

This proforma should be used to collate information from School Annual Monitoring Summaries.

The aims of Annual Monitoring are to maintain quality and improve provision encourage reflection. The form is designed to capture a **reflective summary** of annual monitoring activity at School and subject level. Bullet list format is encouraged.

College	<p><b>College of Social Sciences</b></p> <p>This report has been informed by information available on Quality Enhancement and Assurance across the College and in particular the School AMRs provided by the Quality Officers responsible for undergraduate provision across all of the Schools that comprise the College:</p> <p>Adam Smith Business School UG Studies: Mrs Margaret Milner</p> <p>School of Education: Dr Dely Elliot</p> <p>School of Interdisciplinary Studies: Dr Bethan Wood</p> <p>School of Law: Professor Ernest Metzger</p> <p>School Social &amp; Political Sciences UG Studies: Dr Craig Smith</p> <p>The report was written by Dr Robert Doherty College Quality Officer.</p>
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<b>Reflection</b>
Comment on what is working well? What needs work?
<p><b><i>What is working well?</i></b></p> <p><b>Adam Smith Business School</b></p> <p>External Examiners reports recognised many strengths and features of good practice. Teaching, generally, at UG level was recognised positively in student evaluations. Accounting and Finance noted high pass rates in year 1 and high levels of graduate employment.</p> <p><b>School of Education</b></p> <p>Across eight diverse units of learning, the School noted strengths in supporting student learning, curriculum design and teaching. Active curriculum development and restructuring, together with the application of e-learning is a notable theme across units.</p> <p><b>School of Interdisciplinary Studies</b></p> <p>The four programmes reviewed reported strengths in curriculum design, levels of student satisfaction and course evaluation. The flexible use of staff and external specialist contributions were recognised. Self-evaluation is evident across the units of learning in the construction of a comprehensive profile of areas for development work.</p> <p><b>School of Law</b></p> <p>Evaluation, reflection and responsiveness to problems and student concerns were identified as strengths. This was exemplified in the practice of gathering student views across courses in week 7; allowing early responses. School structures for course review and evaluation are judged to be effective.</p> <p><b>School of Social &amp; Political Sciences</b></p> <p>Across five units of learning, the School noted strengths in curriculum design, quality of lectures, contribution of GTAs, supporting academic writing and feedback to students.</p> <p><b><i>What needs work?</i></b></p> <p><b>Adam Smith Business School</b></p> <p>The Business School reported clear challenges arising from courses with large numbers of student enrolments; including teaching, administration and additional demands arising from significant numbers of non-home students</p>

(up to 50% in some courses). Attendance was noted as an issue, together with a concern over student behaviours in relation to conduct involving wireless devices during lectures. The School noted the need to support the role of GTAs to ensure their consistent contribution to the student experience. The quality and organisation of feedback is a key focus for improvement within the School.

NSS UG	Number of questions below the institutional KPI
Accounting and Finance	3
Business	13*
Economics	16*
	* Includes Q22 Overall Satisfaction

### School of Education

The BA in Childhood Practice reported a range of curriculum and development tasks and programme architecture refinements.

The BA in Community Development programme reported the difficulty of accessing suitable teaching spaces to support effective teaching, with two courses also requiring the redevelopment of summative assessment schemes.

The Postgraduate Diploma in Education reported deficits in communication with students and the need to improve staff involvement in programme decision making and scheduling issues. The need for additional content together with curriculum development across two significant courses was noted. The use of video relay in lectures where students could not be accommodated into one teaching space was reported as being unsuccessful in student feedback.

BEd (Primary) reported a focus on improving assessment and the need to engage with a wider developmental agenda, in responding to recent changes in government policy on teacher education.

The BTechEd programme reported a number of areas of curriculum development, scheduling refinements and areas requiring additional student support and guidance.

The MA in Religious and Philosophical Education identified the need to develop aspects of student's use of sources and research and to refine assessment criteria on some courses.

NSS UG	Number of questions below the institutional KPI
ITE/ITT	4

### School of Interdisciplinary Studies

The BSc in Environmental Stewardship reported a number of timetabling issues and access to the VLE and arrangements for marking. Placement evaluation and preparation of students for placements need refinements. There are unresolved tensions over the place and significance of the course Rural Tourism and Stewardship.

The MA Health and Social Policy identified the need to support the course researching health and social issues around resources, approaches to teaching and contributions from field professionals.

The MA in Primary Education programme noted concerns over students' behaviour around wireless devices during classes; refinements are required to assessment design across a number of courses. The contribution to courses made by the Crichton Carbon Centre was identified as an area that needs improvement. Students raised a question relating to the over use of ICT in teaching sessions.

MA Liberal Arts/Humanities programme reported a number of challenges with the quality of audio-visual resources, optimising timetabling and confidence in course relevance and balance within programme designs. The School also reported the necessity to engage with a wider developmental agenda responding to recent changes in government policy on teacher education.

NSS UG	Number of questions below the institutional KPI
Teacher Training (Dumf)	3

**School of Law**

The School of Law reported no significant areas in need of work arising from the review of undergraduate provision over session 13-14.

