section 4.8.6].

**Action: Head of School**

*Recommendation 11*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School produce a feedback policy focusing on managing students' expectations, and clarifying what constitutes feedback [Section 4.3.8].

**Action: Head of School**

*Recommendation 12*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the content of their Handbooks to ensure information is up to date, and that a robust review procedure for Handbooks is implemented to ensure these are properly maintained [Section 6.8].

**Action: Head of School**

*Recommendation 13*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Undergraduate Medical School Administration be asked to negotiate access to the Wolfson Medical School facilities for Nursing annually, to accommodate the seven sessions required by Bachelor of Nursing students [Section 4.8.4].

**Action: Head of School; Undergraduate Medical School Administration**

*Recommendation 14*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School offer opportunities for student members to chair meetings of the Staff/Student Liaison Committee, in line with University policy [Section 6.4].

**Action: Head of School**