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.

College	MVLS Graduate School

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?**

What is working well?

- Student engagement with research projects and research ethos of the Institute. Clear that students were very highly motivated to undertake their extended research project (Project 1 + 2 combined). Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) comment 'the wide range of internal/external seminars as well as the networking after have been really good to gain insight across a range of subjects and possibilities'.

- Staff are attempting to spot some of the early warning signs where mental health may be impacting student performance. Students have been encouraged to seek help provided by University and new administrator has met all students and will be a point of contact for them. Attendance is recorded to keep track of any students who might be showing risk of lack of engagement. For 2019-2020 a former MRES/PhD student acts as an official mentor, with drop-in sessions throughout Term 1.

- The media training sessions and assignments (press statements, policy briefs).

    - Engagement with Online Distance Learning.
    - The development of a 'Graduate Skills Award' to enhance graduate attributes.
    - The development of peer-support mechanisms to assist students with their studies.

What needs work?

- Clarifying the line of responsibility for student mental health support.

- Expanding the provision of group projects and ensuring the equality of learning opportunities for students across all PGT programmes.

- Improving the signposting of PhD and funding opportunities for students.

- Expansion of mental health advice and counselling services within the University. Waiting times are lengthy and this is especially important for students that are only here for a year. PGT fast track system is therefore required.

(College and University)

- The support provided to students in their transition from undergraduate to postgraduate studies.
- The wide range of learning opportunities that were made available to students.
- The Graduate School's engagement with technology-enhanced learning and teaching (TELT).
- The introduction of multi-student projects to manage increased student numbers.

- Students report that staff are approachable and supportive, and they appreciate the added value of teaching being delivered by a wide range of public health practitioners. The diverse range of optional courses that are available to students was highly valued.

Learning and teaching (including assessment and feedback)	
What is working well?	**What needs work?**
- Throughout the clusters there has been a high level of student satisfaction. Several programmes reported excellent student staff relations and opportunity for discussion about teaching, feedback and progress. - External examiners emphasised and commended academic staff teams on various aspects of the programmes including research components, assessments, administration, organisation and feedback to students. - Excellent administration was mentioned by several programmes and this was highlighted by academics, external examiners and students. - Working to reduce variance in feedback: looking at mechanisms for improvement and trying to manage student expectations and be more rigorous with staff to ensure deadlines are kept. Also standardising feedback forms and communicating more about the expectations for the level of feedback, including examples. - Across programmes, students felt positive about the use of technology e.g. lecture materials and reading lists, message boards on moodle, video walls, flipped classroom approaches. Students felt programmes were interesting and exciting, the standard of teaching was high, and that the majority of staff were very helpful and supportive. Staff responded quickly to questions and queries on moodle, via email and face-to-face. Students	- Many programmes share courses, but it means that the course leader and administrative staff have to deal, on occasion, with over 150 students on a single course. This results in delays in collecting all the assessment and feedback. Also problems dealing with the large number of students with good cause requests, resits and extensions. - Students in several programmes commented that feedback provision could be better. In some cases this took a long time and comments were sometimes inconsistent. In some ways, this can be addressed through better expectation management by staff. The University guidelines for turnaround times for feedback are unrealistic for large class sizes and this places an impossible level of expectation on staff. Making these guidelines more realistic would help manage student expectations. **(College and University)**

also valued the help and support provided with future career planning and many students have been successful in obtaining places on prestigious PhD programmes and jobs within the wider bio-medical field. Students also indicated that they enjoyed their research projects and exposure to real-life research activities. Forensic Toxicology, the move to the teaching and learning Centre of QEUH has been a positive step in terms of teaching environment.	

Quality and suitability of teaching spaces, and timetabling	
What is working well?	**What needs work?**
	• Accommodation has been a recurring issue. For the last few years the Graduate School has highlighted/promoted t state-of-the-art teaching facilities at the QEUH. On occasions, these rooms are now fully occupied and students are sent to sub-standard rooms in old parts of the University. In addition, with student numbers only becoming known very late (several months after room booking), this can lead to problems ensuring rooms are large enough to accommodate class size. This can also make course delivery challenging as small group work and tutorial provision can be difficult to plan for with uncertain class sizes. This is a particular problem for large classes.
	• Provision of suitable/accessible teaching spaces and facilities.
	• Conformation of students' attendance or otherwise is in September, leaving staff in a difficult position in relation to room bookings.
	• The nature and extent of any student's disability is not disclosed until they arrive, meaning the accommodation may not be suitable and timetabling is very problematic.
	• Students value the interactive component of class time and the opportunity to work and discuss with their peers. Having access to Technology Enhanced Active Learning (TEAL) spaces would have been ideal for this course however availability and timetabling was a prohibitive issue. In addition, it is unhelpful when central room booking allocates back-to-back teaching sessions at different ends of Gilmorehill Campus. For the statistics tutorials it has been very difficult to source rooms; a combination of a lack of rooms together with understaffing and high staff turnover in the