NSS UG	Number of questions below the institutional KPI
Law	7

**School Social & Political Sciences**

The School noted the challenge of regular effective teaching team meetings, together with supporting the contribution of GTAs and concern with their remuneration and motivation. Economic and Social History identified student performance in some courses and levels of recruitment into honours. Curriculum development, the design of summative assessment and the timely provision of feedback were noted across units of learning.

Lack of large lecture spaces to accommodate courses close to 200 students was identified in relation to impact on student satisfaction. Video relay and recorded lectures were reported as being unsuccessful in generating positive student evaluation.

NSS UG	Number of questions below the institutional KPI
Social Policy	2
ESH/History	5
Politics	8
Sociology	9

**Complaints CSS** *(Note from CQO: Complaints as an indicator of assurance or enhancement issues is at a trial stage, the information provided is exploratory at this point in time.)*

For College as a whole in 2013-14 there were:

Stage 1 complaints: 32 of which 19 upheld/partially upheld (University total including University Services = 112)

Stage 2 complaints: 27 of which 14 upheld/partially upheld (University total = 46) (That looks like a large proportion for the College but we had a number of complaints all closely related to one issue.)

**College NSS Results 2014**

Over the 29 statements (eight categories), 8 statements had a satisfaction level below the institutional benchmark of 80%. The 8 statements include all 5 statements relating to Assessment & Feedback.

**Good Practice**

Comment on innovation? What practices should be recommended?

A range of good practices have been identified from the School UG AMR reports. These are best presented on a School by School basis.

**Adam Smith Business School**

ASBS has introduced Learning and Teaching Forums to disseminate good practice across the School. One example of that dissemination is the increased use of the Reading List software managed by the University Library. Further, Economics reports that Q&A sessions and the use of video presentations were reported by more than one course co-ordinator. These should be facilitated to a greater extent by the library acquisition of a suite of video materials that can be added to the new Reading List system.

Specifically across the ASBS Subject Group,

- In Management, use of a three stage learning process based on the work of Erskine et al (2003). The learning process supports students becoming deep learners and helps them to analyse the link between theory and practice. In her course, students realized that there are often multiple solutions to case studies and that flexibility in implementation is often important to deal with changing circumstances.
- In Management, use of social media to generate contact with students.
- In Accounting and Finance, computer assisted learning tools such as end of lecture Moodle MCQ tests are used.
- In Accounting & Finance, video clips are being used in lectures to illustrate real-life scenarios.
- Accounting & Finance feel that the key to their success in both NSS results and overall course evaluations is the excellent relationship they promote between staff and students. The mutual understanding is fostered by social events and by taking student concerns seriously and consulting with students on teaching practices.
- Critical analysis skills in Economics 2B are developed by the presentation of alternative interpretative frameworks.
- In Economics, some staff find that staying in the class during breaks and remaining after lectures – when possible - is helpful in engaging students and that providing motivation/examples at every step for the more technical material is also helpful. This action by some staff in Economics is particularly important as students in the NSS student and in course evaluations often comment that they feel staff are not engaging with them.
- Use of a 15-minute classroom debate sessions at the end of each lecture in Economics of Business 2, were well received and highly evaluated by students.
- In Economics, small group discussions (whenever possible) seem to be appreciated by the students.
- In Economics, a number of courses have invited lecturers (other academics or practitioners) to give lectures or joint lectures and this elicits very positive student feedback.
- Two particular examples of efforts made to enable students to understand the learning material: In Management, an attempt to address the gulf between student understanding and staff expectations to improve performance in an honours elective by repeatedly describing to students what was necessary to achieve each grade in the assessment and exams. Student performance was improved. Secondly, the extent of a collaborative approach with students for *Foreign Direct Investment* (Economics) increased the level of student engagement/understanding of the course materials.

#### School of Education

- **BA Childhood Practice** – Usage of ‘self-study’ booklet; varied assessment approaches, e.g. debates, pen portraits. External Examiners remarked on the clarity of the guidance for course assignments. Assessment feedback given to students by **all** staff is ‘very detailed and helpful’, as noted by students and externals, and is combined with very detailed information accessible via Moodle. Support for markers who did not teach the course is available.
- **BA Community Development** – Community Development Jigsaw – used as a framework for students’ practice courses; marrying theory and practice, instilling ‘a strong sense of values’; teaching courses in blocks; and field visits and practitioners’ visits.
- **PGDE** – ‘School experience partnership arrangements offer students excellent support during school placements.’ In the Maths department, a ‘unique approach of using maths secondary specialists as lead learners working with PGDE primary non-specialist students’ is being implemented. Additionally, ‘student-led seminars’ are excellent opportunities for student development. Finally, an opportunity for showcasing students’ good work through a student-led conference is currently being organised for the end of session.
- **BEd** – Identified examples of innovative practice are: ‘interdisciplinary approach’ used for BEd 3 Curriculum Enquiry that affords ‘linking of policy, research and practice across the curriculum’ that also provides ‘challenge’ and ‘need for higher level thinking’; opportunities to learn outwith university, e.g. art galleries, parks, museums, etc.; better use of the VLE through the use of Twitter, iPads and a number of applications/technologies; continuous work on the assessment procedures towards creating better and more effective examples; the new Master’s Programme for Teacher Education (recently accredited by the GTCS) is ‘designed to accommodate the needs that a fast evolving and technologically oriented society demands’, with a move towards a Sociology-

focused Master's degree endeavouring to best prepare future teachers to deal with 21<sup>st</sup> century pupils.

