



University
of Glasgow

Periodic Subject Review (PSR)

Review of School of Education – Community Development and Adult Education held on 13 and 14 March 2014

Report Summary

The following is a brief summary of the full report of the review carried out in the School of Education – Community Development and Adult Education. *Periodic Subject Review* is an internal subject review focused on the quality of provision as experienced by students. The review looks at the range of programmes, course content, the teaching methods employed, assessment, facilities and much more.

The full report of the review is available publicly at:
http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_357277_en.pdf

Further information about the PSR process can be found at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/gea/periodicsubjectreview/>

Italicised words are explained in a glossary below.

Conclusions

The Panel was impressed by the very positive view from the students; particularly non-traditional students who demonstrated that they were very appreciative of the staff and very proud to be at the University of Glasgow. It was evident that their experiences in relation to support, academic provision and the reflection of research practice in teaching had been extremely positive, despite staff being under significant pressures.

Staffing issues were identified as a key challenge for the Subject Area. There was concern that, while there were potential opportunities to expand, the Subject Area was unable to take advantage of these as staffing capacity limited its ability to respond to new challenges and to be more ambitious. The Subject Area was currently fragmented, with small teams having responsibility for discrete programmes of study and it was recognised that a coherent structure with a single team having collective responsibility for the range of courses would be more effective and mitigate some of the risk factors of the current structure.

The main area for improvement was for the School to establish a clear vision and strategy for growth. The strategy would need to be built into the College of Social Sciences plans for growth and it was therefore important for the School to demonstrate to the College the potential for the Subject and the benefit this would provide both the College and University.

Key Strengths (Commendations) ¹

1. Supporting Students in their Learning

- Outstanding support provided to students [paragraph 4.8.1]
- Quality of provision and the dedication of the staff team in providing a rewarding and supportive student experience. [Paragraph 6.2.1]
- *Induction* support students receive. [Paragraph 4.8.6]
- Pairing of students on the BACD with more senior students. [Paragraph 4.8.4]

2. Enhancement in Learning and Teaching

- Integration of research into the teaching of the programmes [Paragraph 3.2.1]
- Use of *Moodle* within the Subject Area. [Paragraph 5.6]

3. Academic standards

- *Annual course review* involving all students and teaching team [Paragraph 4.6.15]

4. Recruitment

- The delivery of *widening access* ambitions of the University of Glasgow. [Paragraph 3.1.1]

5. Engaging and supporting staff

- Support provided to the *probationary* member of staff. [Paragraph 6.2.9]

Areas to be improved or enhanced

1. Enhancement in Learning and Teaching

- The School of Education to develop relevant examples within the Research Methods course to reflect the diversity and needs of the STRADA PG students. [Paragraph 4.6.13]
- Consult with the *Learning and Teaching Centre* to review the *Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)* to ensure they appropriately reflect the distinctive nature of different programmes, even when there are common elements [Paragraph 4.4.1]

2. Resources for Learning and Teaching

Staffing

¹ Numbers refer to the paragraphs in the full report that contain the relevant discussion.

- Consideration to be given to possible additional staff appointments or existing posts secured and made permanent. Such appointments were crucial to ensure the Subject Area maintained the high level of teaching currently provided as well as provide developmental opportunities. [Paragraph 6.2.4]
- Review of the flat organisational structure and shortage of senior and promoted posts [Paragraph 6.2.5]
- Capitalise on the expertise of *STRADA* staff more broadly so funding for these posts was not reliant on Scottish Government Funding. [Paragraph 6.2.6]

Accommodation

- An urgent review of policy around room allocations. Alternative factors need to be introduced to room bookings to recognise the diversity of requirements in the timetable and estate. [Paragraph 6.1.3]

