University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 26 November 2021

Periodic Subject Review: Review of the School of Geographical & Earth Sciences (GES) held on 11 – 12 March 2021

Mrs Irene Bruce, Clerk to the Review Panel

Review Panel

Convener	Professor Neal Juster
External Subject Specialist, University of Plymouth	Professor Anne Mather
External Subject Specialist. University of Liverpool	Professor Mark Boyle
Student Representative Council (SRC)	Ms Sharlotte Green
Cognate Member	Professor Scott Roy
Elected Member from the University Court	Professor Simon Kennedy
Academic and Digital Development (ADD), Academic Services	Dr Vicki Dale
Clerk	Mrs Irene Bruce, Senate Office

1. OUTCOME

1.1 The Panel **confirmed** there were no concerns regarding the academic standards of programmes delivered by the School of Geographical and Earth Sciences and recommended the validation of all programmes for a further six years.

1.2 The Panel **confirmed** that nothing was raised as a concern during the PSR that had not already been identified by the School in their Reflective Analysis.

1.3 The Panel **confirmed** the School had a transparent and academic governance and quality assurance structure which aligns to the University regulatory framework.

2. SUMMARY AND CONTEXT

2.1 The School of Geographical and Earth Sciences (GES) is one of seven Schools within the College of Science and Engineering which is one of four colleges within the University. The previous GES Periodic Subject Review (PSR) was undertaken in February 2015. The Panel were satisfied with the information provided by the School and noted the significant progress made on recommendations from the previous PSR. The Panel also noted the commitment to ongoing enhancement in relation to the continued focus on the development of the student experience ensuring their graduates are equipped for the future.

2.2 The Convener confirmed the Panel had no authority for allocating resources however the expectation is that solutions to some of the recommendations in this report will be provided in collaboration with key University central professional support services as required and may have wider resource implications.

2.3 The Convener confirmed the PSR was taking place in the context of the Global Pandemic which had resulted in teaching and learning moving online and staff and students working remotely. This was also the first fully online PSR undertaken by the University. While the focus of the review was on progress made since the previous

PSR in 2015, the PSR was heavily influenced by the impact of Covid restrictions on the student and staff experiences of the last twelve months.

2.4   The Panel noted that GES established effective methods of monitoring the impact of the Covid pandemic during the first few months by more regular meetings of the School Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) in particular and established a Flexible Learning and Teaching team with responsibility for the oversight of moving the teaching and learning on line and acknowledged that this would have been a time consuming and stressful period for the School community. The Panel **commended t**he School on the effort and approach taken.

Staff and Student Participation

2.5   The Panel met staff from across the School including those in leadership roles, key academic roles, early career academics, graduate teaching assistants, professional and support staff and technicians. The Panel met with undergraduate and postgraduate students and had access to a virtual tour of the facilities. Comments made by staff and students were supportive and constructive and demonstrated the culture within GES was innovative, inclusive and supportive.

School Preparation for PSR

2.6   The Reflective Analysis (RA) was drafted and co-ordinated on behalf of the School by the Head of School, Director of Learning and Teaching and the Head of School Administration. The Convener acknowledged the time taken to prepare for the PSR and the impact this had on the School and workloads during this particularly challenging year.

Student and Staff Numbers and Profile

2.7   The RA confirmed the School had a total of 716 students (578 FTE) of this 590 UG (468FTE) and 126 PG (86FTE). The information provided at the time of the PSR did not fully include January enrolments.

2.8   The School has 68 teaching staff FTEs with two further appointments outstanding at the time of the review.

2.9   The Panel noted the diversity of the staff and student profile which was inclusive with respect to age, gender and background and were confident the School demonstrated a transparent commitment to the University Equality and Diversity Strategy.

2.10   The Panel noted a high progression rate (95%) and that any variation from this was due to students moving to subjects not previously experienced in high school or college.

3.   OVERVIEW

3.1   STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Panel **commended** the School for its collegiate and strategic approach to enhancement. There was evidence in discussions with staff and students that the motto "be part of the solution" had developed a strong sense of community within the School.