- **BTechEd** – Employing a 'student calendar of submission dates' to assist students with workload planning and management; recorded verbal feedback additionally given to written grading summaries highlighting 'considerations for improvement'; an informal trial where students had the 'opportunity to personalise the focus of feedback' received, e.g. particularly challenging elements of the assignment; development of 'Guided Learning Podcasts' to assist students regarding 'calculations' essential in their final exam; compilation of 'digital portfolios' and 'working towards the programme's affordances of technology strand' contributed to students' graduate attributes and employability skills. After initial testing, the use of 'active feedback forms' allowing selection of grades for 'weighted criteria' will be operationalised in the next academic session.
- **MA Religious & Philosophical Education** – Involvement of professorial and senior teaching staff on particular courses; 'continuing development of peer-to-peer presentations' with emphasis on shorter presentations for 'very specific' topics and requiring high level of communication among students; the final assessments for the school experience placements, to be successful, necessitated drawing evidence from both practice and theory for 'a fully referenced and evidenced reflective summary of experiences'.
- **Fundamentals of Education 1A & 1B**– Course success is informed by: a stable team that has been together for years; high quality teaching received; having one lecturer per unit, thus avoiding 'a disjointed learning experience'; running 'small seminar groups where student learning and critical thinking is the focus'; use of 'a very good blended learning approach'.

#### School of Law

- Timing of student evaluations: In most courses, students' opinions are gathered before the close of semester, so that problems can be addressed during the semester, if possible.
- Staff reflections on student evaluation occur soon after the close of teaching, when memories are fresh and steps can be taken to solve problems before the next academic year. The School then supplements those summaries in the autumn with the aid of information prepared over the summer.
- The SQO maintains a QAE page on Moodle and posts all relevant documents there.
- Course convenors favour the distribution of topical questions for discussion in advance of class. Though this is usual in Level 3/4, it was employed also at Level 1/2.
- The use of post-class review summaries by teaching staff.
- The use of detailed course documents, containing summaries of each week's lectures in advance.
- The School of Law would note as innovative [1] the use of a past paper as the subject of the final course tutorial; [2] assessment by portfolio; [3] peer review of class essays.

#### School of Interdisciplinary Studies

##### What practices are innovative?

- Experimental Design Project (Level 1 course; Dr B Wood) – students are presented with a hypothesis which they have to test during the course of the semester. Some groups have travelled the county testing soil or water samples; others have travelled across counties to measure noise in rural and urban environments; some have carried out purely laboratory work, while others have used the web to assess carbon footprints of countries.
- French - the use of the following is highly recommended: Use of native language speakers; Student self-diagnosis of linguistic issues in written work (Jane Cavani).
- Encouragement of students to set up self-study / peer-mentoring groups outside of class.
- Using documentary films as the texts for the group presentations (Dr S Hanscomb).
- Course essay requires each student to research a particular emotion under some specified headings (Dr S Hanscomb).
- Web design (Level 1 course; Dr M Davies) – this has enabled students to acquire skills in designing web pages and in using html.

- Linking environmental topics to the Curriculum for Excellence for Primary Education students (Level 1 course; Dr S Gillespie).
- Field classes leading to placements for students (Level 3 courses; Dr B Wood) – students have undertaken placements with Edinburgh Zoo, Scottish Natural Heritage, RSPB, and others, following field classes to the sites earlier in the academic year or degree programme.
- Oral presentations on level 4 courses (Dr D Borthwick) – these allowed the students to be creative and present their environmental topic within a chosen format e.g. poems, posters, talks – all targeted at a specific audience.
- Inclusions of the Scottish Independence referendum within the policy orientated courses within the Health and Social Policy degree (Karen Wright).
- Practitioner involvement on courses – environmental, health and social policy, and primary education (Dr A Whitelaw).
- ‘Flip’ teaching; at our AMR meeting it was felt that whilst this had been innovative half of the students like it and half of them do not. The team was told that there was anecdotal evidence for the fact that some students’ level of interaction was greater as a result of ‘flip’ teaching. The practice will continue over the next session but will be very carefully monitored (A. Graeme Pate).

#### **What practices should be recommended?**

- Opportunities for credited work placements within degree programmes – students appreciated the opportunity in level 3, semester 2 to undertake a 60 credit placement.
- A rigorous moderation of essay marking was carried out in the course ‘Education in its wider context’ in November and this practice helped the team to see how others were assessing and recording progress of the year 4 students. This is beneficial preparation for the undertaking of dissertation marking.

