

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Academic Standards Committee – 19 May 2017

**Responses to the Recommendation arising from the Periodic
Subject Review of Central and East European Studies held on 22
February 2017**

Lesley Fielding, Clerk to the Review Panel

PSR Overview and Response

We are pleased to note the many positive outcomes which arose as part of the PSR. Four major commendations focus on induction and support of staff and students; the subjects approach to external reviewers; the strong sense of community and the range of provision on our international programmes. Such programmes are -as noted- unique, enquiry and research led. The good practice award in respect of our extensive work placements, student identity and GTA management is most welcome as are the positive comments on enquiry led teaching.

However, there are areas for improvement and certain obstacles to maintaining such a diverse range of programmes and these are addressed below.

Areas for enhancement

The Review Panel highlighted the following areas as opportunities for further work. These and the recommendations that follow are intended to support the Subject in its reflection and to enhance provision in relation to teaching, learning and assessment.

- Over-commitment of staff
- Increased College and School support
- Increasing profile of Subject at pre-entry level

Specific recommendations addressing these areas for work are listed below, as are a number of further recommendations on particular matters.

General response to the above

As a relatively small subject area committed to excellence in respect of research led teaching and running a full quota of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes- as well as engaging in supervision - there are obvious resource issues which we address by active engagement with the Head of School and College. We are fully committed to the delivery of CEES, School and College programmes which, if this is to continue, will require additional resources. Our internal profile is high, but there are issues with respect to pre-entry level- since the subject is not taught in Schools- which we shall seek to address with our colleagues in recruitment.

NB This response has been circulated to staff and students at all levels and I am grateful for their constructive engagement in this process.

Recommendation 1

The Review Panel **recommends** that, in order to alleviate pressure on staff and to ensure effective and timeous feedback, the Subject review the practice of double marking all Honours and PGT work and introduce a form of targeted moderation. *[paragraph 4.3.2]*

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject maintain current office hours and review the open door policy. *[paragraph 4.3.3]*

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Response:

Following the PSR and after consultation with staff and students the subject moved to a system of moderated marking in time for session 2017/8.

We have also firmed up our office hours and encouraged students to make appointments with staff.

Recommendation 2

The Panel **recommends** that the Subject and School review their practice with regard to plagiarism to ensure conformity to the University regulations *[paragraph 4.1.6]*

For the attention of The Head of Subject

For information: Director, Senate Office

Response:

CEES follows Senate policy with respect to plagiarism; the confusion was caused by an error in editing which omitted a vital sentence in respect of plagiarism at honours level. This has been rectified.

Recommendation 3

The Panel was pleased to note that the appointment of a web officer was imminent; however, it **recommends** that the School takes **immediate action** to update the information on the Subject's webpage, particularly in relation to Postgraduate Taught provision. Disclaimers should be included on the web pages advising that not all courses advertised would necessarily be available. The School should undertake a review of the long-term technical support for the maintenance and updating of the Subject's web pages to ensure that all subsequent requests are actioned in a timely manner. An update should be provided to the September meeting of ASC. [paragraph 3.1.6]

For the attention of: The Vice Principal and Head of College

The Head of School

For information: The Head of Subject

This response was submitted to the October 2017 meeting of ASC, minute extract below:

ASC/2017/5.3.1 Central & East European Studies

The Convener advised that the Subject area and College had taken the urgent action required under Recommendation 3 to correct information available on their website, particularly in relation to the availability of postgraduate taught provision.

Recommendation 4

The Review Panel **recommends** that, in consultation with the Director of the Open Programme, the subject convenor investigate the possibility of enhanced language provision for small minority languages within the extant and planned language provision. [paragraph 2.4.2]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

For information: The Head of School

Response:

Following discussions with the Centre it is apparent that there is a clash between our desire to include more minority languages- specifically Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian and the likely low commercial return. I am informed it is unlikely that they can be of assistance in this matter.

However, we have been offered support funds from the Estonian government and we are exploring on line delivery from the countries in question, which reduces the costs to the University of Glasgow. The Lithuanian government has also launched a scheme similar to that provided by the Estonians. There are excellent language summer schools in the countries in question, however, this does bring with it some costs: since we have a well-defined mobility policy we are exploring ways of utilising such for this purpose. (We already have funding from the Hungarian government for language teaching)

Recommendation 5

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject engage as early as possible with the GTAs to identify areas in which they could improve development opportunities. *[paragraphs 4.4.4 and 4.4.5]*

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

The Review Panel **recommends** that the College and School review the availability and/or the communication of training opportunities available to GTAs. *[paragraph 4.4.5]*

For the attention of: The Head of School

For information: The Vice Principal and Head of College

Response: Head of Subject

Although this is stated as an action for the head of subject this in effect a School matter. All GTA matters are dealt with by the School. Development opportunities and training opportunities are the remit of the Head of School Administration Chris McAdam who is engaged in a thorough review of these issues.