3.2   The Panel **commended** the School on the significant progress made against the recommendations made from the previous PSR in 2015. It was evident that the School had built on their strong and productive relationship between students and staff and that this approach still underpins the enhancement of the student experience. Interviews with staff and students confirmed the School had a cohesive approach to enhancement and that the School prioritises research-informed teaching at both UG and PG level.

3.3   The Panel **commended** the School for having an effective strategy which demonstrated an understanding of the growing and changing national and international job market and global societal needs. Pedagogy is underpinned by a productive blend of critical and liberal arts and career connected training focused on remediating global public problems.

3.4   The Panel noted that learning and teaching in GES is organised, monitored and managed under a single management structure and that the inclusion of GTAs in the School Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) demonstrates a transparent and inclusive approach to strategic development.

3.5   The Panel noted the Schools Athena Swan Silver Award and congratulated the school on its commitment to equality and diversity.

Strategy and Resources

3.6   The panel noted the effective marketing and recruitment activities which included a targeted marketing campaign to support recruitment of women to the new Environmental Geoscience and Geology programmes. The panel **recommends** the School continues to build on the successful partnership with the College of Science and Engineering External Relations team in marketing the School to prospective students.

3.7   Following a period of significant curriculum development, The Panel **recommends** the school continues to review the portfolio with a view to maximising the effectiveness and efficiency of resources to maintain the SSR. Striking the right balance between consolidation and growth will require ongoing reflection and consideration. If capacity emerges, further growth of the taught postgraduate offer might include a focus on urban regeneration and urban analytics (exploiting links with Urban Studies). The School should also take the opportunity to reflect on the experiential learning opportunities created during the pandemic with a view to embedding good practice, while consolidating their portfolio ambitions. An example of which was the modification of active learning to accommodate online delivery in 2020 when students were given a variety of ways to interact to complete the activity with approaches which focused on individual learning, cooperative learning and collaborative learning. The students were given access to a variety of platforms such as Blackboard, Onenote, Padlet and Microsoft Teams and were supported with some the projects by Graduate Teaching Assistants to help keep track of learning objectives. This approach to learning helped the students develop time management, active listening, problem solving, communication and presentation skills.

3.8   Outstanding programmes require outstanding scholarly communities and propinquity on campus is centrally implicated in community building, the panel noted comments regarding the physical space and estate used by GES and **recommends** the School continues to work with University central estates services to help inform future estate needs. The School is encouraged to identify a pipeline of infrastructure priorities to ensure that resource requests are appropriately targeted.

3.9   To maximise the sharing of institutional knowledge and inform future staff development needs, the Panel **recommends** the School should look to develop transparent succession planning and to build in capacity around roles to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of resources by removing single points of failure. This should include the roles that support the academic committee and governance framework to ensure a more effective and evidential trail to capture learning and programme development and record more explicitly decisions made at key committees (for example, Learning and Teaching Committee and Student Staff Liaison Committee).

3.10 The panel **recommends** the School Executive continues to develop the workload allocation model to help manage resources and look at ways of communicating the understanding and benefits of using this model for planning purposes.

Early Career Research Academic Staff

3.11 It was noted that all ECRs were mentored by senior colleagues and that performance was monitored through the annual PDR process. The Panel acknowledged this as **good practice.** The Panel **recommended** that additional time should be allocated to ECRs in the workload allocation model (recently introduced by the School) to ensure they are given appropriate time to complete the mandatory Post Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) and to develop independent research programmes. The panel were satisfied that processes were in place to allow ECRs to contribute and influence portfolio development.

Graduate Teaching Assistants

3.12 The Panel noted as **good practice** the support provided by the School for GTAs. They were supported by a group of designated staff, in terms of induction, training and mentoring and that this was supported by resources including an annual induction programme, a GTA Handbook and various online training resources and that this approach had been recognised and adopted by the University.

4. LEARNING, TEACHING AND ENHANCEMENT

4.1 The Panel **commended** the School for receiving a very high percentage of nominations for teaching excellence from the SRC Student Teaching Awards, including innovative teaching, which demonstrates the commitment to innovation and enhancement of learning and teaching. The Panel also noted the School takes a proactive approach to cross disciplinary work across the College and wider University.