#### **School of Social & Political Sciences**

- Innovative and varied approach to teaching and student development/support within Honours curriculum, including weekly presentations in Globalisation of Stuff, Reflective Learning Journal in Addiction (ESH).
- Continued success of group working in Honours curriculum, with average student performance in core course RESH 1 better than average student performance in all other ESH Honours courses (ESH).
- Exam Feedback in Honours courses in operation for first time in 2013-14, to provide profile of performance for each student across entire programme of courses, enabling students and staff to identify patterns of performance and structural strengths and weaknesses (ESH).
- Students liked the quick availability of lectures via Moodle in all four pre-Honours courses. (Politics)
- Consistent format of lectures, with clear signposting of each lecture’s aims and structure. (Politics)
- Various practices are used to support and give guidance to GTAs on the pre-Honours courses including marking meetings, weekly chat sessions with course convenors and a tutor guide. (Politics)
- Level 1 courses have an employability session built into the curriculum. (Politics)
- We have developed the Olive Tree Initiative programme for the 2014-15 academic session, which if approved, will include a 2 week educational trip to Israel, Palestine/West Bank, and Jordan. This will be complemented with an Honours course and activities both before and after the trip. (Politics)
- We piloted electronic marking, with excellent support from College Learning Innovation Officer. There were some issues but it was considered generally quite successful. (Politics)
- Exam practice exercises were introduced into Public Policy 1A and 2A tutorials (Public Policy)
- Threshold concepts were made explicit in 1A lectures in order to promote deep learning. Students were asked to write a couple of sentences about these concepts and bring them to next lecture. Next session, students will also be required to write an essay plan and present this in a tutorial as formative assessment. (Public Policy)

- Collaborative learning through student-teacher co-creation of Honours students' essay titles and student-teacher co-design of Honours essay and exam marking criteria was also introduced. Honours students formatively self-assessed their essays. Typed formative exams were introduced into an Honours class and students' answers were student peer reviewed using Aropä, an online software tool. This led to the introduction of typed summative 'seen' exams in this Honours course. The exam answers were uploaded to Aropä by the course convenor who marked their work and using Aropä, gave students online feedback on this Honours summative exam within one week. This timely feedback allowed students to reflect on their performance before sitting any of their other exams (the typed online feedback was however rather time consuming). (Public Policy)
- In an Honours course, students were encouraged to read the lecturer's blog and twitter feed and had engaged actively with these forms of social media, which had stimulated debate that encouraged discussion in the class. (Public Policy)
- In addition to discussing teaching and learning issues during staff meetings and staff-student meetings, we have informal discussions at a lunch time T & L meeting. This has been a valuable forum for discussing various issues such as collaborative learning and feedback mechanisms. We also had a teaching away day where we looked at the coherence of our entire undergraduate programme. (Sociology)
- To enable the students on the Sociology 1A course to develop effectively a wide range of knowledge, skills and graduate attributes, the following actions, among others, are taken: (1) a range of assessment methods are used; (2) students are provided with Sadler's three key elements of feedback whenever they receive feedback; and (3) a formative assessment is included to give students an opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills and receive feedback on their progress.
- In light of feedback from GTAs involved in teaching and assessing the course this year, the Sociology 1A and 1B assessed essay feedback sheets were revised. The draft feedback sheets were circulated to students on the Sociology 1B course for comment before being finalised for use in 2014-2015. (Sociology)
- The Course Convenor's 'Response' to the student feedback questionnaires on the Sociology 1A course this year, as in previous years, provides evidence of the ways in which students participate meaningfully in curriculum development discussions and decisions, reflecting the importance which staff attach to this. This year's course included a change requested by students and which was specifically designed to teach core disciplinary concepts effectively (partly through being linked to the formative assessment as well as the summative assessment). (Sociology)
- Excellent GTA support (CEES)
- Provision of an exam workshop during the final semester class.(CEES)

## Improvement Plans

What actions are being taken forward?

### Adam Smith Business School

Across the School, and within three units of learning, development plans are being progressed. The plans arise from reflection on areas identified as needing work or presenting opportunities for enhancement. Response to issues arising from the NSS is a key cross School focus, including attention to: communication, support from HOS, assessment feedback and engagement with students through focus groups.

The Quality Enhancement and Assurance Committee is taking forward enhancement work on preventing plagiarism, e-assessment and student feedback.

The Teaching of Management Group has developed a 14 point plan including; course and programme redesign, the configuration of assessment schemes, feedback to students, communication with students, student access to academic staff and timetable optimisation.

Economics is actioning GTA support and development, the extension of small group discussions for students, the use of real data in teaching analysis, e-learning resources including simulation software and enhancing student access to

academic staff.

Accounting and Finance are taking forward course and programme redesign, a review of assessment schemes to ensure variety and e-learning enhancements.

#### **School of Education**

Each of the eight units of learning reported development plans. The plans arise from reflection on areas identified as needing work or presenting opportunities for enhancement. Common actions across units include; course and programme redesign and change, the configuration of assessment schemes, feedback to students, communication on programmes, NSS responsiveness, timetable optimisation, amelioration of teaching space deficits and staff development and support.

#### **School of Interdisciplinary Studies**

Across the four units of learning, development plans are dominated by course and programme redesign and change. This agenda is almost exclusively concerned with reconfiguration and refinement of course and programme content and approaches to teaching and supporting student learning.

#### **School of Law**

Across all units of learning, a development plan is being implemented. Action is planned on refining student feedback arrangements, analysis of grade profiles and on reviewing monitoring systems to integrate the introduction of EvaSys.

#### **School Social & Political Sciences**

Across all units of learning, development plans containing a total of 19 action points are being implemented. Plans are dominated by course and programme redesign and change addressing enhancement and deficits that have been identified.

Central and East European Studies are reviewing course content, introducing online resources, data sets to support the Q-Step initiative and improving student preparation for seminars through coordination with GTAs.