	Graduate School has led to rooms having to be found at the last minute. Also, some of these rooms have proved unsuitable, resulting in more administrative and lecturer time to resolve. **(College and University)**
Staffing levels (including administrative support)	
What is working well?	**What needs work?**
• Excellent administration was mentioned by several programmes and this was highlighted by academics, external examiners and students.	• MVLS Graduate School administration has been working under pressure. There are concerns around the potential impact on the effectiveness of courses and programmes for two reasons: (1) There are more students and there is more course sharing, which increases workload and complexity. (2) Administration staff turnover is very high as staff are overworked and end up moving jobs. **Please note there are no complaints about the staff themselves. Staff are very diligent and any mistakes are due to pressure-of-work and high staff turnover. This results in a lack of continuity.** **(College and University)**
University facilities (including IT, conference and library facilities)	
What is working well?	**What needs work?**
• Overall, learning technologies are being utilised enthusiastically. • Global Mental Health (GMH). In 2019/2020 an augmented reality task was undertaken to complement an in-class teaching session. This was supported by the digital education team and demonstrated that investment in WiFi within the teaching space would be helpful. For 2020/2021 a blogging formative assessment pilot is being introduced. Again financial support and IT service support would be helpful to ensure that this runs efficiently and effectively and can be reproduced for our Online Distance Learning (ODL) student cohort.	• The audio-visual system in the lecture theatre in Mental Health and Wellbeing was a problem once again this year (sound issues). • The quality of the physical environment continues to be poor in the teaching areas in Mental Health and Wellbeing. • The use of the remote desktop for accessing statistical software was a problem with the distance learning statistics course. This was very slow and crashed regularly. • Access to Echo360 and trained staff to work the system has led to difficulties in delivering sessions. **(University)**

University systems (including MyCampus, Moodle, URKUND and EvaSys)	
What is working well?	**What needs work?**
	• There were several issues around enrolling students on programmes and courses. This is a major problem particular for online or blended learning courses where this access is essential. This problem comes up every year and there needs to be a better system in place to address this issue. Problems with administration are the biggest issue that students report to academic staff. This is not an issue with individual staff members in the Graduate School; his reflects chronic understaffing and the associated issue of high staff turnover. • Addressing deficiencies in the Applicant Self-Service process. • Improving student survey response rates and compliance with the University's Course Evaluation Policy. **(College and University)**

Marketing, recruitment and admissions	
What is working well?	**What needs work?**
• Staff are well supported by the reactive and helpful marketing team.	• Insufficient staff to cover e.g. the PGT open day, which is outwith the timetable. Due to an overlap with other appointments, it is also difficult to participate in the cluster meetings. **(College)**

Other themes/issues	
What is working well?	**What needs work?**
	• English language support and student welfare are recurring themes within annual monitoring. **(College and University)**

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?
MRes students' choice - Contact: Professor Barbara Mable • Offering MRes students the choice of one long project or the two traditional shorter projects has increased publishing and going on to PhDs.	(All Programmes, College, University)
MSc taught courses 'Using Your Feedback' workshop – Contact: Dr Eileen Cowey	(All Programmes, College, University)

