

The aim of Annual Monitoring is to maintain quality and improve provision through identifying action that can be taken to improve future student experience.

This form should be used to capture a focused and concise reflective summary of annual monitoring activity at school and subject level. Bullet list format is encouraged.

College	<p>Science & Engineering which consists of: Chemistry (report received); Computing Science; Engineering (report received); Geographical and Earth Sciences (GES); Mathematics and Statistics (all PGT info was provided in UG report); Physics and Astronomy (report received); Psychology.</p> <p>Comments in this form are those provided by the PGT convenors in the Schools listed above except where the comment has "(MMC)" after it, where it was written by the CoSE QO, Dr Morag M. Casey. Reports were received from 3 of the 7 Schools in CoSE as noted above.</p>
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Reflection

What is working well?

Chemistry

- Since their introduction in 2010, the structure and organisation of the PGT programmes has been continuously optimised and improved, to the point that they are now operating close to the optimum (within the given boundary conditions; see below).
- The introduction of the College PGT Committee has been a positive step. It is useful to have a formal structure that enables the sharing and comparison of best practices, approaches, and standards. It also allows for direct exchange and discussions between PGT Convenors of the different Schools, between Convenors and the Deans, and Convenors and College administrators.
- The collaboration with MaRIO has been improved. We are pleased to note that we were pro-actively contacted when a new Admissions Officer took over the Chemistry PGT programmes. She visited the School to introduce herself and has been very helpful in resolving any admissions-related queries since.
- The PGT students in the School were included in the College-wide "PGT Transitions" project (led by Dr N. Labrosse, School of Physics and funded by the LTDF), which surveyed PGT students to identify problems they encountered in transitioning to, and during, their PGT studies in Glasgow.

Engineering:

- Feedback from students is generally positive across all PGT courses within the School of Engineering. Students have mostly commented that they are enjoying the courses and engagement is generally high. Some specific issues have been raised with some classes and have mostly been addressed locally by the relevant Subject Disciplines or Academics involved.

Physics & Astronomy

- Programmes run smoothly and students enjoy the quality of teaching.

What needs work?

Chemistry

- From the "PGT Transitions" surveys, a clear view

What action is being taken forward?

- These issues are known but are inherent in the

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<p>emerged for Chemistry that the students feel somewhat underwhelmed by being “piggy-backed” on undergraduate courses. Also, the fact that the grades (except for one course) are derived entirely from end-of-year written exams was flagged as problematic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student numbers on the programmes are often (very) low. This exacerbates the issues identified above. There were 4 students in 2015/16, which is at the lower limit. For the current session 2016/17, only 1 student is on the programme. 	<p>design of the programmes, which are built entirely on existing undergraduate courses. They are mitigated as best as possible by the provision of supplementary tutorials and mock exams to familiarise the students with the exam style.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viability and desirability of maintaining these programmes needs to be reviewed at School level.
<p>Engineering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of classes have a low spread of marks, though the average mark is acceptable. Submission dates for assignments/courseworks need consideration to avoid too many deadlines occurring at similar times in the semester. Consideration of smaller group tutorials to assist with feedback and student support. Some optional level 5 classes have low numbers that mean course may not be considered viable in future. A compulsory course in “Report and Technical Writing” was provided for MSc students. Students who attended found this useful, however engagement was low. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff involved should consider assessment questions and marking schemes to help produce wider spread of marks. Collaboration between staff to review the coursework submissions required to try and spread student load where possible. Investigate feasibility of smaller tutorial groups. Logistically it may be problematic but worth investigating. Advertise courses more widely or open up to other programmes to improve student numbers on certain courses. Could highlight course content and syllabus more clearly to help students make informed selection. Although the course was scheduled (ideally) early in the degree course and the compulsory nature emphasised, there were still some students who did not attend. Credit bearing to ensure engagement and attendance?
<p>Physics & Astronomy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School research staff should submit more MSc project proposals in a timely manner to give students more time to choose among more projects. Timetable clashes appeared in September 2015 preventing, or making non trivial, some course combinations that would seem natural for some MSc programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder emails sent. Attention of P4/5 Class Head was drawn to this.

Good Practice	
What practices are innovative?	Which of these would you recommend for wider dissemination?
<p>Chemistry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of mock exams (based on past papers) to prepare students for the final exams has been discussed at the College PGT Committee and recommended. 	<p>YES</p>

Closing Loops	
What progress has been made on actions identified in last annual monitoring cycle?	
Action:	Progress:
Chemistry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of practice exams. • Apply for RSC (Royal Society of Chemistry) accreditation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. • Completed.
Engineering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School of Engineering has recently appointed a new quality officer who has provided this year's PGT report. There are no loops to close because no loops were opened in previous years due to lack of reporting by previous appointee (MMC).
Physics & Astronomy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear message to School staff sent via email regarding MSc project proposals. • Academic and support staff will be proactive and coordinate better between Glasgow and Edinburgh universities. • Updated plan rules have been uploaded to ensure all core and elective courses appeared accurately for each programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. • Completed. • Completed.

