

## University of Glasgow

## Academic Standards Committee - Friday 24 November 2017

Updated Responses to Recommendations 4, 5 and 7 Arising from  
Periodic Subject Review of the Dental School held on 17 March  
2016

Mrs Catherine Omand, Senate Office

**Recommendation 4**

The Review Panel **recommends** that the College, School of Medicine and the Dental School continue to engage with Student Lifecycle Support and Development to discuss the Dental School's current systems with a view to identifying, where possible, methods to improve compatibility and integration with the University systems. [Paragraph 5.2.5]

**For action: Head of College, Director, Student Lifecycle Support & Development, Head of School of Medicine, Head of Dental School**

**Response – Head of College and Head of School of Medicine**

There has been a meeting between Dental school representatives and colleagues from SLSD. The meeting focused on the perceived problems that the Dental School was experiencing with MyCampus and CMIS and what the Dental School requires. The meeting was positive and the group are confident that it will be able to make clear recommendations regarding changes to structures on MyCampus to address the issues encountered to date within the timescale required by ASC.

**Response – Head of Dental School**

Over the past year or so, interactions with the Student Lifecycle Support & Development (SLSD) team had been taking place at College level as part of the *Revo/ve* development project. This project set out to create a bespoke IT solution to manage aspects of the UG programmes in the College of MVLS, not currently possible within MyCampus. The development focus was on support for clinical placements, principally in undergraduate Medicine, since the existing platform that has been used by the MBChB programme, VALE, is at end of life.

The Dental School Senior Administrator requested the opportunity to meet directly with the SLSD team to talk through the particular difficulties relating to the timetabling of a complex clinical programme like Dentistry. An initial meeting took place in late October 2016. There was a suggestion from the SLSD team, under new leadership, that the advice provided previously to the Dental School on how courses and timetabling should be set up, which had caused such significant difficulties and resulted in the creation of multiple “dummy” courses, had been wrong.

It was then suggested by the SLSD team that the way to manage some of the current difficulties was to undertake a complete revision of the integrated academic structure of the BDS programme, i.e. breaking down each integrated year of teaching into component parts, timetabled separately and examined separately. The School Administrator, under clear guidance from senior academic staff, rejected this suggestion since it was contrary to the concept of integrated professional education, advocated by dentistry's professional

regulator, the General Dental Council (GDC) and which has been strictly implemented by the academic staff in designing the BDS curriculum, resulting in strong praise from the GDC at its most recent visitation in 2013.

Immediately following that meeting, the School Administrator provided detailed background and information to the SLSD team and it was agreed that a further meeting would take place to discuss a potential way forward which would be acceptable to the academic staff in charge of course content and would not result in yet further unrealistic and excessive workload for the administrative staff. This further meeting is awaited but there is now significant concern that progress will not be possible within the very tight deadlines necessary for timetabling (i.e. major changes to be entered into CMIS by the end of April 2017). In summary, the central University systems for curriculum management and room bookings do not satisfy the requirements of modern integrated teaching methods in professional healthcare courses such as dentistry.

### **Response – Director of Student Lifecycle Support & Development**

There has been one meeting between the Dental School and SLSD representatives.

The group reviewed the issues experienced by the School and acknowledged the volume of time and resource required to set up their programmes. The group concluded that this set up was driven by requirements, which were perceived rather than actual, of MyCampus and CMIS rather than by the needs of the School. The group then looked at the actual requirements of the School and considered these in the light of new functionality now available within MyCampus.

Progress:

- The Dental School has shared details of the learning outcomes which the programme adheres to. SLSD is reviewing this to better understand the Dental programme set up.
- SLSD has shared further guidance on 'Plan Building' in MyCampus so that the Dental School can revise current requirements to ignore 'dummy courses'. The MyCampus/CMIS interface is being reviewed to understand the drivers behind the volume of sub groups.

### **Updated response from College and School – November 2017**

Fundamentally the issues relating to compatibility of the University systems with the requirements of the Dental School remain incompletely resolved. We manage to function because of the skill and determination of our School Administrator and her staff who find appropriate workarounds.

Since the previous update, SLSD were recently invited to join first year students during their induction to the BDS programme, when they observed at first hand some of the enrolment issues that had previously been reported and discussed. Subsequently:

- SLSD plan to investigate setup requirements and arrange a specific hands-on session with administrative staff members at the Dental School office to review processes with the aim of making recommendations, though there is no indication currently what these may be.
- SLSD now believes it understands the disparity between University processes and the requirements of the Dental School, for example CMIS setup. Dates are required for the system and the university provides these. Local practice is not taken into consideration and there are a number of variations across schools, not just the Dental School. Some allowances for this need to be made to support course set-up at a local level.

There is still a long way to go before these issues are fully resolved.

### **Updated response from Director of Student Lifecycle Support and Development Team – November 2017**

Since the previous update SLSD were invited to join first year students during their induction to the Dentistry programme. As part of this session we observed first hand some of the enrolment issues that have previously been discussed with the Admin office. This session provided SLSD with the opportunity to further investigate setup requirements and subsequently we are arranging a specific hands-on session with the Dentist school office to review processes with the aim of making recommendations.

This further investigation has allowed us to understand the disparity of university process and specific Dentistry school requirements, for example CMIS setup. Dates are required for the system and the university provides these. Local practice is not taken into consideration and there are a number of variations in schools. Our aim is to investigate what or where any allowances can be made.