Economic and Social History have an enhancement focus on curriculum and assessment, exam feedback and preparation support for examinations at L1 and L2.

Politics are revising the honours curriculum, and developing guidance for students on courses where their participation is an assessed element. GTAs will be provided with more support for teaching and assessment duties and the group are initiating a programme of peer-review teaching to enhance the teaching of all staff. There is also action planned to ameliorate lectures where students cannot be accommodated in one teaching space.

Public Policy are developing a broader variety of assessment approaches in response to student feedback along with exam preparation, academic writing skills and dissertation support. The development of contributions from field professionals and the provision of more field trips are being explored.

The Sociology group are continuing to look to improve feedback to students and are reviewing content and assessment schemes across a number of courses.

(Detail for all development plans is accessible in School AMRs)

### **Closing Loops**

Comment on progress made on actions identified in last annual monitoring cycle

#### **Adam Smith Business School**

The School indicated that all issues identified in the previous session have been actioned and the changes introduced will be evaluated in the present session.

#### **School of Education**

The School reported that issues identified in the previous session have been actioned and changes introduced. The BTechEd programme's deficit in 'modelling space' and its detriment to design courses is the main exception. This has



been a long running issue and has still not been closed at this point in the review cycle.

**School of Interdisciplinary Studies**

The School indicated that, across three units of learning, all issues identified in the previous session have been actioned and adjustments introduced.

**School of Law**

The School reported progress in achieving actions arising from the previous session; this included the removal of duplication in two courses and an increase in student feedback on another. The need identified for tutorial provision in one course at levels 1&2 and a lack of challenge in another course has still not been closed at this point in the review cycle.

**School Social & Political Sciences-** The School indicated that nine points of action identified in the previous session have been actioned and modifications introduced for the current session.

What matters (if any) need to be brought to the College or University's attention?

**College**

Adam Smith Business School

- Economics point out that a topic of continuing concern is the standard of basic literacy of students as reflected in misinterpretation of questions apparent in both tutorials and exams. This continuing concern should be discussed by the college based recruitment and admissions team.
- Accounting and Finance would ask that software crucial for teaching such as SAGE 50 accounts be better maintained.

School of Education

- Additional Staffing (both teaching and admin support). Staffing levels needed in support of the marking processes as well as 'knowledgeable' and experienced admin support 'last year, due to inexperienced staff, students were not enrolled and the income was lost' (BACP).
- Staffing levels needed additional 1 day/week on a permanent basis for a staff member (BACD).
- Increase of staffing levels (teaching) to enable staff to conduct more research (BACD).
- Rolling out of the new M Education - Advanced planning is required: 'As Year 1 of the M Educ rolls out, it will be important to acknowledge that work needs to begin on Years 2 and 3 of the M Educ' (BEd).
- A decision regarding the usage of 'annotations of scripts' needs some serious consideration for consistent, 'fair and equitable' practice within the School of Education (BEd).
- Recognition of Community Development as a distinct entity in SoE (BACD).

Lack of suitable rooms or teaching spaces.

- Consistent, suitable teaching space for all classes (BACD).
- Provision Of air-conditioning in Room 450 (previously raised with the College, BTechEd).
- Provision Of a sink in Room 450 (previously raised with the College, BTechEd).
- Modelling facilities required and room for possible development of a technologies innovation hub.
- Further discussion on a model of school experience which will work for the programme
- Further discussion on tariff and widening participation (BTechEd).

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

No matters were report that required the attention of the College.

School of Law

No matters were report that required the attention of the College.

School Social & Political Science

- Performance at bottom end of Level 2 courses of international students is a cause for concern. The problem is particularly noticeable within the cohort of ex-GIC students, who are generally on Business and Management (BM) plans. These students struggle to perform effectively in BM as well as ESH.

Projected Student Numbers: staff were informed very close to the start of the semester that there would be a significant increase in the number of students on the course compared to the previous year. If the College could in future notify staff further in advance of likely increases in student numbers on the course, this would be appreciated, although staff appreciate there may be very good reasons why this is not possible. (Sociology)

**University**

Adam Smith Business School

Increased class sizes and lack of adequate lecture space are the two main issues. Specifically:

- The size of the Economics 2 class has increased quite significantly. Due to the lack of lecturing venues that can accommodate 340 (nominal) students, it has been necessary to introduce double teaching. In general, such a large class is bound to create a number of serious administrative and organisation problems (including the organisation of formative assessment, the organisation of tutorials, the timely return of feedback to students, etc.) which might reflect negatively on the students' learning experience.
- A potential further problem is the effect of the expected sizeable direct entry into Economics 2 of students from the Glasgow International College. The crucial issue is whether their background is comparable to that of our standard University of Glasgow students who proceed to Economics 2 having done Economics 1.

Management specifically notes that the growing student numbers and lack of sufficient lecture space are leading to problems. One of the many problems caused by increasing student numbers is finding space of a sufficient size for exams and class tests. We have had to hold exams and class tests on Saturdays which has led to complaints from the students. These complaints appear to be outside of our control yet are impacting on our student feedback.

There were a large number of broken seats in the WILT which led to student complaints and are likely to have affected feedback from students and NSS scores.