4.2 The panel **commended** the School for its high NSS scores including 100% and 98% student satisfaction for Geology and Human Geography, respectively, in 2020 and were top in the UK. Most of the scores for assessment and feedback were above the University target. The panel also noted the continued high league tables which consistently rank GES subjects in the UK top 10%. The Panel **recommends** the School looks at ways to share good practice identified for student satisfaction (in Geology and Human Geography), across all the subject groups to ensure consistency.

Strategic Development of Learning and Teaching Plan

4.3 The Panel were impressed by the approach taken by GES to develop its learning and teaching plan and vision as part of the strategic planning process. The strong links between the School plan and the College plan was evident and the Panel were satisfied with the alignment to University priorities including research-led teaching, active and blended learning, widening participation, assessment and feedback innovation and sharing good practice. The Panel also noted the development of the strategy had been achieved in consultation with the students and staff via workshops and away-days. It was also evident that GES follows the recommendations and guidance within the University Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy (2020). This inclusive approach should be recognised as **Good Practice.**

4.4 The panel were satisfied with the plans in place to review the effectiveness and efficiency in teaching practices and supporting technologies and noted the programme of events included an away day as a forum for sharing good practice and various events with commerce and industry.

Curriculum Review and Development

4.5 The Panel **commends** the School on the review and development of the portfolio and the collaborative approach taken during this development. Working in partnership with

students, alumni, employers and industry bodies had resulted in an adaptable portfolio which provided opportunities for interdisciplinary working and demonstrated a knowledge and commitment to the ever changing global challenges. The Panel **recommends** the school continues to reflect on these changes and to embed any lessons learned during the pandemic year to further enhance the provision.

Enhanced Technology and working remotely

4.6   The Panel noted as **good practice** the creation of a small working group to support the move to online learning as part of managing COVID government imposed restrictions relating to home working.

4.7   The panel noted that the School continued to underpin their teaching philosophy and active learning ethos as teaching and learning moved to online delivery. The focus on individual learning, cooperative learning and collaborative learning remained the priority. With the introduction of online learning, the School had made enhanced use of learning technologies including Mentimeter, Slido, Moodle, Teams and Zoom. Students have access to external providers and industry specific software which enhances their skill set and competitiveness in the future job market. The panel noted this as **good practice.**

4.8   Students confirmed they found the online and pre-recorded lecturers posted on Moodle helpful. The panel noted that some lecturing staff held more informal discussions at the end of formal lectures which students suggested helped build a sense of community.

4.9   Staff and students confirmed that the delivery of practical based lab group work and field trips was more difficult to replicate online and suggested these need to return to face to face and on campus delivery when the pandemic restrictions are lifted. The panel endorsed this suggestion.

4.10 All students interviewed, including international students, confirmed the University had provided good support for working remotely. Issues arising were dealt with by either GES staff or University IT services. The Panel **recommends** the School reflects on lessons learned from this year as it could inform the future development of online programmes to support the strategic ambition to grow international student numbers.

Internationalisation and study Abroad

4.11 The Panel noted that students are actively encouraged to study abroad. Pre-Covid all UG students were offered an international experience through at least one field trip and the Panel noted that GES plan to reintroduce this post-Covid taking consideration of costs and carbon footprint. The School has an extensive network of international universities it works with to facilitate study abroad which it hopes to resume in 2021/22. GES also participates in the Erasmus exchange programme which will no longer be available post BREXIT. The panel noted discussions around alternative options are ongoing.

4.12 GES leads in the "Open Skies" programme with McGill University in Canada which is an ambitious initiative to share the best that the two institutions have to offer. This will include staff and student mobility and joint field work projects. This initiative was put on hold due to COVID. The panel noted that an online conference is planned to re-vitalise the teaching collaborations and **recommends** the School continue discussions post-Covid in order to maximise the potential of this relationship.

4.13 The panel noted that GES is a named School in a strategic partnership with the University of Minas Gerais in Brazil which included opportunities for student exchanges and field-classes which had been postponed due to pandemic restrictions.

