



Departmental Programmes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (DPTLA)

Review of Department of English Literature: Monday 16 and Tuesday 17 March 2009

Report Summary

The following is a brief summary of the full report of the review carried out in the Department of English Literature. Reviews of *Departmental Programmes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment* (DPTLA) are internal subject reviews 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:

http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_125474_en.pdf

Further information about the *DPTLA* process can be found at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/gae/dptla/>

Italicised words are explained in a glossary below.

Conclusions

The Review Panel was impressed with the leadership of English Literature by the Head of Department, the collegiality of the Department's staff, the quality of support to *Graduate Teaching Assistants* (GTAs) and above all, to the students. The students who met with the Panel were enthusiastic about their learning and spoke highly of the Department. The *GTAs* echoed this and displayed a great passion for their subject and the Department. There was strong evidence of energy and enthusiasm at all levels.

The Department demonstrated that it had made significant progress since the previous departmental Review in March 2003, with an impressive array of strengths and self-awareness of areas in which it wished to improve. The most substantive of these are reflected in the recommendations that follow.

Key Strengths

- The departmental ethos of collegiality, energy and enthusiasm under the effective leadership of the Head of Department
- The level of contact and support provided to applicants prior to entry;
- The high levels of student attendance and *retention*
- The breadth of courses in the honours provision, and the emphasis on pre-1800 literature giving the Department a distinctive "trademark"
- The extra curricular provision

- The formal *Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)* interviews and level of support provided for GTAs

Areas to be improved or enhanced¹

1. Assessment, Feedback and Achievement

- a) Review departmental policy on the provision of feedback to students to ensure that a clear and consistent process exists across all programmes. The process should address, amongst other things, a strengthening of feedback for postgraduate students after week 3 of the first semester. The Department should ensure that the agreed policy is communicated to all relevant parties and its effectiveness monitored at all levels. [Paragraph 3.3.5]
- b) Report departmental experiences of the new academic year structure to the Convener of the Academic Structures Implementation Group. [Paragraph 3.3.9]
- c) Liaise with the *International and Postgraduate Service (IPS)* about the late arrival of *Erasmus* students to minimise any potential for their being disadvantaged. [Paragraph 3.3.9]
- d) Review the Faculty's *Examination Board* procedures to ensure consistent practice across all departments. [Paragraph 3.3.10]

2. Curriculum Design, Development and Content

- a) Review the Honours provision by considering the introduction of literary theory based lectures in Level 1 and inclusion of the study of an anthology of individual poets. [Paragraph 3.4.1]
- b) Ensure that all students are fully informed about requirements for dissertations, particularly the relevant timescales and arrangements for support, and that students are kept informed should these be subject to delay. [Paragraph 3.4.5]
- c) Review arrangements for postgraduate seminars to ensure that part-time students are not excluded, even if this requires repeating the seminars. [Paragraph 3.4.7]

3. Student Progression, Retention and Support

- a) Provides reading lists and timetables to *Postgraduate Taught (PGT)* students in advance of the start of their programme. [Paragraph 3.6.3]

4. Resources for Learning and Teaching

- a) The University reviews its position on the provision of janitorial staff to ensure that desirable out of hours teaching opportunities are not jeopardised. [Paragraph 3.8.2]
- b) Take steps to standardise the provision of Audio Visual (AV) equipment in its seminar rooms, for example, by making a strategic application to the Faculty Technical Committee. [Paragraph 3.8.3]

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

- c) Discuss with the University Library the adequacy of provision of secondary texts and that the Department considers placing extracts of relevant texts on Moodle as well as providing on-line access to those DVDs currently available for hire. [Paragraph 3.8.4]
- d) Make specific reference to the role of the Departmental Disability Coordinator in the workload model. [Paragraph 3.8.6]
- e) Clearly formalise the staff mentoring arrangements already in place and take steps to ensure that all parties are aware of their relevant roles and responsibilities. [Paragraph 3.8.13]
- f) Continue the revision of all documentation intended for students and ensures adequate reference to *Intended Learning Outcomes* (ILOs) and compatibility of the style and content with the target readership. Students should be consulted as an integral part of the revision process. [Paragraph 3.8.17]

5. Assuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Student Learning Experience

- a) Ensure full compliance with *Annual Course Monitoring* requirements for all courses. [Paragraph 4.1.1]
- b) Introduce formal feedback mechanisms for undergraduate students on the performance of the *GTAs*. [Paragraph 3.8.10]

Glossary of terms/acronyms used

Annual Monitoring (of courses)

Annual Monitoring is a process undertaken at the end of each session by Course or Programme Leaders designed to encourage reflection on the operation of course and programmes – what went right, what could be improved, what students did and didn't like etc. – with a view to enhancing the student experience next year. The work done by the course or programme leaders is followed by a full reporting process through Departments and Faculties to Senate, with responses being made, as appropriate, at each level. The reporting procedure is designed to ensure that issues arising from monitoring are properly considered and responded to, and that enhancements and the sharing of good practice are promoted. Annual monitoring reports are reviewed by DPTLA Panels as part of the documentation provided by the Department.

Audio Visual or AV

Audio visual facilities include: data projector linked to a computer; slide projectors; CD and DVD players; infra-red hearing systems; wireless lapels and handheld microphones.

Departmental Programmes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment or DPTLA

The University has a six yearly cycle of review of the departments within it. The DPTLA is one of the main ways by which the University assures itself of the quality of the provision delivered by departments.

Erasmus

Erasmus is a European Commission exchange programme that enables students in 31 European countries to study for part of their degree in another country. The Erasmus programme is available to current students at the University of Glasgow who would like to study at an exchange-partner university in Europe. The University of Glasgow has exchange agreements with around 250 universities throughout Europe.

Examination Board

A formal meeting of internal and external examiners to consider and confirm the allocation of grades awarded

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 department. They are paid an hourly rate by the University.

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.

International and Postgraduate Service or IPS

The International and Postgraduate Service provides applicants, parents and teachers with a single point of contact for information and advice on the range of programmes available at the University of Glasgow. .Nb The Recruitment, Admissions & Participation Service (RAPS) and IPS were brought together to create one overarching team in December 2008; the Recruitment and International Office (RIO) is situated in the Fraser Building.

Moodle

Moodle is the University's supported virtual learning environment (VLE).

Postgraduate Taught or PGT

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

Programme Specifications

Programme specifications are documents that aim to provide the core factual information about a programme of study to a range of stakeholders, including students or potential students, e.g. Level of award, number of credits, programme aims, intended learning outcomes, etc.

Retention

Retention refers to the continuation and progression of a student at the University of Glasgow.