



Centre for Alternative Technology

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Plan 2022-23 – July 2022 Update

The COVID pandemic continued its significant impacts upon the Graduate School and its activities with onsite teaching only returning in mid-2022, and there remains the potential for further impacts in 2022-23. Focus has to recently been moved back to a blended learning approach but with a backup of returning to delivering an entirely online quality student experience.

Previous plans for enhancement typically remained on hold as the success indicators often became redundant as the academic environment and context was completely different to what was expected. Some planned enhancements to distance learning were developed more rapidly, whilst other indicators such as student careers opportunities were effectively immeasurable against wider unemployment levels. This QAP/QEP builds upon the lessons, challenges and developments of the previous 30 months, and recent successful QAA and UEL partnership reviews.

<u>1 Findings</u>	<u>2 Actions to be Taken</u>	<u>3 Date for Completion</u>	<u>4 Action By</u>	<u>5 Success Indicators</u>	<u>6 Progress Measures</u>
Features of Good Practice					
The innovative design and development of adaptable programmes that provide a wide range of, practical and professional skills and	Keep courses up to date by: CPD, conferences	Ongoing	Head of School (HoS) and Programme Leaders (PLs)	Partner universities continue to validate courses	Successful re-validation by UEL in 2022. UEL courses rationalised to avoid over duplication within programmes and provide

academic rigour for students that are aligned with the Centre's mission and values	Run twice yearly allocation of Continuing Professional Development budget	Biannual	Chair of CPD allocation panel	Number of conferences and CPD courses attended	additional focus to programmes New MRes validated for delivery from 2023 (2020 LJMU re-validated SFNR) Continued and more diverse range of CPD applications (2020 4 funded CPD applications) (2021 3 funded CPD applications) NB fewer CPD activities were available during pandemic period
	HEA accreditation for staff	Ongoing	HoS and Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching UEL	UEL admit CAT staff to HEA programme	Additional CAT academics enrol upon and achieve HEA accreditation – 2020-22 initiative cancelled due to COVID – UEL staff could not attend. Restart process in 2022-3. Discussions with UEL during partnership review process can commence autumn/winter 2022. Access to HEA process may also be extended to SSOs
	Peer observation and review	Ongoing	HoS / PL and academic staff	Review peer observation at academic council	Improved professional skills of academics

Well-organised and flexible learning experience that enhances the provision of learning opportunities for students	Continue to recognise and respond to the fact that no single learning approach can meet the needs of all students Provide variety of learning approaches - consider more flexibility in teaching session durations and intersperse any long didactic content delivery with more interaction. Guest lecturers will be encouraged to also consider activities to run engagement activities or provide breaks during delivery. .Update IT and create feedback database	Ongoing	PLs / academic staff	Student feedback proves student needs are being met	Ongoing – monitor student feedback
		Sept 2022 and ongoing	Module Leaders	Adjustments made to online delivery timetables	Delivery changes delivered modules from Sept 2021. Good practice to continue throughout 2022 particularly in induction sessions
		Jan 2022 Complete	SSM	Searchable feedback database	Additional use of more extensive feedback database to support course

					enhancement. Enhancement dashboard now available on Teams for staff and students
The recognition of individual student capacities and the availability of specialist resources that support their academic, personal and professional development	Continue the equivalent of the National Student Survey for GSE students Consider separating responses by MArch and MSc programmes subject to response rate Consider improved access to specialist journals and resources following changes to remote access from UEL and LJMU	July / August 2022	Student Support Manager (SSM)	Survey data analysed and repeat surveys show improved student satisfaction Student satisfaction shows improvement across programmes	End of year Survey issued in July 2022 Sufficient feedback received to allow detailed appraisal of feedback by programme
		Complete	HoS	Engage with JISC to consider remote access alternatives. Also support from library staff at LJMU for student alternatives to existing - complete	Student support sessions to be delivered by library staff at UEL / LJMU – annual ongoing activity
		Summer 2023	Module Leaders and Academic Staff	Consider module reading lists in light of changes to access. Completed but ongoing as new	Revised module reading lists for new modules throughout 2022 and ongoing

	Onsite library / quiet space for working	Complete	HoS	literature released online Site redevelopment to include quiet space working / library facilities	Space identified for quiet working / library. Garden Room Annex refurbished – Book and journal collection requires cataloguing. consider options for new library support technician Purchase hard copies of core texts for library Outline plans for training facilities included in options appraisal for site redevelopment. –
	Site Masterplan redevelopments	Ongoing	CAT SMT and Eco-centre Manager /	New flexible training facilities planned as part of site masterplan. Outline plan completed by external consultants includes additional training facilities and accommodation	Support fund raising activities for planned redevelopment. Encourage continued staff and student engagement with staged redevelopment.
Review Curriculum content	Following UEL review 2022 and amendments to	Sept 2022 and ongoing	PLs / Academic Staff	Successful delivery of new programmes	improved student engagement and