Assessment and Feedback

4.14 The RA confirmed work had been ongoing since the previous PSR in 2015 and that this included the constructive alignment of assessment to Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO). Discussions with staff and students confirmed multiple methods of assessment were used across GES and that they made full use of the 22 point scale. Interviews with students suggested an inconsistency regarding the timing and content of feedback. The Panel **recommends** the School continues to work on the development of assessment and feedback to ensure they provide more consistent, constructive and timely feedback and that the timing of feedback is made explicit to students. The panel noted the introduction of a feedback template and would encourage the School to consider using this across all subjects as part of this recommendation.

External Engagement

4.15 Evidence presented confirmed that GES proactively engage and collaborate with employers, professional bodies, Alumni and other industry bodies to create and develop the portfolio. These relationships can also provide students with appropriate work experiences relevant to the changing job market. The recently established Industry Advisory Group whose initial focus is on the Geomatics PGT programmes is a good example of this collaboration.

4.16 The School successfully use Alumni as ambassadors and as part of their curriculum and portfolio development. The panel noted the concerns raised by some staff that the success of this approach is dependent on individual staff-alumnus relationships and would therefore **recommend** the School continues to collaborate with colleagues in the University Alumni Office to reduce this single point of failure by establishing a more structured approach to managing these critical relationships. GES use international alumni as ambassadors for recruitment purposes which worked well in Nigeria and the Panel encourages GES to continue with their plans to broaden this approach globally.

Professional Accreditation

4.17 The panel noted that the School had a good working relationship with various professional bodies which accredited some of the degree programmes. It was also noted that GES staff were members of key professional body committees which provided them with an opportunity to influence.

Staff Development and Support

4.18 The Panel noted the positive commitment by GES to the continued development of staff. This included the use of mentors, networks and engagement with Academic and Digital Development (ADD) and that formal career progression routes are available to research and teaching (R&T) staff and learning and teaching (L&T) staff.

4.19 In the 2018 staff survey, the staff engagement score of 77%, which is 15 percentage points higher than the College of Science and Engineering average. The staff engagement score was formulated based on the survey section which encompasses four questions covering sense of belonging and levels of motivation along with pride in the University and the extent to which the University is recommended as a place to work. It demonstrates the staff commitment and emotional connection to working for the University and School. The Panel encourages the School to continue to develop this approach to participation and inclusion. Feedback from staff suggests a gap in development opportunities for mid-career academics and therefore the Panel **recommends** GES collaborate with colleagues in ADD and HR to establish appropriate development opportunities.

4.20 The Panel **recommends** the School should act on the suggestion raised in the staff survey that module biographies should be created – capturing the incremental

development of modules. Not only would this create a written record of the constant and reflective development of module content, delivery and assessment; in the context of staff turnover and staff development it would also create a backstory for new module leaders and would record module memory.

5.   THE STUDENT VOICE

Responding to student feedback

5.1   It was evident from the information presented and the interviews with staff and students that a number of processes were in place to obtain student feedback formally and informally. There was also evidence that the School had acted upon feedback to improve the student learning experience and that this was published on Moodle. However, the Panel noted that some inconsistencies were evident when closing feedback loops and recording these at formal committees such as the SSLC. The Panel **recommends** the School looks at its feedback mechanisms to ensure a consistent approach is taken and communicated to the student body. In addition, decisions and follow up action made at key governance committees (such as LTC and SSLC) should be recorded more explicitly.

5.2   The panel **recommends** the school collaborates with colleagues in staff development services/Organisational Development to introduce staff development for those supporting these committees and to ensure training is also given to anyone new to Convening or participating in committee work to ensure feedback is formally recorded at relevant committees.

Staff Student Partnerships

5.3   The panel were satisfied that the School had an effective, collaborative and transparent approach to working in partnership with the student body. This was evidenced in the development of new programmes, the learning and teaching strategy, and recruitment and marketing activities.

6.   SUPPORTING STUDENT WELLBEING

6.1   The Panel were satisfied with activities in place that demonstrated a good understanding of supporting student wellbeing. Examples include most academic staff acting as an Adviser of Study (AS) and an "open door" policy when working on campus. While working remotely during the pandemic this policy had been replaced by an online service.

6.2   There was evidence to confirm GES staff had an awareness of student mental health issues with 27 staff trained in mental health first aid. The School also encourages staff to attend various workshops including one on transgender awareness.

