



## Periodic Subject Review (PSR)

### Review of the School of Education held on 19 and 20 March 2018

#### Report Summary

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The following is a brief summary of the full report of the review carried out in the School of Education. *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\\_613783\\_en.pdf](https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_613783_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.

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#### Conclusions

The Review Panel was impressed by the School of Education's strong commitment to the Partnership Model of Teacher Education and its collaboration with local authorities and schools. Similarly, the Panel was impressed by the School's commitment to both research and teaching through the Research and Teaching Groups. The School has developed a broad definition of education and offers a wide range of programmes which involve close liaison with external professional bodies and external partners and agencies, and there is much to be admired here. However, the Review Panel was concerned that there was an insufficiently clear vision for the future, together with some processes that required revision as outlined in the following recommendations.

#### Commendations, Key Strengths and Good Practice<sup>1</sup>

Commendations are practices identified as innovative and exemplary activities for potentially wider dissemination.
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<sup>1</sup> Numbers refer to the paragraphs in the full report that contain the relevant discussion.

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Equality and Diversity**

Procedures in place for reporting and providing support for students with disabilities. [Paragraph 3.1.7]

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

#### **Strategic approach to Enhancing Learning and Teaching**

- The School's Partnership Model of Teacher Education, working in collaboration with schools and local authorities [Paragraph 2.4.1]

#### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Equality and Diversity**

- Gender Action Plan [Paragraph 3.1.7]

#### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Graduate Attributes**

- Employability Conference [Paragraph 3.2.7]

#### **Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Support for staff**

- Support and training for Associate Tutors and Teaching Specialists
- Support and Training for Early Career Staff
- Leadership programmes

#### **Areas to be improved or enhanced**

The Review Panel identified the following areas as opportunities for improvement.

- Develop a more coherent and strategic long-term vision in terms of international excellence and recognition;
- Review the processes for school placements to ensure a more consistent experience for all students;
- Review and rationalise the wide-ranging *Postgraduate Taught (PGT)* provision to address issues related to staffing and the workload model;
- Review processes for Student Representation;
- Review Research and Teaching Groups to ensure that the membership criteria are coherent and that reporting structures are robust.

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.

### **Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Learning and Teaching Space**

- Central Timetabling should urgently review the allocation of rooms for the School of Education, in collaboration with the School, to reduce the negative impact on the student and staff experience. [Paragraph 4.3.3]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Admissions - UG**

- In view of the difficulties identified with regard to enrolment, outline a plan as to the future of both UG and PGT numbers together with a plan to review the initiatives in place and to increase UG applicant numbers to meet the *Scottish Funding Council (SFC)* targets. [Paragraph 3.1.1]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Placements**

- Review and reinforce current placement processes to ensure more parity in the level of support and communication provided to students. [Paragraph 3.2.2]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Social interaction**

- Consider offering more frequent social events and strongly encourage/facilitate both undergraduate and postgraduate students to establish their own forums and societies. [Paragraph 3.2.3]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Handbooks**

- Review all handbooks to ensure consistent information is presented to students. [Paragraph 3.2.4]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Student Feedback Mechanisms**

- Review student representation and committee processes to ensure full functionality, and to ensure feedback loops are closed and students informed of actions resulting from these consultations. The School should ensure that all students are made aware of the class representative system and encourage class representatives to engage with the students and to utilise the MyClassRep online system. [Paragraph 3.3.3]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Group Supervision for Masters Dissertation**

- Review the current system of dissertation supervision to ascertain if a more acceptable and workable form of supervision can be identified. [Paragraph 3.1.4]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Postgraduate Students**

- Review assessment and feedback provision to ensure consistency of policy and the provision of *formative* feedback to all PGT students. [Paragraph 3.2.6]

### **Enhancing the Student Experience: Graduate Attributes**

- Highlight *Graduate Attributes* more explicitly in documentation and with students. [Paragraph 3.2.7]

### **Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)**

- Review the training and support of GTAs. [Paragraph 4.3.8]

### **Strategic Approach to Enhancing Learning and Teaching**

- Clearly articulate its vision for the next five years, building on the School's commitment to social justice and its aspiration to be a world leader. The School should identify exactly what is required for the School to be distinctive in a world market, building on its undoubted existing strengths. *[Paragraph 2.4.1]*

### **Context and Strategy: Postgraduate provision**

- Undertake a rationalisation exercise on the Postgraduate (PGT) provision to streamline to a manageable level, enabling the School to focus on delivering high quality teaching in focused areas. *[Paragraph 2.4.2]*

### **Context and Strategy: Research and Teaching Groups (RTGs)**

- Formalises the reporting structure of the RTGs to ensure there is a record of any issues discussed and resolved that can be made available to share across the RTGs. In addition, reporting between RTGs and other School committees should be clarified. *[Paragraph 2.4.3]*

### **Enhancement in Learning and Teaching: Workload Model**

- Undertake a review of the current *workload model* to ensure that staff are allocated appropriate time to undertake their duties and to ensure that students experience parity in the level of support provided throughout their placements. *[Paragraph 4.3.2]*

## *Glossary*

### **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.

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant or GTAs**

Graduate Teaching Assistants, Tutors and Laboratory Demonstrators are students, usually research students, who assist with teaching in the form of tutorials, labs and other activities that are part of undergraduate programmes in the subject/school. They are paid an hourly rate by the University.

### **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.

### **Postgraduate Taught or PGT**

Postgraduate Taught refers to taught programmes at postgraduate level, usually Masters.

### **Scottish Funding Council**

Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is the body in Scotland that distributes funding from the [Scottish Government](#) to the country's colleges and universities.

### **Workload Model (Staff)**

A workload model is a means of describing the workload of all members of staff and should be used by Schools to ensure that staff workloads are manageable and allocated fairly with different types of work appropriately distributed.