At the last ASC meeting it was reported that SLSD are working on a project with the Vet school to assist in curriculum mapping. This project uses new Oracle functionality 'Activity Management' and 'Programme Enrolment'. Following on from successful presentations to the Vet school management team and to the Campus Solutions Higher Education User Group, investigation on how the functionality could be used to improve course set up at a local level will begin.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Panel noted, from the SER, that the School of Medicine and SoLS were working to address the shortfall in life sciences subject specialist staff through the University Planning and Budgeting round to bid for staffing resources. The Panel would hope that this issue will be resolved in the near future and **recommends** that an update report be submitted on the status of life sciences teaching within the Dental School. [Paragraph 5.3.1]

**For action: Head of School of Medicine, Head of Dental School**

#### **Response – Head of School of Medicine**

As set out below, a school-wide process to review provision of LS teaching across SoMDN is underway, with a view to alternative arrangements for tuition in basic sciences across the professional programmes.

#### **Response – Dental School**

The situation in relation to life sciences teaching within the Dental School remains precarious. With the exception of gross anatomy, which is adequately covered, there are continuing significant gaps in the teaching of other life sciences subjects such as physiology, histology and neurosciences. Interactions with the School of Life Sciences have not been fruitful and much of the teaching is still being delivered by dental clinicians who are not subject experts. Following discussions with the Head of the School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing, and in the knowledge that similar problems exist for the other professional healthcare courses, we are actively examining alternative mechanisms for provision of in-house life sciences expertise. This work is being undertaken in parallel with a review of the significant funding that flows from the professional courses to the School of Life Sciences in support of this teaching.

## Updated response from College/School of Medicine and Dental School – November 2017

During the past academic year, the Dental School has received some additional NHS revenue funding for the teaching of medical subjects to dental students. By using these funds to offset the cost of a core-funded senior clinical academic post, University funding has been released to appoint a 0.6 FTE Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences in Relation to Dentistry. A strong pool of applicants responded to the advert and a highly qualified new staff member will be joining the Dental School staff at the beginning of January 2018.

This new appointee will resolve the staffing challenge for delivery of Life Sciences teaching on the BDS programme.

### Recommendation 7

The Panel **recommends** that the Dental School and School of Medicine review support mechanisms for the mentoring programme to ensure that the difficulties identified with regard to leadership and training are addressed. [Paragraph 4.3.4]

**For action: Head of School of Medicine, Head of Dental School**

### Response – Head of School of Medicine

The review of student mentoring arrangements within the Dental School is underway. Once complete this review will help inform best practice within the other programmes.

### Response – Dental School

Even before the PSR visit, the Dental School had commissioned the Learning & Teaching Centre to undertake an external review of its student mentoring programme, with particular reference to staff training. The review was undertaken by a nominated member of staff from the L&TC and we suggested the following questions for consideration:

1. How should mentors be inducted and trained, and by whom?
2. Should mentors receive refresher training? How? How often?
3. How can we ensure that the mentoring role is reflected in PDR, workload modelling, reward and recognition, promotion?
4. Should we evaluate the mentoring scheme? How? How often?
5. Is the envisaged role of the mentor still appropriate? Are there purely administrative aspects of the role that could be done by someone else?
6. Who can/should be a mentor?
7. Is the model for submission of written reflections and the structure of mentor meetings still appropriate?
8. How should BDS1 students be inducted and trained, and by whom?
9. Is refresher training for students required?
10. Is it appropriate for administration of the scheme to be devolved to course teams or is some form of central oversight required?

All of these aspects were considered and the following actions agreed:

1. Vince Bissell (Deputy Head of Dental School), Aileen Bell (Director of Dental Education), Chris Nile (BDS 1 Course Coordinator) and Neil Nairn (Deputy BDS 1 Course Coordinator) would meet with Scott Ramsay to review and, if necessary, enhance the introduction to the mentoring programme and the concept of reflection that takes place

at the beginning of BDS 1. Accordingly, Scott Ramsay delivered a relevant session to the new BDS 1 cohort in September 2016, a teaching activity that will now be timetabled every year.

2. Mentoring would be discussed in detail at a future meeting of the Course Coordinators and their Deputies. This action has now been completed.
3. Consideration would be given to the appointment of a Senior Mentor to oversee the programme. So far we have been unable to identify a suitable staff member who is not already over-committed to other teaching duties, but our intention to do so remains and we would aim to have a Senior Mentor in place for the 2017/2018 academic session.

A session at the Dental School Education Day on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016 was devoted to mentoring and reflection and delivered by Vince Bissell and Scott Ramsay, to ensure that all staff received a refresher on the concept and the programme.

### **Updated response from College/School of Medicine and Dental School – November 2017**

This work is now complete. Following the review which was undertaken with the Learning & Teaching Service (now LEADS), we have appointed a Senior Mentor from within the academic staff of the Dental School. This Senior Mentor will be responsible as follows:

1. Attend the Dental Education Committee to provide advice on issues relating to the mentoring programme.
2. Agree with Course teams the topics and timetable for reflective exercises and mentor meetings each academic session.
3. Work with Course secretaries to ensure mentors have clear guidance on the topics and content to be covered in advance of individual mentoring sessions
4. Agree timelines with course teams for communication with students and mentors, uploading of materials on Moodle, and for the development and distribution of guidance to mentors.
5. Plan and arrange, in cooperation with the BDS1 team, induction for new BDS1 entrants covering reflective learning and mentoring.
6. Arrange and contribute to induction and training for new mentors.
7. Arrange for, document and contribute to, biennial training of all mentors.
8. Liaise with local TELT support regarding ongoing development and use of the electronic portfolio (currently Mahara) to support the needs of students and mentors.
9. Liaise with the Director of Dental Education to implement changes in the reflection/mentoring scheme to support the Dental School learning and teaching strategy, as required.
10. Report annually to the Dental Education Committee on the reflection and mentoring scheme.