6.3   It was evident to the Panel that GES follows the recommendations in the University Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy (2020) for online, on campus and field trip activities and that further adjustments were made during the COVID emergency when students were working remotely.

Student Transition

6.4   The School operates a successful Geography and Earth Sciences Summer School for widening participating students with numbers increasing from 16 in 2016 to 43 in 2020. Students entering via this route are allocated a Senior AS.

6.5   The panel noted the outreach work undertaken by GES to engage with high schools as a way of helping students make the transition from school to University. This included engaging applicants via webinars and social media engagement by staff and student ambassadors. The panel **recommends** the School should continue working with

University central support services, including student learning services to facilitate further the outreach work they do and the transition from High School to University for first year students

6.6 The panel noted the external creative projects GES engaged with relating to "Girls into Geoscience" and "Working in Wellies" which brings together women from industry, academic and the wider community with a view to improving the gender balance in Geosciences. Working in Wellies is now embedded in the 2017 Governmental STEM Education and Training Strategy for Scotland and used by teachers to encourage pupils to consider a career in STEM subjects.

Student Communication

6.7 Feedback from the student groups suggested a lack of consistency with information in student handbooks and supporting information. The Panel **recommends** the School considers using a handbook template which would provide consistent generic information around assessment, learning outcomes and feedback protocols as well as subject relevant information. (A handbook template is available online via MyGlasgow-Senate Office-Quality Enhancement and Assurance – Course Programme Design and Approval – Central Guidance on Student Handbook).

Student learning support

6.8 The panel were satisfied that the School used and promoted a wide range of university services to their staff and students. They had established effective relationships with External Relations, Recruitment, the International Office and Student Learning Development (SLD). Representatives from the Library attended some GES meetings and staff from GES were members of the College IT committee.

6.9 The Panel **recommends** that all course handbooks and Moodle sites consistently and explicitly signpost students to SLD services, to ensure that all students (UG&PG) are aware of the opportunity to use this service to enhance their learning, effectiveness and assessment and feedback literacies.

7.   GOOD PRACTICE

7.1 The use of Alumni and the external professional community in the development of the curriculum and the establishment of the Industrial Advisory Committee.

7.2 The support provided to GTAs by way of a one day induction and mentoring programme which has been adopted by the University.

7.3 The proactive approach taken by the School to interdisciplinary working across the College of Science and Engineering and the wider University.

7.4 Sharing best practice at learning and teaching away-days, internal workshops and seminars.

7.5 Ensuring graduate attributes are aligned to the future working environment. For example by giving students exposure to commercial software and digital databases via their work experience or collaboration with external partners, teaching vital courses such as geography and pandemics, and including writing audiences beyond the academy.

7.6 Working collaboratively with the student body when developing new programmes.

7.7 The commitment to equality and diversity and social inclusion demonstrated in the approach to marketing and recruitment, outreach and transition and the support for student mental health and wellbeing.

7.8   The appointment of a School Learning and Teaching Administrator in 2016 has been transformative and it is clear that strategic investment in senior administration is a highly effective way of supporting academic staff, GTAs and students.

8.   COMMENDATIONS

8.1   The Panel **commended** the School on its commitment to reviewing its portfolio to ensure the inter-disciplinarity of the UG and PGT programmes is planned and designed to provide its students with the most competitive graduate attributes in a fast-changing world under the banner "be part of the solution".

8.2   The Panel **commended** the School on its approach to diversifying the portfolio in consultation with employers, alumni and students to meet the future needs of employers and the evolving national and international global priorities.

8.3   The Panel **commended** the School for expanding and recruiting to new programmes during a challenging national and international recruitment period.

8.4   The Panel **commended** the School on the extraordinary progress made since the last PSR in 2015 and meeting requested recommendations.

8.5   The Panel **commended** the School on its innovative approach to moving its programmes online, while at the same time creating a sense of community for the students studying remotely. Students interviewed confirmed that despite studying remotely (nationally and internationally) they still had a sense of belonging to the University of Glasgow.

8.6   The Panel **commended** the School for achieving outstanding NSS and league table improvements for assessment and student satisfaction and encourages the School to look at innovative ways of sharing this success across all subject groups in the portfolio.