Concerns on Rooms made by all subject groups across the School:

- Kelvin gallery (not fit for purpose, space too large) – Economics particularly felt that the Kelvin Gallery was unfit for purpose. It is reported as not having a white board, and all lecture venues should be equipped with a white board.
- Humanities lecture theatre (uncomfortable).
- Gregory Building LT (chalky).
- Thomson Building 236 (regular fire alarm, projector screen too high)
- Concern over tutorial venues on 7<sup>th</sup> floor of main Gilbert Scott building (poor layout and no visualiser or projector)
- Need to use Saturdays for class tests because of lack of availability of suitable venues mid-week
- Increase in labs with SAGE availability required.
- More widespread availability of EVS.
  
- Difficulty in switching from one device to another (or using both) e.g. visualiser to projector in lecture theatres.

School of Education

- Staffing levels needed – additional 1 day/week on a permanent basis for a staff member (BACD).
- Increase of staffing levels (teaching) to enable staff to conduct more research (BACD).
- Consistent, suitable teaching spaces for all classes (BACD).
- Recognition of community development as a distinct entity in SOE (BACD).
- Approval process for course change resulted in planned changes abandoned due to inflexibility of the process (BACP).

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

- Difficulties in importing quizzes from Moodle to Moodle 2 – represents a lot of additional work for the course staff.

School of Law

No matters were report that required the attention of the University.

School Social & Political Science

- **Penalty System:** One cause for concern, as indicated by our externals and discussed at our exam board, is the University penalty system. While we do grant extensions to students based on good cause, the number of applications has very much increased in the past few years and it takes quite a lot of staff time to answer enquires, processing the claims, and chasing students up for medical documentation. While the intention of deducting two marks per day for late work might have been to reduce the number of claims, we find that it has increased levels of stress and anxiety amongst our students and would welcome a re-examination of the penalty system by the University. (Sociology)
- **Staffing:** Replacing staff who leave and confirming staff on temporary contracts. When staff members obtain 'buyouts' for their time, it has severe implications for remaining staff members who conduct most of the teaching.
- **Staffing: Pay and Conditions of GTAs:** General concerns that the current level of payment for GTAs does not reflect the time required to undertake the preparation, assessment and administrative duties associated with the post.
- **Room Booking:** Overall, the allocation of rooms at every level is unsatisfactory: some classes had no room when the semester started, a few of the rooms allocated were too small and/or were on the opposite side of campus to the previous hour. In part this might have to do with how CRBs work but, more broadly, the university must invest in the estate.
- **Room Booking:** Both Sociology and Politics raised strong concerns about the availability of large enough rooms for their Level 1 and Level 2 courses. Where possible it would be helpful to avoid the need for video links, and where unavoidable it would be preferable if the spill over room were to be located closer to the main lecture hall to allow staff to deal with any IT problems that may arise. Where video-link lectures are necessary we need full and prompt IT support when technical problems arise.
- **Teaching:** The process of changing ILOs must be simplified and the role of the MA Board of Studies clarified. The current PIPS approval system is overly bureaucratic, cumbersome and is a significant barrier to encouraging innovation in our teaching.

**Hot Topics**

Do you have any comments on the following topics?

*How would you like to see the VLE (moodle or other) develop to enhance the delivery of your courses?*

**Adam Smith Business School:**

- General request for more advance notice in the identification and circulation of Hot Topics to aid the collection of staff feedback.
- In Economics 1, more could be made of these facilities to inject some additional life into the subject by posting up some interesting and relevant articles showing Economics in action.
- Economics Honours: the issue of connecting Moodle to a gradebook system was raised by one member of staff; Staff seem pleased with the new Reading List system and are looking forward to exploring its use; one staff member would like his lectures videoed and uploaded on Moodle; the same lecturer reported very poor lecture attendance (around 50%) from the start of the session; Moodle's folder system needs to be more simplified and visualised, as it currently has too many folders and it is hard to search necessary documents; it might be a good idea to promote the discussion board more; announcements made there were missed by a quite significant number of students.
- Accounting and Finance would like screencasts built in and would look forward to detailed statistics on student usage of teaching materials on Moodle. Some academics have tried used publishers websites such as CONNECT to deliver formative assessments to students, but feel that formative assessments delivered via Moodle would be

better.

#### **School of Law**

- Students in the School of Law did not express a desire for any new capabilities in the VLE. Many courses in the School of Law used the new electronic reading lists with success, and in one course at Level 1/2 the students expressed a desire for podcasted lectures. Both of these are met by current provision.

#### **School of Interdisciplinary Studies**

- All staff teaching on the BSc Environmental Stewardship programme have fully embraced Moodle 2 for their courses. Some staff have links to reading lists and all put lecture notes, further reading, exemplars of assessments and assessment information on each course site. All use Turnitin for summative assessments, and some use the news forum for a method of communication between all the students and course staff (unless the issue is personal to the student).
- MA Primary Education uses Moodle well and the students recognise this facility. Members of the team would like to see more workshops on a scheduled basis for all staff in order that they can update skills in relation to inputting video clips, quizzes and other aspects of the VLE.
- MA Liberal Arts/Humanities courses: Moodle is entirely adequate for the convenor's current and planned uses in Science, History and Culture; for modern languages, the convenor would appreciate further training re. the scope of other Moodle functions/activities with which they are not familiar (wikis; lessons etc.) with the demonstration of concrete examples and hands-on training; for History, the convenor has found Moodle to be a very useful tool for sharing information, class notices and discussion forums for all courses. However, an over-reliance on web-based sources can sometimes be a problem in terms of standards of research in, for example, course essays.

