

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 23 March 2018

**Periodic Subject Review: Updated Responses to the
Recommendations 5 and 8 Arising from the Review of Scottish
Literature held on 23 March 2016**

Ms Catherine Omand, Senior Academic Policy Manager

Study Abroad

Recommendation 5

The Review Panel recommends that the Subject, with the support of the School, explore the possibilities around the opportunities for short period of study abroad, with a range of preferred partners (to assure duty of care can be discharged) where there are opportunities for wider comparative studies that can be related back to the study of Scottish Literature. [Paragraph 5.1.4]

**For the attention of: The Head of Subject
For information: The Head of School**

Response:

The Subject remains committed to allowing students opportunities to study abroad and has, to this end, begun developing a list of 'preferred partners' so that students (particularly those undertaking Single Honours) can keep up their studies in Scottish Literature while away. In addition, our Internationalisation Officer is part of a group (including Jim Murdoch) currently in discussions to set up a partnership with Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands. Semester-long exchanges with Radboud are planned, as are shorter periods of study abroad and summer schools.

As the Subject is the only teaching unit dedicated to Scottish Literature, it is the natural home for those wishing to specialise. However, we recognise that other institutions, particularly in North America, have some, very limited coverage of Scottish texts. To make the best of this situation, the Subject has set up a study abroad agreement with Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, and is investigating other institutions that may be 'preferred partners'. We remain open to the possibility of one-semester periods of study abroad and are continuing discussions with MaRIO as to the mechanisms available to us. We have one student poised to take up a Junior Year Abroad at Simon Fraser University in 2017-18. We are also exploring institutions which teach 'national literatures' other than English Literature; this work is ongoing. The appetite for study abroad is low in Scottish Literature compared to other Subject Areas; anecdotally, this is because our students appreciate that they are part of a specialist unit. We are, however, gathering intelligence from our student body to understand the reasons.

Updated Response: March 2018

We currently have one student from Hons studying abroad. She is in Canada and has – with great difficulty – carved out a bespoke curriculum, which remains not entirely satisfactory. The landscape internationally remains essentially unchanged: there are no HE institutions abroad that can provide the critical mass of Scottish Literature courses necessary to the curriculum of the GU Hons MA in Scot Lit. We remain open to suggestions.

Interdisciplinary teaching

Recommendation 8

The Review Panel recommends that the School should review the potential for new collaborative courses given examples of courses between subjects working well elsewhere. [Paragraph 4.2.9]

For the attention of: The Head of School

For information: The Head of Subject

Response:

Since the PSR, new developments with regard to the MA curriculum, led by the College's Dean of Learning & Teaching, will undoubtedly drive forward interdisciplinarity in line with the Review Panel's recommendation. In this regard, however, perceived 'funding competition' between subjects and Schools will need to be a major consideration going forward, and more work will need to be undertaken here. The Subject area would emphasise that we are already very much committed to collaborative teaching. We have collaborated with our colleagues in English Language on various courses throughout the Scottish Literature degree for decades. Currently, and based on a very long-standing relationship, English Language colleagues provide teaching on Scots and Historical Scots on our Level 1 and Level 2 courses (the latter of which incorporates assessment on Older Scots), and two compulsory Honours courses, 'The History of Scots' and 'The History of the Scottish Book'. In addition, we currently contribute heavily to a major course under the aegis of the Centre for Scottish and Celtic Studies: the successful Junior Year Abroad course, 'Introduction to Scottish Culture' is team-taught by colleagues in Scottish Literature, Scottish History, Archaeology and Celtic & Gaelic. Convening responsibility for this course rotates around the involved subject areas, and currently sits with Scottish Literature in 2017. Within Scottish Literature, two of our Honours courses ('Memorialising' and 'Robert Burns') are interdisciplinary, featuring contributions from our colleagues in Scottish History, but also from our colleagues in the heritage sector. 'Memorialising', in particular, has a guest lecture and seminar delivered by a Museums professional. Finally, our flagship 'Principia' teaching initiative is entirely interdisciplinary and collaborative, with the 'Scottish Enlightenment: Ideas and Influences' course, compulsory for all students visiting from the Principia consortium, being taught by colleagues from Scottish Literature, English Literature, History and Social & Political Sciences. We are, as always, open to collaborative opportunities in teaching as well as in research.

Updated Response: March 2018

Interdisciplinary Courses: we have developed and run a Blended Hons course option in 'Robert Burns' (online and in situ seminars). This has been iterated also for outside paying students, and has run twice in this form. The course is taught by staff from Scottish Literature and Scottish History (School of Humanities). The cross-schools team won a team teaching award for the course in 2017. We remain the host of the hugely successful 'Principia' Scottish Enlightenment course (pipped at Hons level) and involving staff from five different disciplines. We also contribute in the context of the Centre for Scottish and Celtic Studies to the inter-disciplinary JYA (10 credit) course, 'Introduction to Scottish Culture.'