8.7   The Panel **commended** the School on the training and induction programme for GTA's which has been adopted by the wider University.

8.8   The Panel **commends** the School for the work it is doing as part of the University's civic engagement programme – including its leadership of university wide modules on sustainable development.

	Section 3.1 Strategy for Development	Shared Enhancement Benefits	Attention in the School	Attention of University support service
1	The panel noted the effective marketing and recruitment activities which included a targeted marketing campaign to support recruitment of women to the new Environmental Geoscience and Geology programmes. The panel **recommends** the School continues to build on the successful partnership with the College of Science and Engineering External Relations team in marketing the School to prospective students. Ref: Section 3.6	Continuing to develop this approach (which was identified by the School) will help GES promote their embedded approach to working collaboratively to demonstrate a commitment to equality	Head of School Head of Administration School Executive	External Relations (CSE)
2	Following a period of significant curriculum development, The Panel **recommends** the school continues to review the portfolio with a view to maximising the effectiveness and efficiency of resources to maintain the SSR. Striking the right balance between consolidation and growth will require ongoing reflection and consideration. If capacity emerges, further growth of the taught postgraduate offer might include a focus on urban regeneration and urban analytics (exploiting links with Urban Studies). The School should also take the opportunity to reflect on the experiential learning opportunities created during the pandemic with a view to embedding good practice and while consolidating their portfolio ambitions. An example of which was the modification of active learning to accommodate online delivery in 2020 when students were given a variety of ways to interact to complete the activity with approaches which focused on individual learning, cooperative learning and collaborative learning. The students were given access to a variety of platforms such as Blackboard, Onenote, Padlet and Microsoft Teams and were supported with some the projects by Graduate Teaching Assistants to help keep track of learning objectives. This approach to learning helped the	Provides the Executive with the opportunity to review resources, maximise the potential for inter-disciplinary working and cross College working. The continuation of this activity (identified by GES) helps GES to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to innovation.	Head of School Head of Administration School Executive	Head of College College Deans of L&T and Quality

	students develop time management, active listening, problem solving, communication and presentation skills. Ref: Section 3.7			
3	Outstanding programmes require outstanding scholarly communities and propinquity on campus is centrally implicated in community building, the panel noted comments regarding the physical space and estate used by GES and **recommends** that the School continues to work with University central estates services to help inform future estate needs. The School is encouraged to identify a pipeline of infrastructure priorities to ensure that resource requests are appropriately targeted. Ref: Section 3.8	To demonstrate and develop a shared understanding between the school and the wider University support (estates) services.	Head of School School Executive	Head of Estates and Campus Services
4	To maximise the sharing of institutional knowledge and inform future staff development needs, the Panel **recommends** the School should look to develop transparent succession planning and to build in capacity around roles to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of resources by removing single points of failure. This should include the roles that support the academic committee and governance framework to ensure a more effective and evidential trail to capture learning and programme development and record more explicitly decisions made at key committees (for example, Learning and Teaching Committee and Student Staff Liaison Committee). Ref: Section 3.9	Protects school /institutional knowledge. Provides a local in-house staff development framework to support key decision making. Provides the school with the ability to proactively plan for contingency. Provides staff who are new to roles with support and guidance to maximise their contribution.	Head of School School Executive Head of Administration	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.
5	The Panel **recommends** the School executive should continue to develop the workload allocation model to help manage resources and look at ways of communicating the understanding and benefits of using this model for planning purposes.	To help build a broader understanding of the complexity and challenges of managing resources. Also provides the Executive with assurance that the school is	Head of School School Executive	Head of PIA