What matters (if any) need to be brought to the College or University's attention?
College
N/A
University
Engineering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moodle access to classes from previous years: Current practice is to "un-enrol" previous years students from Moodle classes so only the current cohort has access to the site. Students commonly note that this removes their access to previous year's notes, many of which are relevant as prerequisite material to their current classes. Other institutions using similar systems "archive" an academic years VLE sites to allow students access to past material, yet limit access to current years "active" site to the current cohort. UoG should consider a similar approach.

Hot Topics
Do you have any comments on the following topics?
1. The student population is becoming more diverse. How have you or might you enhance curriculum, delivery and/or assessment methods to provide an inclusive and inspiring experience for everyone?
Chemistry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PGT students are almost all international students, so there is always a large degree of diversity in terms of previous learning experience, expectations, and background. Also, many of them have worked outside university after completing their first degrees and starting the PGT programme. • As the courses of the Chemistry MSc programmes are all shared with undergraduate students, which constitute the large majority, it is not really viable to tailor them to the somewhat different and diverse needs of the PGT students. We have mitigated this to some extent by offering separate "supplementary" tutorials for the PGT students (10 each in Inorganic, Organic, and Physical Chemistry), which not only serve to revise background material but also to provide a timeslot where there is flexibility to cater to the students' needs in terms of delivery and material. Engineering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support courses (e.g. report writing, computing, etc) to ensure the student can bridge any

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educational/skills gap and therefore prepare them better for their studies.

Physics & Astronomy

- During 2015-16 the PGT convenor (Dr Nicolas Labrosse) led a project funded by LTDF to understand better the transition to PGT study of the diverse PGT student population. Better online resources were identified as key to feeling prepared before the commencement of a PGT course, and better communication with lecturers and peers was important to the success and satisfaction of students, particularly after beginning PGT study.

2. What methods do you use for communicating with students? Which have you found most effective? As members of staff, how do you prefer to receive information?

Chemistry

- Dissemination of information: By e-mail and Moodle Forums.
- Answering questions or discussing particular matters with students: By e-mail or in person. The latter may be more efficient when the problem itself first needs to be clarified, which otherwise requires several rounds of e-mails. The advantage of e-mails is that it creates a paper trail, which is often useful for later reference.
- Receiving information: E-mail is most efficient.

Engineering

- We use email and moodle to communicate with students.

Physics & Astronomy

- Communication via emails and Moodle remains the most used and most effective method, but some students still struggle with a large number of “unwanted emails” from the University and this can result in an apparent level of disengagement from those students who fail to act / reply to important messages.
- The PGT convenor himself prefers to receive emails.

3. Are there any other topics you wish to comment on?

Engineering

- **Teaching Room Infrastructure:** there have been some general comments about the quality of some teaching rooms. Whilst most classes did not raise any issues, some engineering classes were taught across 2 rooms using a video link. The temperamental reliability and lack of student engagement was felt to be detrimental to the student experience. Some rooms also noted to be “antiquated” and not entirely suitable for providing a modern engineering education.

General (MMC)

- I note that reports from only 3 of the 7 Schools within CoSE were received. My personal feeling is that this is the wrong time of year (January 2017) to be requesting such information as the cohort of PGT students to which these reports pertain completed their studies some four months previously (October 2016), with a new cohort having already started (September 2017). If any issues are raised in this form, it is too late to do anything at a College or University level for the new cohort and, hence, I detect a legitimate lack of enthusiasm for preparing this report; it is simply too late.
- In preparing the UG report earlier in the academic year, I asked all School Q.O.s to provide their information in June 2016, when class heads and other relevant parties, including PGT convenors, were present at exam board meetings and the information fresh in everyone’s mind. At this time, I had noted that Schools could provide PGT information along with the UG information if they felt it useful. My intention with this approach was to tackle issues raised at College level over the summer months in time for the new cohorts, both UG and PGT (some success).
- The general feeling from School Q.O.s, as I noted in my UG report, is that
 - Almost all University-level issues raised at UG level (teaching room infrastructure (equipment and availability of rooms), MyCampus, EvaSys, lack of sufficient administrative support) remain the same for PGT students.
 - There is a serious lag in the system, with reporting at this point in time referring to issues that could have happened anything up to 16 months in the case of PGT students. I do not find it surprising that many issues raised herein are repeated requests. Engagement of staff in this process is likely low because of this lag.