• MSc taught courses. A 'Using Your Feedback' workshop was run to encourage students to review their feedback and develop an action plan for improvement, using the Sheffield Hallam self-assessment tool.	
MSc programme alumni engagement - Contact: Dr Eileen Cowey • MSc programme: Alumni engagement was facilitated with new students at a discipline-specific induction session (i.e. additional to Graduate School provision). These were alumni who were either engaged in careers that are of future interest to students, or who have progressed to PhD study at UoG. This knowledge exchange offered our new students networking opportunities, sources of potential peer support and information about progression to PhD study.	(All Programmes, College, University)
MSc programme transition to PhD study - Contact: Dr Eileen Cowey • MSc programme: An information session about transition to PhD study was offered, tailored for students from nursing and other healthcare professions. This added to broader Graduate School provision and was delivered by our PGR Convenor in Nursing. It was well-received, and we have seen an increase in PGR interest from current students.	(All Programmes, College, University)
Group projects BMS cluster – Contact: Programme Director • Group projects: Evaluation indicates that offering group projects in addition to individual projects is an effective way of ensuring all students in the Biomedical Science (BMS) cluster are offered high quality research projects. Periodic Subject Review (PSR) commended this as a key strength of our PGT provision.	(All Programmes, College, University)
MSc Medical Genetics students identifying feedback priorities - Contact: Dr Maria Jackson • MSc Medical Genetics: Getting students to identify an aspect of their coursework on which they would like specific feedback (rather than markers deciding all feedback priorities).	(All Programmes, College, University)
Molecular Pathology distance online learning – Contact: Programme Director • Molecular Pathology: Distance online tutorials delivered by Zoom on iPad/iPhone set up in the classroom with or without Swivl platform. • Use of a wide variety of online tools such as Glogster (online posters) to allow assessments to be carried out by distance. • Combination of software such as Camtasia, Articulate, videos filmed by media team, Skype and Big Blue Button for online delivery of material. • Use of video walls to introduce and gather a feeling of being part of a class/group doing the MSc.	(All Programmes, College, University)
Forensic Toxicology problem based learning – Contact: Dr Amanda Britten • In Forensic Toxicology: Introduction of problem based learning sessions within the Principles of Forensic toxicology module, enhancing the student learning experience.	(All Programmes, College, University)
Accessibility – Contact: Programme Director • MED5500. A new application is being utilised, Articulate Rise, which is used to create fully accessible online presentations, which replace linear recorded lectures.	(All Programmes, College, University)

Assessment – Contact: Programme Director	(All Programmes, College, University)
• TVETMED 5053 was assessed with three pieces of assessment, two of which were an assessed online discussion followed by a short reflection. These two assessments were well liked by the students and the level of understanding and the student's ability to communicate was excellent. The marking process was straightforward and relatively time efficient.	

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?

- Clinical pharmacology has been exam heavy with assessment and has introduced course work assignments for some courses. This spreads the assessment burden more evenly as it was initially loaded to the end of the year.

- Clinical pharmacology has already introduced formative exams and feedback sessions and also is encouraging lecturers to give tasks that are de-briefed with feedback at a later date.

- DClin Psy has replaced some traditional essay exams with more clinically relevant skills and knowledge assessments via intensive case studies. The benefits will be evaluated as the roll-out of this change occurs over the coming year.

- Audio feedback using Camtasia for formative PBL work has been introduced. Group facilitators provide commentary over screenshots of the work in question (~4-7 min video per student for each of four PBLs in semester 1).

- MSc Infection Biology. Acting on student feedback assessment criteria, grades and feedback are being provided sooner. Methods for improving the speed of feedback to students have recently been discussed by the Programme Director (RD) and Head of PGT Administration (Mrs Linda Atkinson). Greater emphasis on the importance of meeting deadlines will be made in e-mails sent to assessors and course leaders will be encouraged to notify students of any likely delays.

- Designing a Research Project (DRP) course staff are attempting to reduce the amount of written assessments which has to be marked by introducing an oral assessment. Contact: Professor Harry De Koning.

- The GMH programme recently reviewed summative assessment. Traditional essays and exams were replaced with the introduction of more 'authentic assessments' such as posters, podcasts, designing information sheets etc. This targets Graduate Attributes and promotes development of transferable skills. Student satisfaction with these assessments was recorded.

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?

- Evidence Based Research Methods (EBRM): Access to TEAL spaces would have greatly enhanced the interactive class sessions by allowing equitable access to online material e.g. research papers which would have allowed the class to delve more deeply into the set topics/tasks. Being rather constrained in a lecture theatre is not conducive to small group work and when trying to develop student critical review skills, access to additional resources in real-time is important for this course.

- GMH: In 2019/2020 an augmented reality task was undertaken to complement an in-class teaching session. This was supported by the digital education team and showed that investment in WiFi within the teaching space would be helpful. For 2020/2021 a blogging formative assessment is to be piloted. Financial support and IT service support would again be helpful to ensure that this runs efficiently and effectively and can be reproduced for our ODL student cohort.

3. Are there any other topics that you wish to comment on?
• Identifying a sufficient number of projects is a growing problem. Also it is unsustainable for staff to supervise 8-10 projects. One solution could be to make projects optional, so students could graduate MSc with 180 taught credits. This would be particularly helpful for distance learning programmes, where project supervision is very challenging and most students would prefer a further taught component. Also it may be helpful to consider this for on-campus MSc programmes. Many programmes have a number of options, so this would not involve the need to create new teaching content.

Additional matters

Please highlight any additional matters that you wish to raise from this year's Annual Monitoring cycle
• It would be helpful if the college proforma matched the questions asked within the annual monitoring forms.
• English language support and student welfare are recurring themes within annual monitoring.