



Periodic Subject Review (PSR)

Review of School of Law held on 20 and 21 February 2018

Report Summary

The following is a brief summary of the full report of the review carried out in the School of Law. *Periodic Subject Review* (PSR) 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:

https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_613784_en.pdf

Further information about the PSR process can be found at:

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

Italicised words are explained in a glossary below.

Conclusions

Commendations, Key Strengths and Good Practice¹

Commendations are practices identified as innovative and exemplary activities for potentially wider dissemination.
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Enhancing the Student Experience: Supporting students with disabilities and caring responsibilities

- Commitment to supporting its students through the advising system, particularly through the introduction of a co-adviser system, and commends this as an example of outstanding practice in the School. [Paragraph 3.3.2]

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

Enhancing the Student Experience: Inclusion and community building

- Strategies of inclusion and community building by which the School has attempted to ensure that all staff in the School are committed to supporting the student experience. [Paragraph 3.3.4]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Study abroad

- Recognition of the efforts to promote *internationalisation* and commends the range of *study abroad* opportunities available within the School and encourages the School to continue developing these opportunities. [Paragraph 4.1.1]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Formative assessment and feedback

- Review Panel commends the School's efforts to embed *formative assessment* and provide students with regular formative feedback opportunities. [Paragraph 4.2.2]

The Review Panel identified the following key strengths and areas of good practice.

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Learning opportunities

- The range of learning styles (including the use of a Moot Court Room, group work and *problem based learning*) to which students are exposed. [Paragraph 4.2.1]

Enhancing the Student Experience: Diversity of student body

- Efforts to recruit and support students from the *REACH and Access* programmes. [Paragraph 3.2.1]

Enhancing the Student Experience: Student support

- The Undergraduate Law Student Handbook. [Paragraph 3.3.3]
- The supportive approach of administrative support staff. [Paragraph 4.4.4]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Disseminating good practice

- Sharing good practice through the Learning and Teaching Day. [Paragraph 4.1.5]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Supporting staff

- Engagement of Diploma tutors with learning and teaching. [Paragraph 4.3.1]

Areas to be improved or enhanced

The Review Panel made a number of recommendations where it identified opportunities for further enhancement. The Head of Subject commented that the review had been timely given the Subject's recent transition and that the recommendations would enable the Subject's strategic objectives.

Enhancing the Student Experience: Placements and internships

- Provide undergraduate students with more information (and communicates existing information more effectively) about internship deadlines and greater assistance in securing placement opportunities during the first two years of their degree programme, and that efforts should be particularly focussed on providing early support for students undertaking the two-year accelerated LLB. [Paragraph 3.4.2]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Study abroad

- Students are provided with more information about academic expectations at different overseas institutions before embarking on their *study abroad* opportunity and that the grade conversion process is reiterated when students return from their year abroad and that the School reflects on the students' perception that there were differences in the level of difficulty experienced at different international institutions. [Paragraph 4.1.2]

Enhancing the Student Experience: Supporting students with disabilities and caring responsibilities

- Continue to develop short term mobility opportunities accessible to students with caring responsibilities and that, wherever possible, workshops and events are held during normal working hours. Also consider providing information about support and opportunities for students with caring responsibilities in the Undergraduate Student Handbook and via Advisers of Studies. [Paragraph 3.3.1]

Enhancing the Student Experience: Employability and graduate attributes

- That the curriculum places greater emphasis on developing students' *graduate attributes* (including their application writing, interview, problem solving and note-taking skills) during the early stages of the undergraduate degree programme, particularly for accelerated LLB students who have less time to nurture these skills. [Paragraph 3.4.3]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: E-Learning strategy

- Continue to develop an academically driven and co-ordinated e-learning strategy with a view to further embedding the use of technology and *blended* online-learning (including lecture recording) in learning and teaching across the School's curriculum. [Paragraph 4.1.4]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Student grade profiles

- To improve student attainment in first and second year, review grade descriptors, assessment criteria and *Intended Learning Outcomes* to ensure greater consistency across courses and enhance students' assessment literacy. [Paragraph 4.2.4]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Assessment Policy

- Revise procedures and updates to the Student Handbook to reflect the University's policy of returning feedback to students within 15 working days of submission [as outlined in the *Code of Assessment*]. [Paragraph 4.2.5]

Enhancing the Student Experience: Diversity of student body

- Liaise with *External Relations* to compile performance data on *Widening Participation* and Access students which can be made available to School staff responsible for supporting these students. [Paragraph 3.2.1]