#### **School of Social & Political Sciences**

- Politics: Piloted electronic marking via Turnitin and Moodle 2 this year. At times the Moodle site was too slow to mark efficiently. In general, better support of online marking in terms of guidance in using the TII e-marking software, creating templates for Glasgow marking descriptors and returning work to students using online marking software would be welcome. In addition, more student engagement via Moodle would be welcome, perhaps through setting up quizzes that they could take part in, although this might require VLE support and is time consuming to prepare and run.
- In Sociology, most Honours lecturers make extensive use of Moodle 2 to communicate with students and to post lecture notes. Turnitin is used on all courses and to assist in identifying students who have a 'lack of originality issue'. Now that Turnitin has a box to tick for the student to declare that their work is original, this saves administrative time as well. What is less satisfactory are the limitations of class size with Turnitin. We understand that CEES makes use of Mahara for reflexive diaries and this might be one of the new assessment methods we take up.
- The Sociology level 1 Course Administrator, redesigned the course Moodle 2 website completely this year. The feedback from Sociology students and staff on the course Moodle 2 website was extremely positive.
- In Sociology, the use of 'replay' (recorded) lectures as a mode of delivery of the course to some students, in order to cope with a significant increase in the number of students on the course, had a negative impact on the 'student experience' and was abandoned after six weeks.
- The use of live 'relay' lectures (through a video-conferencing facility) as a mode of delivery of the course to some students, in order to cope with a significant increase in the number of students on the course, was introduced. This is likely to be used again in 2014-2015, given a further projected increase in student numbers, although in the interest of fairness a rotation system will be introduced in future so that all students have a combination of lectures delivered in person by the lecturer and relayed live through a video-conferencing facility.
- Central & East European Studies suggest the need for students to have easier access to library catalogue e.g. access to catalogue on smart phones.

#### **School of Education**

- BA Childhood Practice: Mahara needs to be made available to students beyond the programme. IT response time ought to be quicker, especially since ongoing Mahara-related issues remain unresolved.

- BA Community Development: Elimination of the problems related to Moodle access, particularly when uploading assignments via Turnitin; address 'slow performance' during peak times, i.e. between 13:30 and 16:00; Increased capacity of Turnitin by accepting 'a wider range of assessment modes'.
- CREDL: Moodle 2 crashed several times; this can be 'a major issue' for distance-learning courses like CREDL as the materials housed on the site need to be electronically accessible by the students, 24/7.
- BEd: While Moodle 2 is 'an improved version of Moodle 1', the system needs to be made 'more user friendly' and 'less laborious'.
- BTechEd: Moodle needs to be further developed to account for future affordances of media technologies. The development of excellent quality VLE content is essential and time, resource and investment is required'.
- MA Religious & Philosophical Education: Received 'very satisfactory' advice and level of support during move to Moodle 2 and when problems were encountered. Experienced persistent problems with Turnitin, especially during peak hours (perhaps the problem is beyond the institutional level).
- Fundamentals of Education 1A & 1B: Students are accessing teaching materials from Moodle; the ones who tended to perform better were those who actively pursued a blended learning approach.

*Was student attendance at your courses maintained at an acceptable level throughout the year? If not, what strategies would you employ to improve attendance?*

#### **Adam Smith Business School**

- Accounting and Finance have noted that student attendance at lectures is generally poor and that this is an issue that needs to be addressed. The subject group welcomes the use of electronic scanners for improving attendance at lectures. The subject group's learning and teaching committee has brought this issue forward for discussion. Economics have also noted the lack of tutorial preparation by students.
- Economics report that at level 1, while attendance is broadly acceptable, there does seem to be a pattern of a fall off in attendance towards the end of semesters. At level 2 student attendance at lectures was low, between 50% to 60% of enrolment. This was unexpected, as there had been no problems in the past in this respect. Attendance will be monitored during the year. At honours, attendance was generally good but for most courses attendance declined around assessment submission dates and towards the end of the semesters. Economics propose to monitor attendance via student ID, encourage the School to develop an attendance policy, and stress to students in an enhanced manner the link between attendance and performance. This issue maybe a possible statistics based project for the subject group to take on.

#### **School of Law**

- There were no reports of any problems in students' attendance.

#### **School of Interdisciplinary Studies**

- BSc Environmental Stewardship: All attendance is recorded on all environmental courses and any student registering 3 absences is sent a letter expressing concern. This is followed up with an email if the absence continues.
- Attendance on MA Primary Education is monitored due to GTCS requirements and is not an issue.
- MA Health & Social Policy: Attendance on health and policy courses was not an issue.

#### **MA Liberal Arts/Humanities courses**

- Science, History & Culture (SHC)/ Issues in Contemporary Society (ICS)/Power culture and criticism (PCC) were affected by strike days, which generated some loss of continuity and student engagement, despite active strategies to provide the missed material.
- Noted in several courses that students who need guidance most urgently, often attend with less regularity, particularly in the final (review and exam preparation) week.
- Modern Languages attendance was almost 100%.
- History: student attendance was good for all classes where attendance was both mandatory and non-mandatory.
- Text and communication (T&C) Seminar attendance is very good, but lecture attendance tends to dip to 50% or

below. Intention to withdraw the course.