3. Context and Strategy

- Establish a clear vision and strategy for growth, working with the Vice Principal and Head of College in line with College plans for sustainable growth to produce a phased plan as how to reach its vision. [Paragraph 3.1.6]
- Strategically develop a coherent body of study within the field of Adult Education and Community Development by introducing a hub and spoke approach, building in pathway flexibility for students, adopting a coherent organisational unit with staff having collective responsibility for the range of courses under its remit, including consideration of the opportunity to develop a Youth Work option. [Paragraph 4.6.6]
- Prioritisation to be given to the introduction of an Honours year for the BA Community Development programme, consideration being given to incorporating a broader range of theorists. [Paragraph 4.6.12]
- A senior member of staff to be given a clear leadership role and authority for ensuring that the changes to programmes identified happen speedily and that the necessary provision is made for this member of staff to have the capacity to undertake this. [Paragraph 6.2.8]

4. Enhancing the Student Learning Experience

Recruitment

- Engage with the *Recruitment and International Office (RIO)* to carry out assessment of market opportunities for the full range of provision and potential. [Paragraph 4.7.2]

Glossary of terms/acronyms used

Annual Monitoring (of courses)

Annual Monitoring is a process undertaken at the end of each session by Course or Programme Leaders designed to encourage reflection on the operation of course and programmes – what went right, what could be improved, what students did and didn't like etc. – with a view to enhancing the student experience next year. The work done by the course or programme leaders is followed by a full reporting process through Schools and Colleges to Senate, with

responses being made, as appropriate, at each level. The reporting procedure is designed to ensure that issues arising from monitoring are properly considered and responded to, and that enhancements and the sharing of good practice are promoted. Annual monitoring reports are reviewed by Periodic Subject Review Panels as part of the documentation provided by the Subject(s)/School.

Induction

Induction is a series of events planned by the University, Colleges, Schools, Subjects and the Student's Representative Council to welcome new students and provide them with information to prepare them for their studies and the forthcoming year at University. Events usually take place during the first week of the academic year.

Intended Learning Outcomes or ILOs

Intended Learning Outcomes or ILOs describe what all students should be able to do or demonstrate, in terms of particular knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes when they successfully complete the course or programme that the ILOs relate to.

Learning and Teaching Centre

The Learning and Teaching Centre is a University Service whose role is to "help implement and develop the University's Learning and Teaching strategy, identify, assess and disseminate new developments and good practice which serve to enhance the student learning experience, and will work with colleagues throughout the University to bring about change".

Moodle

Moodle is the University's supported Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Periodic Subject Review or PSR

The University has a six yearly cycle of review of the Subjects/Schools within it. The PSR is one of the main ways by which the University assures itself of the quality of the provision delivered by Subjects/Schools.

Probationary Staff

Lecturers/Teachers, on appointment are required to serve a period of probation to ensure that a new lecturer/teacher has an opportunity of familiarising him or herself with the academic environment; it also provides the University with an opportunity of ensuring that the lecturer/teacher is capable of undertaking the work for which he or she has been employed.

STRADA (Scottish Training on Drugs and Alcohol)

Scottish Training on Drugs and Alcohol (STRADA) is the leading national workforce development organisation supporting those working with and affected by drug and alcohol misuse. It works to improve the competence of staff working in the substance misuse field in order that the interventions available locally aid the recovery of those affected by substance misuse.

Recruitment and International Office (RIO)

The Recruitment and International Office (RIO) provides applicants, parents and teachers with a single point of contact for information and advice on the range of programmes available at the University of Glasgow. The Service also develop, implement, co-ordinate and monitors

widening participation initiatives within the University and with other partners. The Recruitment and International Office (RIO) is situated in the Fraser Building.

Widening Access or Widening Participation

The objective of widening participation is to develop, implement, co-ordinate and monitor initiatives which further: the increased recruitment of students to Higher Education from those areas and groups where there is low participation; the provision of educational support for all students once they have entered the University in order to improve student retention and to facilitate the successful completion of students' programmes of study; and the flexible provision of learning opportunities. More information can be found at the Widening Participation at Glasgow website at: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/wideningparticipation/>.