Enhancing the Student Experience: Course evaluation survey response rates

- Liaise with the *Senate Office* and consults the good practice guide on the Senate Office Website to develop a strategy for increasing student response rates for course evaluation surveys. [Paragraph 3.4.1]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Marking and feedback on the DPLP

- Liaise with *Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Service (LEADS)* to provide further support and guidance for Diploma tutors (particularly in relation to assessment and feedback) and develop a system for moderating marking and feedback to ensure greater consistency. [Paragraph 4.2.3]
- Ensure that all School staff, including Diploma staff, undertake the University's mandatory Equality and Diversity training. [Paragraph 4.2.3]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Learning and Teaching Space

- Liaise with Space Management and Timetabling to investigate the possibility of prioritising particular teaching spaces for the DPLP. [Paragraph 4.3.2]

Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Diploma tutors

- Consider the possibility of formally acknowledging the contribution of Diploma staff whose teaching is of a particularly high standard and that this might be achieved by nominating them for *Teaching Excellence Awards*. [Paragraph 4.3.1]

Enhancing the Student Experience: Recruitment

- To enable the School to better resource future increases in student numbers, liaise with External Relations to ensure that undergraduate admissions data is provided to the School further in advance of the proceeding academic year and that direct access to the admissions database is provided to relevant staff in the School. [Paragraph 3.1.1]

Glossary

Blended Learning

Using face-to-face teaching and on-line learning.

Code of Assessment

The University's Code of Assessment (implemented 2002-03) is designed to provide a fair and rational means of assessing students' performance. It provides instructions to staff on how assessment should be designed and carried out. It sets out verbal descriptions of each of the eight grades from A to H. Students' work is judged against these descriptions in terms of how well they have met the stated intended learning outcomes of the course or other assessed component and the corresponding grade is awarded. A guide to the Code of Assessment for students is available from the Senate Office website.

External Relations

The External Relations Directorate is part of University Services bringing together the existing teams from within the Marketing, Recruitment & International Office with the Development & Alumni Office and the Centre for Open Studies, now Short Courses.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment refers to assessed work where feedback is given to help the student improve their learning and their performance. The work may or may not contribute to the student's final grade for the course.

Graduate Attributes

[Graduate attributes](#) are the skills, knowledge and qualities or attitudes developed by individuals through their programme of study that they will use to contribute effectively in work or other aspects of society in the future.

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.

Internationalisation

Internationalisation is a key strategic priority for the University. The University's Internationalisation Strategy contains six interconnected themes aimed at enhancing the global reach and reputation of the University (student experience, research and knowledge transfer, partnerships, alumni, local engagement and staff). The University's web pages contain a range of resources and guidance to support staff in achieving the University's [Internationalisation Strategy](#). This includes information for students and staff engaged in international initiatives, international staff working in Glasgow and staff working overseas.

Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Service (LEADS)

LEADS 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'.

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.

Problem Based Learning (PBL)

In problem based learning (PBL) students define their own learning objectives. Subsequently they do independent, self-directed study before returning to the group to discuss and refine their acquired knowledge. Thus, PBL is not about problem solving per se, but rather it uses appropriate problems to increase knowledge and understanding.

REACH

The REACH programme encourages students from less well advantaged backgrounds into degree programmes for dentistry, law, medicine, veterinary medicine and surgery.

Senate Office

The Senate Office oversees the University's compliance with national and international quality assurance and enhancement requirements and has responsibility for academic governance and its coordination, developing and implementing a range of policies and processes and supporting Senate and University Committees. The Senate Office provides a range of academic services to staff and students across the University and to a number of external bodies as well as members of the public.

Study abroad

Study abroad is a term that is often used to refer to several programmes that offer opportunities for students to study in a European University, or one further afield, for a term, semester or year as part of their undergraduate degree programme. (The University's "Study Abroad Programme" is specifically for designed for visiting students who elect to come to the University of Glasgow.)

Teaching Excellence Awards

In 2005-06, the University introduced Teaching Excellence Awards (TEA) to recognise and celebrate members of staff whose teaching is of a particularly high standard. From 2013-14, the competition has included College level and University level awards. Up to two TEA winners per College can be nominated for an award at University level. An informal Teaching Excellence Network will be formed of all Teaching Excellence Award winners since 2005. Members of the Network will be invited to contribute their skills and expertise to a range of activities, such as training, informal mentoring, peer review and, on a consultative basis, to Learning & Teaching Committee business and strategy meetings.

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 <http://www.gla.ac.uk/wideningparticipation/>.