Response: Head of School

Recommendation 6

The Review Panel had some concerns regarding the functionality of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee in failing to address the clash of examination and essay and, therefore, **recommends** that the Subject review their SSLC feedback mechanisms to ensure that such issues are fully addressed and the feedback loop is closed *[paragraph 3.4.5]*

For the attention of the Head of School

Response: Head of School

Response: Head of Subject

This was a one off in that we failed to notice the clash; it had never happened before and we have reviewed our feedback mechanisms to ensure this does not happen again.

Recommendation 7

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject consult with the Marketing, Recruitment and International Office (MaRIO) to review the current recruitment and to identify ways to increase and enhance the Subject's profile at pre-entry level. *[paragraph 3.1.2]*

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

**For information: The Director of Marketing, Recruitment and International
Office**

The Head of School

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject review documentation, including handbooks, to better articulate progression to Level 1 students and highlight the benefits of continued study of the Subject. *[paragraph 3.1.3]*

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Response: Head of Subject

It is fair to state that we have had good service from external relations, particularly in respect of the marketing of our PGT offerings. It is also of benefit that the College International Lead is a member of CEES staff.

We are home to 4 major PGT programmes:

- *International Master in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IMCEERES) double degree programme (EM)*
- *Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies MSc*
- *International Master in Security, Intelligence & Strategic Studies (EM)*
- *Global security*

Applications are running at record levels and in many cases we are full to capacity- hence the need to strengthen staff recruitment in these areas.

With the help of the School, College we have also produced new high quality publicity material and launched new websites.

Profile at pre-entry level.

We have pulled together information on the market assessments done recently in this area and are engaged with ER as to ways forward to increase our profile at pre -entry level. This involves Schools liaison and other support agencies. We take active part in applicants visit days and in outreach activities, for example in career fairs.

CEES and the UK/EU Recruitment team will continue to liaise to ensure effective representation of the Subject at on and off campus events, such as Open Days and UCAS HE Conventions, supporting recruitment staff with timely and appropriate subject and student information, such as student testimonials and career outcomes. Inclusion in the WP Summer School and RUK school engagement via related subject webinars will be explored. The Subject will continue to ensure it provides on-campus visitors the best possible insight and experience to generate interest and applications.

We have also instituted a robust system of engagement with students already registered with us: for example students at all levels, students- in conjunction with members of staff- give talks on the subject to those in the years below. We believe that this has had a beneficial impact on progression rates and entry to honours.

Response 7 b Progression

We have reformulated our information in respect of entry tariffs; there was some misunderstanding about entry to honours as this can be accomplished by the normal route i.e. level 1 and level 2 or by a high performance in level 1 or 2. This has now been reformulated and made clearer in all documentation and on websites.

Response: Director of MaRIO

Discussion is ongoing with College International Lead, Dr Clare McManus, regarding opportunities for effective in-country marketing of the programme portfolio of Central and East European Studies, and a further meeting organised with Professor Richard Berry in February 2018 to discuss opportunities for greater representation of the School both here and overseas. A number of market assessments have been progressed on behalf of the School in recent years, including, most recently, the: International Masters in Russian, Central and East European Studies double degree programme.

We have pulled together information on the market assessments done recently in this area.

- 1) ***International Masters in Russian, Central and East European Studies (IMRCEES) double degree programme*** – assessed in 9.2.11.

Query - To determine the needs analysis of this programme's objectives i.e. how are the programme objectives linked to identified needs in a European and worldwide context. This would include perceived socio-economic needs of given economies. (rated Medium)

- 2) In September 2015, CEES asked for an assessment on introducing 'Central' into the title: ***In summary:*** Unlikely that there would be much impact of changing the name to 'MSc Russian, Central European and Eurasian Studies'.
- 3) In October 2015: request re change the name of the ***International Master in Russian, Central and East European Studies*** degree programme to the ***International Master in Russian, Central & East European & Eurasian Studies. In summary:*** Unlikely that there would be much impact of changing the name to 'International Master in Russian, Central & East European & Eurasian Studies'.
- 4) Currently two programmes running in this area:
 - ***Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies MSc***
 - ***Central & East European, Russian & Eurasian Studies (Erasmus Mundus International Master) IntM***
- 5) the subject area is also involved in the IMSISS – International Master Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies. The initial assessment was done in Sep 2014, then updated in Jan 2016.

