1. Overview of College performance in NSS 2013

We are very pleased that Arts’s average for Q22 remains above the 90% benchmark, and that on all but 5 of the questions our results are above the 80% benchmark. We notice a small reduction in a number of the figures across several categories, however. In the 2013-14 session, we will focus in particular on Qs19-21, in which we would have expected Arts’s performance to be stronger.

2. Consultation

The results have been discussed at College Council; they have widely disseminated among colleagues and will be discussed at School L&T committees and SSLCs throughout the College. The Dean for L&T has arranged meetings with most of the subject areas to discuss the results; action points emerging from the meetings held so far are noted below. Follow-up meetings will be held around Christmas/New Year to review progress.

3. Action points:

SCHOOL OF CRITICAL STUDIES

TRS:
1. Staff will be reminded about the 3-week turnaround time for marking
2. The new essay feedback sheet will be discussed at an SSLC meeting, as will wider questions about improving the helpfulness of feedback
3. Staff will be consulted for ideas about improving student confidence, especially re. varying the forms of assessment
4. Students will also be consulted for ideas about improving confidence
5. TRS will meet the Senior Honours cohort (perhaps in the context of preparation for the upcoming PSR) to discuss the NSS results for 2013 and identify any likely problems for 2014. Students will be told about changes made in the past in response to NSS feedback.

English Literature:
1. Head of subject area will discuss with L&T rep best ways of addressing student responses to Q. 21. One possible action will be for English Literature to set up a working group with staff and students to address issues of confidence
2. The SSLC will be asked to discuss issues around question 20 (communication skills)
3. A new essay feedback form is to be introduced which gives more space for comments on writing skills
4. L&T rep will report to subject area meeting on subject area meeting to discuss ways of improving students’ satisfaction with their communication skills
5. Head of subject area will cascade reminders about encouraging students to take part in the survey to all colleagues and will email students himself.

SCHOOL OF CULTURE AND CREATIVE ARTS

Music:
1. A staff meeting will discuss the question of improving student confidence
2. NSS results will be discussed at SSLC
3. The Music Library is being refurbished to make it more inviting. Students are being invited to take part in the planning process. Consideration will be given to providing social as well as study space.

Theatre:
1. Staff will help students appreciate the facilities in the newly-refurbished building. A mini-festival will be held to celebrate its reopening, to be coorganised by students
2. Staff will be reminded about the 3-week turnaround time for marking, especially for Senior Honours courses in semester 1
3. Honours tutors will explain to students how the course’s assessments are appropriate to its content
4. Colleagues will write and distribute to students a set of criteria for selected Honours assessments
5. A staff training session will be held on marking practical work. This will result in a set of criteria which will be published to students
6. Staff will tell students in detail about changes made in response to previous NSS and other feedback
7. Staff will work with the SSLC to investigate issues areound question 15.

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

Philosophy:
1. The subject area will elicit feedback from Joint Honours students about what additional support they would like
2. Some tutors will introduce peer feedback on the delivery (as distinct from the content) of presentations
3. Honours convenor will encourage tutors to state explicitly the ‘groundrules’ for delivery of presentations
4. Some tutors will experiment with requiring students to deliver presentations using handouts but not scripts
5. Carol Collins (ELA for Arts) will be invited to give students some training on presentations
6. The essay-writing session will be followed up with a student marking exercise
7. A bank of very good essays and dissertations will be built up, which can be used to provide examples for discussing writing skills with students
8. A general operational preference will be given to increasing the number of tutorials on each course given by a member of staff other than the main lecturer. At Induction the Honours convenor will stress the importance of exposure to varying opinions. The Philosophy Society will be asked to organise one or two debates between pairs of academic staff.
Classics:
1. Staff will be reminded about the 3-week turnaround for marking
2. Honours essay submission dates will be arranged such as to maximise staff marking time for large Honours classes
3. Two weeks after submission of essays, convenors will check in with markers about their progress; Honours convenor will do this for all Honours options
4. In response to external examiners’ comments, the criteria for presentations are being published in the Classics Handbook
5. Sarah Graham has been invited to the Honours Induction meeting to talk to students about presentations and oral skills; Prezi is now available on Moodle
6. Colleagues will experiment with asking Senior Honours students to articulate the graduate attributes they believe they are acquiring as Classics students
7. Honours convenor will consult the students about how best to support confidence and oral communication skills
8. Students will be invited to make videos about Classics graduate attributes
9. Colleagues will experiment with introducing very short presentations on the theme of 'what I have learnt on this particular course' or 'how this particular course has affected me and my life'.

SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

Hispanic:
1. To minimise problems with students finding themselves unable to complete the NSS in the correct year, the list of eligible students for 2014 will be carefully checked
2. Steps will be taken to ensure that the problem of course documents not being distributed certain courses does not arise again
3. New and recent appointments will receive closer support on teaching
4. Course documents for all Honours options will be reviewed to make sure that everything is available on Moodle
5. Active monitoring will ensure that delivered teaching and assessment are in line with course documents
6. Colleagues will meet with the current Senior Honours cohort to discuss the NSS results
7. Culture courses will elicit student feedback at the start of November as well as at the end of the course, and action will be taken to solve problems identified in November as quickly as possible
8. Colleagues will look at the feedback offered by French, where high student satisfaction is reported, and see whether changes can be made to Hispanic’s practice to make feedback more helpful
9. Students will be consulted about the range and topics of courses, and invited to suggest topics for new courses; they will also be consulted about whether assessments are varied enough
10. The Programme Director will email students more frequently, inviting them to let him know of any problems as they arise.
Slavonic:

1. The Programme Director will remind staff about the 3-week turnaround for marking.
2. Meetings will be held with the current Senior Honours cohort to discuss the 2013 results, including especially questions 8, 9 and 12. Separate meetings will be held for Russian and Slavonic Studies/Polish.
3. The School’s new Assessment Officer will lead a working group on, among other things, providing more detailed criteria and grade descriptors and feedback for language assessments; and on improving the criteria and marksheets for oral exams.
4. The School is running a Careers Week in which graduate attributes and employability will be intensively addressed.
5. Slavonic will hold a teaching meeting with colleagues in CEES; the meeting will focus on issues raised by the NSS results.