			Attention in the School	Attention of University support service
	Ref: Section 3.10	effectively managing the resources in line with the precepts of the SCQF		
6	It was noted that all ECRs were mentored by senior colleagues and that performance was monitored through the annual PDR process. The Panel acknowledged this as **good practice.** The Panel **recommended** that additional time should be allocated to ECRs in the workload allocation model (recently introduced by the School) to ensure they are given appropriate time to complete the mandatory Post Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) and to develop independent research programmes. The panel were satisfied that processes were in place to allow ECRs to contribute and influence portfolio development. Ref: Section 3.11	Will provide the executive with assurance that staff development opportunities are maximised as a way of developing the academic profile within GES.	Head of School School Executive	Head of ADD
	Section 3.2 Learning, Teaching and Enhancement	**Shared Enhancement Benefits**	**Attention in the School**	**Attention of University support service**
7	The panel **commended** the School for its high NSS scores including 100% and 98% student satisfaction for Geology and Human Geography, respectively, in 2020, and were top in the UK. Most of the scores for assessment and feedback were above the University target. The panel also noted the continued high league tables which consistently rank GES subjects in the UK top 10%. The Panel **recommends** the School looks at ways to share good practice identified for student satisfaction (in Geology and Human Geography), across all the subject groups to ensure consistency. Ref: Section 4.2	Sharing the good practice across the wider subject groups should help to increase NSS and league table rankings across the wider portfolio.	Head of School Head of Administration Dean, L& T Dean, Quality	
8	The Panel **commends** the School on the review and development of the portfolio and the collaborative approach taken during this development. Working in partnership with students, alumni, employers and industry bodies had resulted in an adaptable	Having already highlighted this activity as a development priority, GES can use this recommendation to further evidence its commitment to	Head of School Dean, L&T Dean, Quality	External Relations (for marketing and promotion)

	portfolio which provided opportunities for interdisciplinary working and demonstrated a knowledge and commitment to the ever changing global challenges. The Panel **recommends** the school continues to reflect on these changes and to embed any lessons learned during the pandemic year to further enhance the provision. Ref: Section 4.5	collaborative working with multiple stakeholders to inform curriculum development.	Head of Administration	
9	All students interviewed, including international students, confirmed the University had provided good support for working remotely. Issues arising were dealt with by either GES staff or University IT services. The Panel **recommends** the School reflects on lessons learned from this year as it could inform the future development of online programmes to support the strategic ambition to grow international student numbers. Section 4.10	Will provide the school with an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned during a challenging period and to maximise and/or develop future learning technologies.	Head of School Director of L&T School Executive	Head of ADD
10	GES leads in the "Open Skies" programme with McGill University in Canada which is an ambitious initiative to share the best that the two institutions have to offer. This will include staff and student mobility and joint field work projects. This initiative was put on hold due to COVID. The panel noted that an online conference is planned to re-vitalise the teaching collaborations and **recommends** the School continue discussions post-Covid in order to maximise the potential of this relationship. Section 4.12	Will provide GES with an opportunity to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to internationalisation and collaboration.	Head of School Dean L&T Dean Quality	
11	The RA confirmed work had been ongoing since the previous PSR in 2015 and that this included the constructive alignment of assessment to Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO). Discussions with staff and students confirmed multiple methods of assessment were used across GES and that they made full use of the 22 point scale. Interviews with students suggested an inconsistency	Using a template would provide an opportunity to reduce confusion and to evidence consistency of experience for the students.	Head of Administration Dean, L&T	

	regarding the timing and content of feedback. The Panel **recommends** the School continues to work on the development of assessment and feedback to ensure they provide more consistent, constructive and timely feedback and that the timing of feedback is made explicit to students. The panel noted the introduction of a feedback template and would encourage the School to consider using this across all subjects as part of this recommendation. Section 4.14				
12	The School successfully use Alumni as ambassadors and as part of their curriculum and portfolio development. The panel noted the concerns raised by some staff that the success of this approach is dependent on individual staff-alumnus relationships and would therefore **recommend** the School continues to collaborate with colleagues in the University Alumni Office to reduce this single point of failure by establishing a more structured approach to managing these critical relationships. GES use international alumni as ambassadors for recruitment purposes which worked well in Nigeria and the Panel encourages GES to continue with their plans to broaden this approach globally. Section 4.16	Provides further opportunities to demonstrate innovation and commitment to the enhancement of the student experience. Provides an opportunity to inform international strategic partnerships with opportunities for student and staff mobility.	Head of School School Executive	Alumni Office	
13	In the 2018 staff survey, the staff engagement score of 77%, which is 15 percentage points higher than the College of Science and Engineering average. The staff engagement score was formulated based on the survey section which encompasses four questions covering sense of belonging and levels of motivation along with pride in the University and the extent to which the University is recommended as a place to work. It demonstrates the staff commitment and emotional connection to working for the University and the School.	Maximise the development of staff and career opportunities. Develop the wider academic profile of GES	Head of Administration Head of School Director of L&T	Head of ADD	