The International Team meet with the CIL regularly. Programmes also attracts students from a wide variety of countries, such as India, Pakistan, China and America, mainly due to the fee scholarships, so in terms of the International Recruitment activity, there's promotion in all markets and staff carry programme information (flyers) to pass onto potential applicants at in-country events across the world.

The UK/EU recruitment side has mentioned that CEES have a stand and do a talk at Open Days but suggests more student profiles and testimonials to support recruitment generally could be done. We could also review your Open Day talk. There are subject matter leaflets and CEES is included in the MA SocSci section of the school presentations. We are exploring doing subject specific webinars with groups of schools so that could be a future possibility, if the trial this spring goes well.

We already attract UK and EU students however once we start having to recruit EU UG's it will be of more interest to certain markets than others and we don't know how that will affect numbers. Perhaps there are existing relationships with school academics or you are aware of schools / networks that are active in the relevant subject areas? If so, it would help the recruitment team refine our knowledge and assist targeting schools where there could be more demand to study CEES at HE level. If we don't already engage with these schools, we can look to establish contact if other metrics are right, ie, high proportions of pupils apply to HE, other RG, etc.

Response: Head of School

Recommendation 8

The Panel **recommends** that the Subject review their core provision at postgraduate level to identify and address areas which require further development. *[paragraph 3.1.6]*

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Response:

Dr Cheskin was already reconstructing this course at the time of the review. This has now been thoroughly overhauled. Student feedback demonstrates that this had been welcome.

Recommendation 9

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject and University services, most particularly the Careers Office, to provide support to the School in the development of appropriate national and international work placements. *[paragraph 3.4.1]*

For the attention of: Director of Careers Office

For information: The Head of Subject

Response – Careers Service:

The University's Careers Service, 19 staff (fte), provides careers support and guidance to all students studying here, currently 26,000. This includes individual student consultations on demand with a professional careers manager who can advise them on how to approach possible placement providers and also their applications. The service also includes one (fte) Careers Manager for each college to provide a careers programme to help students manage their individual career development plans and prospects.

The Careers Service itself has no capacity nor remit to develop 'placements' for students in course, with or without a credit bearing aspect. Two members of our staff manage the University's Internship Hub which in 2016-17 developed 379 internships for current students. Of these successful students, 5 were from CEES courses, 1.3 % of all students and of the 2,575 applications received from students, 19 , 0.7% - were from CEES courses. These figures compare favourably with other schools. These internships are not credit bearing and have no formal attachment to academic courses. Students apply for these in a manner consistent with how they would apply competitively for jobs on graduation. The Careers Service also employs a 0.5 fte International Opportunities Officer whose remit is to source international opportunities for students including information, advice and where possible contacts for internships. Part of this role is to share relevant international contacts with relevant academic partners but has no remit to develop 'in course' opportunities.

The College of Social Science's Academic and Student Administration has a Work-related Learning Opportunities Co-ordinator (WRLOC) who is a dedicated resource to seek the development of work related learning opportunities on behalf of students in the College of Social Sciences. The WRLOC supports collaborative research, practitioner speaker inputs, organisational visits and placements across the College. Within CEES the WRLOC now supports embedded, credit-bearing placements for the Erasmus Mundus programmes with national and international organisations, including the UN. The Careers Service supports the WRLOC through passing on relevant alumni and employers who may be able to offer work related learning opportunities specific to courses.

Recommendation 10

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School and Subject jointly work on the development of a robust strategy to ensure that the Subject maintains its leading international position in the post Brexit environment. [*paragraph 6.1*]

For the attention of: The Head of School

For information: The Head of Subject

Response: Head of School

Response: Head of Subject

We have had considerable success in obtaining funding from the EU, as noted by the award of the of the prestigious Erasmus Mundus programmes. We have built up international networks from Canada to Kazakhstan and monitor the changing situation in tandem with our partners. We believe that these networks are strong enough to survive BREXIT and our PG convenors are in constant touch with our partners with a view to continuing our co-operation. A Swiss or Norwegian educational protocol may well emerge which will enable such links to be maintained and developed.

