

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.

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|----------------|-------------------------|
| College | Science and Engineering |
|----------------|-------------------------|

Please comment on the following themes. Issues that are highlighted as requiring work will be reported to the College and/or University (please specify next to each issue)

Student support (including mental health)

| What is working well? | What needs work? |
|--|---|
| <p>Chemistry schedules brief, structured 1-1 meetings with all Level 4 students. Psychology has piloted similar meetings this year (and plan to continue with them).</p> <p>Physics & Astronomy uses Padlet for online message boards, facilitating intra-class communication – they consider its interface easier to use than Moodle for this type of communication.</p> <p>Additional support has been provided to Faster Route students in Computing Science.</p> | <p>Four of the seven schools explicitly reported concerns with student mental health issues. In particular, schools are unsure about how to deal with Good Cause Claims that relate to mental health issues, since, by their nature, these cases are complex and difficult to assess.</p> <p>Four schools particularly noted the problems of low student attendance at classes.</p> |

Learning and teaching (including assessment and feedback)

| What is working well? | What needs work? |
|---|--|
| <p>Assessment</p> <p>Five of the seven schools indicate that their use of assessment calendars is proving useful.</p> <p>Three schools make use of automated marking: Computing Science (programming code & MCQ), Maths&Stats: (WebAssign), Engineering (Moodle)</p> <p>Engineering is making efforts to make assessment more challenging; Maths&Stats are making continuous assessment compulsory.</p> <p>Computing Science makes use of marking assistants, resulting in clarification of marking schemes and moderation procedures.</p> | <p>Assessment</p> <p>Several schools recognise the importance of providing clarity in marking processes and criteria - especially for the marking of project reports (P&A, Engineering). Concerns about variable supervision quality between supervisors have also been raised (GES).</p> <p>Computing Science and GES are moving some exams from the Summer Diet to the Winter Diet (level 3 and MSc).</p> <p>Computing Science plans to look into whether they over-assess their students or not.</p> |

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| <p>Feedback</p> <p>Providing feedback on summative assessment items has been introduced – individual exam feedback (Psych), dissertation feedback (GES).</p> <p>Teaching</p> <p>A range of different teaching activities and practices are used successfully across the college: flipped classrooms, quizzes, online submissions, audio recordings, blog posts, poster presentations, reflective writing, online/electronic logbooks. GES field trips are particularly highly regarded by students.</p> <p>Expectations management</p> <p>Psychology provides assessment information sheets to their students, clarifying the language used in feedback.</p> <p>Engineering’s induction sessions with Level 1 students clarify study expectations.</p> <p>Chemistry gives a lecture on Exam practice to level 3 students.</p> | <p>Feedback</p> <p>Most schools recognise the challenges of giving timely feedback to students (CS, GES, Psych), and are looking at ways to improve this.</p> <p>Teaching</p> <p>Psychology is looking into how best to support student group work.</p> |
| <p>Quality and suitability of teaching spaces, and timetabling</p> | |
| <p>What is working well?</p> | <p>What needs work?</p> |
| <p>No comments</p> | <p>Most schools express concerns about the inadequacy of teaching spaces across the university: too small, too big, crowded labs, and the difficulty of booking spaces for tutorials or for special events.</p> <p>The room booking process (including all the changes that need to be made) makes life difficult for everyone: staff, students, administrators. It is not clear why the timetable is rolled over year-on-year, but not the room bookings.</p> <p>It is difficult to book TEAL rooms, and so preparing classes designed for these rooms is risky.</p> <p>Both GES and Psychology report that their current lab space is not fit for purpose.</p> |
| <p>Staffing levels (including administrative support)</p> | |
| <p>What is working well?</p> | <p>What needs work?</p> |
| <p>Chemistry particularly commented that they have excellent administrative support and processes.</p> | <p>Computing Science is looking into how best to train their marking assistants; Psychology plans to support GTAs though CPD development.</p> |
| <p>University facilities (including IT, conference and library facilities)</p> | |
| <p>What is working well?</p> | <p>What needs work?</p> |
| <p>No comments</p> | <p>No comments</p> |

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| University systems (including MyCampus, Moodle, URKUND and EvaSys) | |
|--|---|
| What is working well? | What needs work? |
| No comments | One school reports that the classroom response system, YACRS, does not always work properly. |
| Marketing, recruitment and admissions | |
| What is working well? | What needs work? |
| Entry into Chemistry programmes now requires Higher Maths, and so level 1 maths provision is supplementary, not mandatory; there is less demand for maths support. | There is concern about students being unprepared for their courses: MSc students particularly, and especially when MSc students are doing courses in other schools. Computing Science is considering whether the best solution would be to offer specialised service courses, rather than trying to integrate unprepared students into existing courses. Engineering reports that there are still problems with students not having sufficient maths ability; they continue to review their maths provision. |
| Other themes/issues | |
| What is working well? | What needs work? |
| Course evaluation: Maths & Stats report that their SARDS process is working well. | Course evaluation: Physics & Astronomy is concerned about low response rates for EvaSys online surveys, and will consider the number of surveys they administer. Engineering is looking at improving their SARDS processes. |

| Good Practice | |
|--|---|
| What practices are innovative? (Please include a named contact for each piece of innovative practice) | Where, if anywhere, would you disseminate this innovative practice? |
| Maths & Stats have introduced a Peer Observation Scheme, whereby teaching staff are observed by other teaching staff for the purposes of “feedback, reflection and development”. Despite being voluntary, around 80% staff took part. <i>Maths & Stats Learning & Teaching Convenor: Vincent Macaulay</i> | LTC conference |
| Chemistry have 1-1 meetings with all L4 students. These are compulsory, and are included in their timetable. Four members of staff share the load, and there is a well-defined format and structure to these meetings. <i>Chemistry Head of Level 4: Linnea Soler</i> | LTC conference, GUSTTO |
| Psychology gives individual exam feedback to students, using a custom-build online system. <i>Psychology Learning & Teaching Convenor: Niamh Stack</i> | LTC conference, GUSTTO |

Hot Topics

Do you have any comments on the following topics?

1. Have you introduced any changes in your approach to assessment and feedback? If so, why, and what benefits have you derived for students and staff from the changes you made?

Successful initiatives in assessment and feedback are reported above.

2. Are you considering increased use of technology to enhance learning and teaching and, if so, what support and guidance would you need to achieve your aims?

Engineering plans to “rationalise, improve and widen the implementation” their technology-based teaching activities; as part of this, they will be seeking training for staff, and funding for collecting a set of resources (cameras, microphones etc.)

GES are looking into the use of VR as an alternative to field work.

Psychology plan to use in-class response systems (thus relying on secure wi-fi), and note that they would benefit from more Echo360-enabled teaching spaces.

Chemistry notes that staff training for the use of Moodle for quizzes would be useful.

It was also noted that there are no resources or funding provided for projects to support staff in performing non-student-facing activities; for example, improved technology for data management. Some Schools have IT staff who can create appropriate systems to support staff administrative functions (but not all), and there are no university/college resources to support projects of this kind.

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

Three schools note that their NSS scores are likely to be affected by either (a) incorrect NSS student lists (Chemistry, Physics & Astronomy), or (b) the inclusion of students from other subjects on the list (Dumfries and GES).

Additional matters

Please highlight any additional matters that you wish to raise from this year’s Annual Monitoring cycle

School Quality Officers would like the loop closed, especially with respect to repeated comments; they would like to know what actions are being taken in response to the concerns expressed in the Annual Monitoring Forms.