- ICS: good seminar attendance, but for lectures, attendance could on occasions dip below 50%, especially if assignments were due on courses viewed as more relevant. Plan to reduce some lecture provision, carry out a content/curriculum review.

#### **School of Social & Political Sciences**

- In Economic & Social History (ESH) there was a fall in lecture attendance in Level 1 and Level 2 lecture attendance as each semester progressed. There may be scope for increasing lecture attendance in these courses through clear publicity of enhanced exam support sessions being scheduled in lecture hours. Lecture attendance was monitored in L2 courses in 2009-10 and 2010-11, and this trial established evidence of a strong correlation between regular attendance and above-average performance ('regulars' attained typical overall performance in B3 range and non-regulars attained typical overall performance in C2 range). The relevance of lectures might be strengthened in other ways, with greater inter-active/participative learning sessions, perhaps especially later in the semester.
- In Economic & Social History, attendance in Honours courses was satisfactory throughout the session, and this was true of Level 1 and Level 2 seminars also.
- In Politics, attendance can often be an issue. Assessing oral participation appears to help. For the pre-honours courses making the lectures more interactive might help address this. Having a 'spill over' room is a further factor reducing attendance, particularly for those assigned to the this room at the start of the semester.
- Public Policy experienced excellent Honours course attendance.
- In Sociology, attendance is closely monitored. Staff are asked to take attendance at each lecture and send their forms to our Honours Administrator. Persistence absences are noted and the student concerned in contacted by the Administrator and, if necessary, by the Honours Coordinator.

#### **School of Education**

- BA Childhood Practice: Student attendance across the entire programme was very good.
- BA Community Development: 'generally maintained'; students were alerted in the early stages if required.
- PGDE: 'Attendance was very good across all courses of the programme'; staff members issue strict guidelines on attendance at the outset, then, there is further careful monitoring of attendance.
- BEd: Student attendance on the programme is 'generally very good'; 'where incidences of continued and unaccounted absences were identified, students were promptly contacted by Year Coordinators and were sometimes required to attend Student Monitoring'. If the 80% attendance / 90% placement attendance requirements are not met, then necessary actions are taken, e.g. re-taking the placement.
- BTechEd: Very good attendance across programme courses. Specific 'localised period of lower attendance' was addressed by the programme team through discussions via staff-student liaison committee.
- MA Religious & Philosophical Education: 'Mostly very satisfactory' student attendance. Very few 'absences in excess of 20% maximum' and dealt with via Monitoring Meetings.
- Fundamentals of Education 1A & 1B: Student attendance and participation were both 'very satisfactory', i.e. 40-50 students regularly attended lectures; all attended the seminars.

Are there any other topics you wish to comment on?

#### **Adam Smith Business School**

- Management would like the strategy behind delivering service teaching reviewed. Given the number of undergraduate courses Management are delivering and the high number of students on management courses which have led to having to double teach at levels 1 and 2, should Management be cutting back the number of courses they deliver, particularly service teaching?
- Economics reports that the number of students visiting academic staff during designated office hours was less than expected.

- Economics has some concerns about the workload model and how demanding courses are addressed.

#### **School of Interdisciplinary Studies**

- All staff supported this new method of annual monitoring in the School. Staff found it more reflective on practice and liked the sharing of challenges and good practice in the meetings.
- The development of our Primary Classroom will be undertaken over the summer. There were initial problems in that this was timetabled for other degree classes at the start of the last session but this has been eradicated and the team will undertake to establish this as a resource centre and indeed has a structure in place now for its use in 2014-2015. This includes use by students who are undertaking the Catholic Teachers' Certificate with local primary School children.

#### **Schools of Law & Social & Political Sciences**

None

#### **School of Education**

- School room booking has been a pressing issue that is also regarded as being 'detrimental to smooth running of course'; this concern was raised by more than one programme. A concerted effort is necessary to address this (BACP, BACD, PGDE, BEd). For example: 'For the past few years, the teaching space that has been allocated (or sometimes lack of space) has been a serious issue and has impacted on our students' experience and staff morale. Despite students raising a complaint to Senate in relation to this, it has still not been satisfactorily resolved. It is anticipated that students will raise another complaint. The BACD team understands that this is not an isolated situation and is willing to make some changes to ease the situation, e.g. changing a teaching day from a Wednesday to a Friday. Students have identified that they would benefit greatly from a consistent, suitable teaching space given the nature of the programme. Students on the programme are working in the field of community development and cannot attend on a sporadic basis.' (BACD)
- BA Childhood Practice: When looking at student evaluations, it might be best for students to sign (an issue for discussion with the Learning and Teaching Committee). There are no apparent benefits in having separate Advisors; students continue to approach the programme leader, admin support, or the tutor. At the moment, students have to undertake placements but there is 'no facility to provide reimbursement of travelling expenses' when compared to ITE students.
- BTechEd: 'Consideration of BTechEd staff workload plans and development time is a priority given the significant re-development phase into which we have entered. Likewise, maintaining discipline-qualified teaching staff is essential to the ongoing performance and satisfaction of students.'