				Attention of University support service
	The Panel encourages the School to continue to develop this approach to participation and inclusion. Feedback from staff suggests a gap in development opportunities for mid-career academics and therefore the Panel **recommends** GES collaborate with colleagues in ADD and HR to establish appropriate development opportunities. Ref: Section 4.19			
14	The Panel **recommends** the school to considers the suggestion raised in the staff survey that module biographies should be created – capturing the incremental development of modules. Not only would this create a written record of the constant and reflective development of module content, delivery, and assessment; in the context of staff turnover, it would also create a backstory for new module leaders and would record module memory. Ref: Section 4.20	Provides a forum/platform to share best practice and create evidence based information for future reporting and monitoring purposes. Also provides information to support induction for inexperienced staff or staff new to promoted posts.	Head of School Director of L&T Head of administration	
	Section 3.3 The Student Voice	**Shared Enhancement Benefits**	**Attention in the School**	**Attention of University support service**
15	It was evident from the information presented and the interviews with staff and students that a number of processes were in place to obtain student feedback formally and informally. There was also evidence that the School had acted upon feedback to improve the student learning experience and that this was published on Moodle. However, the Panel noted that some inconsistencies were evident when closing feedback loops and recording these at formal committees such as the SSLC. The Panel **recommends** the School looks at its feedback mechanisms to ensure a consistent approach is taken and communicated to the student body. In addition, decisions and follow up action made at key	Provides the school with evidence based information that can demonstrate their commitment to enhancing the student experience.	Director of L&T School Executive	

	governance committees (such as LTC and SSLC) should be recorded more explicitly. Ref: Section 5.1			
16	The panel **recommends** the school collaborates with colleagues in staff development services/Organisational Development to introduce staff development for those supporting these committees and to ensure training is also given to anyone new to Convening or participating in committee work to ensure feedback is formally recorded at relevant committees. Ref: Section 5.2	Will provide further staff development opportunities to staff. It maximises efficiency and effectiveness of the governance structures and provides GES with an evidence based records for future reporting purposes.	Head of School Head of Administration	Head of HR & Organisational Development
	Section 3.4 Supporting Student Wellbeing	**Shared Enhancement Benefits**	**Attention in the School**	**Attention of University support service**
17	The panel noted the outreach work undertaken by GES to engage with high schools as a way of helping students make the transition from school to University. This included engaging applicants via webinars and social media engagement by staff and student ambassadors. The panel **recommends** the School should continue working with University central support services, including student learning services to facilitate further the outreach work they do and the transition from High School to University for first year students. Ref: Section 6.5	Provides the school with an opportunity to broaden the understanding of the subjects across the school sector and also create a more explicit transition and induction plan for new Student.	School Executive	Director of External Relations
18	Feedback from the student groups suggested a lack of consistency with information in student handbooks and supporting information. The Panel **recommends** the School considers using a handbook template which would provide consistent generic information around assessment, learning outcomes and feedback protocols as well as subject relevant information. (A handbook template is	The School is encouraged to use the handbook template available online via MyGlasgow-Senate Office-Quality Enhancement and Assurance – Course Programme Design and	Head of Administration Dean, L&T	Senate Office

	available online via MyGlasgow-Senate Office-Quality Enhancement and Assurance – Course Programme Design and Approval – Central Guidance on Student Handbook). Ref: Section 6.7	Approval – Central Guidance on Student Handbook.		
19	The Panel **recommends** that all course handbooks and Moodle sites consistently and explicitly signpost students to SLD services, to ensure that all students (UG&PG) are aware of the opportunity to use this service to enhance their learning, effectiveness and assessment and feedback literacies. Section 6.9	This will provide GES with assurance that students are fully supported at local, college and university level.	Head of School Head of Admin Dean L&T	Student Learning Services.