

Periodic Subject Review (PSR)

Review of Celtic and Gaelic held on 15 February 2013

Report Summary

The following is a brief summary of the full report of the review carried out in the subject area of Celtic and Gaelic. *Periodic Subject Review* 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:

http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_295206_en.pdf

Further information about the PSR process can be found at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/gea/approvalmonitoringandreview/periodicsubjectreview/#tabs=3>

Italicised words are explained in a glossary below.

Conclusions

The Review Panel highly commends the Subject Area for the overall quality of its provision and the dedication of the staff team in providing a rewarding and supportive student environment. The research work of the Subject Area is also to be commended which provides a wide and varied range of courses for the students; however, the Panel had concerns regarding the high workload of some staff team members as a result of strategic research leave and the work-intensive assessment methods.

Key Strengths (Commendations)¹

1. Student Support

- the work undertaken by the Subject Area in providing a supportive Gaelic environment for the students. [paragraph 3.6.1]

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

2. Feedback

- the very rigorous and thorough marking procedures which provide thorough and extensive feedback to the students. [paragraph 3.3.4]

3. Curriculum Design, Development and Content

- the broad and impressive range of courses offered and the level of *research-led teaching* conducted by staff which allowed for diversity and flexibility within the Honours programme. [paragraph 3.4.1]
- the Subject Area enjoyed close teaching links with History and Archaeology and the Panel commends the interdisciplinary aspects of the curriculum. [paragraph 3.4.2]

4. Learning and Teaching Resources

- the high level of research activity that staff undertake and the Subject Area's commitment to Strategic Research Allocation, which apportioned individual staff members a semester of research leave every three to four years. [paragraph 3.8.1]
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Areas to be improved or enhanced

1. Student representation

- a *taught postgraduate* student representative should be appointed to the SSLC to ensure that there is parity in the representation of all students. [paragraph 5.5]

2. Assessment

- review the forms of assessment for Levels 1 and 2 to extend the range of assessments at Levels 1 and 2. [paragraph 3.3.2]
- clarify its policy in relation to the electronic submission of work and convey this clearly to the students. [paragraph 3.3.3]

3. Feedback

- review the submission dates for course work at Levels 1, 2 and Honours with a view to staggering these dates to alleviate the pressure on staff in providing feedback on such a large quantity of work. [paragraph 3.3.4]

4. Learning and Teaching Resources

- reflects on how to ensure that the Gaelic-speaking environment developed and nurtured by the Subject Area continues to be adequately supported particularly in view of the relocation of the office of the Gaelic-speaking administrator staff member. [paragraph 3.8.7]
- the Library should, in conjunction with the Subject Area, identify a more effective method for the classification of books in order that no books utilised by the Subject Area should be removed without their approval. [paragraph 3.8.6]
- the Head of School Administration discuss the use of room 202 with Estates and Buildings to identify how improvement in access could be made. [paragraph 3.8.9]

- review its handbooks for all courses to make them more consistent in terms of presentation of general student information. [paragraph 3.2]
- that the Subject Area reflect on the current research leave strategy in order to identify potentially difficult periods and to ensure that a relatively even balance between teaching commitments and research level is maintained for staff. [paragraph 3.8.1]

5. Curriculum Design, Development and Content

- explore options to promote the beginner's Gaelic class specifically to School of Modern Languages and Culture students. [paragraph 3.5.4]

6. Recruitment

- School of Humanities and *RIO* support the publication of a Gaelic-only leaflet outlining the programmes available in order to maximise the potential audience reached by the University. [paragraph 3.5.1]
- if there was no marked improvement in recruitment to the MLitt Celtic Studies for entry in 2013/14, the Subject Area should review the programme. [paragraph 3.5.5]

Glossary of terms/acronyms used

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.

Recruitment and International Office (RIO)

The Recruitment and International Office (RIO) 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. The Service also develop, implement, co-ordinate and monitors widening participation initiatives within the University and with other partners. The Recruitment and International Office (RIO) is situated in the Fraser Building.

Research-led Teaching

Research-led Teaching can mean different things in different disciplines. Broadly speaking, the term refers to the ways that the current research of staff can positively influence and support student learning and promote the development of research skills and attributes in students.

Staff:Student Liaison Committee or SSLCs

Staff:Student Liaison Committees are Subject/School committees which provide a formal opportunity for Student Representatives to discuss matters with, and give feedback to their subject area.