

## Departmental Programmes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (DPTLA)

### Review of Dental School: 25 and 26 March 2010

## Report Summary

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The following is a brief summary of the full report of the review carried out in the Dental School. 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\\_173366\\_en.pdf](http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_173366_en.pdf)

Further information about the DPTLA process can be found at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/gea/psr/>

*Italicised* words are explained in a glossary below.

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## Conclusions

The Review Panel was impressed with the exemplary leadership provided by the Head of School; the commitment of Senior Management; the collegiate environment engendered by the close staff interactions in the School; the stringent selection and admissions system; the *widening participation* programmes *SWAPWest* and *GOALS*; the excellent student support system including, but not limited to, pastoral support – a system which extends from admission to graduation; the focus on personal development of students, in particular reflective learning as well as the core business of professional competency.

The Dental School has undergone a period of significant change since the last internal review, resulting in the successful implementation of a completely revised, fully integrated BDS curriculum. Added to this, a range of new postgraduate programmes have been launched and the Dental School has been reorganised into four sections to support and encourage interaction between research and teaching. The change has had considerable impact in terms of the student experience and research environment, as evidenced by the gains made in the Times Online Good University Guide ranking and *RAE 2008*.

The Dental School has demonstrated a number of strengths throughout the review process. The reflective approach to the review has also resulted in a well developed awareness and recognition of areas in which it could improve. The most substantial of these are reflected in the recommendations captured below.

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## Key Strengths

- Strong professional relationship that exists between students and staff;

- Collegiality of academic and administrative staff and overall sense of community and camaraderie;
- Student support mechanisms including support provided to students by secretarial staff;
- Transparency of its alignment of *Intended Learning Objectives* with teaching and assessment;
- Approach to feedback and assessment including use of *formative* assignments;
- Outreach placements consolidating student learning;
- Robust, rigorous and transparent admissions process;
- *Widening participation* practice achieved through *SWAPWest* and *GOALS*;
- Effective Management and impressive leadership through a period of substantial change;
- Management of the undergraduate learning experience;
- Integrative approach to review process;
- Exemplary *Self Evaluation Report* that was comprehensive, well written, evaluative and reflective;

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## Areas to be improved or enhanced<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Assessment, Feedback and Achievement

- a) The 'Dental School Strategy for improving Feedback to Students' to be monitored one year post review. [paragraph 3.3.8]

### 2. Resources for Learning and Teaching

- a) All Dental Students to be permitted access to the Wolfson Medical School Library, on a first come first served basis, from the start of the academic session 2010-11. [paragraph 3.8.11]
- b) Out of hours access to the library to be discussed with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, with a view to negotiating improved access for students. [paragraph 3.8.8]
- c) Student demand for access to PCs to be monitored. [paragraph 3.8.9]
- d) Provision of laptops for *Overseas* postgraduate taught students to be considered as part of the review of postgraduate programmes. [paragraph 3.8.10]

### 3. Student Progression, Retention and Support

- a) Course documents for *postgraduate taught* (PGT) programmes to clearly state that the Dental School Prayer Room would only be available during the lunchtime period. The University does provide alternative central prayer facilities. [paragraph 3.4.14]

### 4. Curriculum Design, Development and Content

- a) Work on risk assessment of elective placements, particularly in countries with high prevalence of blood borne viruses, to be continued. [paragraph 3.4.8]

### 5. Accommodation

- a) The poor condition of the Level 8 teaching space in the Dental School to be prioritised appropriately in the University's refurbishment programme for learning and teaching spaces. [paragraph 3.8.7]
- b) Work towards clarity on sources of funding for infrastructure improvements. [paragraph 3.8.6]

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<sup>1</sup> Numbers refer to the paragraphs in the full report that contain the relevant discussion.

## 6. Staffing

- a) Clear and attainable criteria for promotion from Senior Clinical Teacher to Chair to be discussed with Human Resources and the Vice Principal (Learning and Teaching). [paragraph 3.8.14]
- b) Staff *workload* allocation process to be more transparent. [paragraph 3.8.16]
- c) All *Graduate Teaching Assistants* to receive appropriate training. [paragraph 3.8.17]

## 7. Management

- a) *Service Level Agreements* with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (including those funded by *ACT* money) to be reviewed on an annual basis. [paragraph 3.8.3]
- b) The Head of College to reflect on whether the Head of the Dental School should have a seat on the College Management Group and/or whether the Dental School should become a formal School within the College after the new College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences has bedded down. [Conclusions]

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## Glossary of terms/acronyms used

### Additional Cost of Teaching (ACT)

Additional Cost of Teaching (Dental) (ACT [D]) and Additional Cost of Teaching Medical (Dental) (ACT M[D]) monies are received from the NHS to support delivery of the BDS curriculum.

### 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.

### 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.

### GOALS (Greater Opportunity of Access and Learning with Schools)

The University of Glasgow is a partner in the GOALS (Greater Opportunity of Access and Learning with Schools) programme - the largest university access project in Europe. It involves the higher education institutions and the majority of local authorities in the West of Scotland and concentrates on schools with low rates of participation in higher education. The University's main contribution to the GOALS Project is the Top-Up programme which has been designed to help senior school pupils from GOALS schools to make the transition from secondary school into higher education as smoothly as possible.

### 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.

## **Overseas student**

Generally, an overseas student is one who normally lives outwith the European Union. However, for the purposes of determining which level of tuition fee is payable, a more detailed definition is available from the International Office.

## **Postgraduate Taught or PGT**

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

## **RAE 2008 - Research Assessment Exercise**

The Research Assessment Exercise was conducted in Scotland by the Scottish Funding Council (other higher education bodies conduct the exercise in other parts of the UK). The primary purpose of the RAE is to produce quality profiles for research activity in institutions. These quality profiles are used to determine the funding for research awarded to the institutions.

## **Service Level Agreement**

A service level agreement is an agreement between two parties where one is providing a 'service' and the other is a 'customer' and defines what the service will consist of.

## **Self Evaluation Report**

A Self Evaluation Report is a document prepared by the Department in advance of a DPTLA Review. Its purpose is to provide the Review Panel with an insight into the Department's view of itself, its strengths and areas it would wish to develop. It is normally prepared by the Head of Department in conjunction with other staff but students should also be offered the opportunity to comment on whether or not it reflects the Department they know.

## **SWAPWest - Scottish Wider Access Programme**

SWAP is the Scottish Wider Access Programme. SWAPWest works in partnership with colleges and universities throughout the West of Scotland to provide routes into Higher Education for adults with few or no qualifications or whose qualifications are out-of-date. Successful completion of a SWAP Access Programme (usually based in a local college) can lead to a guaranteed place on an HN or degree course at a college or university.

## **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 Glasgow website.

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

## **Workload Model (Staff)**

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