	<p>LJMU modules review success of introduction of new modules / programmes</p> <p>Use metrics such as assessment outcomes to support assessment module quality outcomes</p> <p>Ensure greater internationalisation of curricula</p>	<p>Summer 2022</p> <p>ongoing</p>			<p>progression with new modules</p> <p>Demonstrable consistency across modules – support module action plans where issues identified.</p> <p>Introduction of overseas lecturers and/or international examples to all modules</p>
<p>The wide range of assessment activities including live projects that use bespoke resources to engage and challenge students</p>	<p>Continue to widen the range of opportunities for students to acquire practical skills and to expand capacities for analytical, critical</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>PLS</p>	<p>Positive Student feedback</p> <p>Feedback from external examiners</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Introduction of new assessments following course review</p>

	and creative thinking as an independent learner. Students will continue to be encouraged to undertake projects and pursue areas of interest outside of their specialist programme areas Expand on the range of learning opportunities for research led by applied research design module	Ongoing	PLs and module leaders	Positive student feedback	UEL and LJM U to review assessments in advance of setting work All modules now include a section on research and reflection on dissertation opportunities for students
	Introduce PT route to dissertation	Sept 2023		Additional students engagement with dissertation workshop and applied research design module students engagement with dissertation increases and outcomes improve	New research design module will deliver greater uptake with dissertation amongst student body Review PT student outcomes following new PT route

Improved coursework feedback	Introduce rubrics/effective methods for feedback consistency Ensure high achieving assessment also receives feedback to show areas for improvement	Ongoing 2022/3 academic year	PLs Academic Staff	Support from external examiners on assessment and feedback methods Improved student feedback	Internal and external moderation processes are already built into staff tasks Improvements in student assessment outcomes for all students
Student Outcomes / Leavers Survey HESA Outcomes survey	Review and repeat yearly graduate survey and use results to improve student learning experience and employability, and improve response rates. Prepare to Incorporate HESA survey from 2024	Ongoing	SSM/ Data Manager / HoS	Improved employability of students and changes in courses to reflect alumni experiences	Evaluate responses to Survey Sept 2022. Consider student career outcomes within curriculum development HESA requirement 2024
The strong community engagement that promotes an innovative and positive environment for all	Students meet personal tutors at least once each month (MARCH), and at least twice a	Annual report	PLs / HoS	Student feedback. Records of meetings with tutors	Offer is made – MSc monthly/bi-monthly. Engagement variable. Monitor centrally and improve engagement.

stakeholders in the strategic enhancement process	year (MSc). Programme Leaders monitor tutorial activities.			Academics to be more proactive with non-engaging students	Offer is made – MSc monthly/bi-monthly. Engagement currently variable – improved take up
	Students also have open access to Student Support Officers.	Ongoing	HoS/SSM	Student feedback. Notes of interactions	Open access inc. online but further consideration required for DL students (office hours / email)
	Continued use of external lecturers and employers and guest speakers, and opportunities	Ongoing	PLs and module leaders	Student feedback. Lists of external lectures and employers used	Ongoing – generally positive feedback to external speakers. Delivery of teaching sessions live through Teams / Zoom has increased live interaction for DL students. Remote delivery potentially increases opportunities to engage external lecturers
	Students to influence directly the Centre’s plans for module and programme development through direct representation in major committees	Ongoing	HoS/Head of Eco Centre/Head of Development	Active student representation in all major GSE committees. Involve students in CAT development plans as key stakeholders	Site Development Plans ongoing subject to Capital Fundraising

	<p>Continue to create opportunities for student input to site development plans and activities</p> <p>Continue to seek and obtain student feedback at several times throughout the academic year</p>	Ongoing	HoS/PLs/SSM	<p>Development actively reflects student input – demonstrate student creativity where possible</p> <p>Feedback sought and actively responded to</p>	<p>Increased representation at Academic Council – 2022/23</p> <p>Receive end of module feedback, course committee and representation through student reps</p> <p>Increased use of feedback dashboard to demonstrate responses</p>
<u>2. Other Actions</u>					
Quality of Information	<p>Repeat annual audit process to ensure the continuing appropriateness of published materials</p> <p>all students have equal access to</p>	<p>October 2022 - ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>HoS/ GSMO/ SSM/ CAT data Officer</p> <p>HoS and SSOs</p>	<p>Accuracy of all public information</p> <p>Students use both CAT Teams VLE and</p>	<p>Completed during QAA review but Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Additional use of Microsoft Teams during shared</p>

	<p>their university-based VLEs</p> <p>Ensure student support information to cohort is of high quality. . Improved information about module timetables and differences between timetable options</p>	Ongoing	HoS/SSM/PLs	<p>university VLEs equally easily-</p> <p>Support external training opportunities for SSOs inc AFHEA</p> <p>Provide greater explanation of the online timetable options and the implications for study patterns on teaching, learning and assessment</p>	<p>modules allows for consistent information to all students</p> <p>Communications with students improved, measured through student feedback</p> <p>Greater student satisfaction and greater module performance from students selecting the module study pattern which best suits their personal circumstances</p>
Improved Induction	Ensure student awareness of teaching and learning approaches at CAT and mechanisms for teaching delivery	August/September 2022	SSOs/PLs / academic staff	Enhanced induction activities pre and on enrolment	<p>Production of module guides (video)</p> <p>More engagement with students at induction.</p> <p>Introduction to VLE</p>
Student Support options	Increase the level of student support for financial, health and family issues	Jan 2021 and ongoing	HoS and HR manager	Introduce confidential and professional external support organisation to support students.	Students have access to CAT employee assistance plan – telephone support system

		Complete		Monitor engagement on annual basis	Complete but continue to review in light of increased use of service
Enhancement Strategy	Continue effecting the CAT Student Learning and Enhancement Strategy Implementation Plan.	Ongoing	HoS	Academic Council agrees implementation	Ongoing process
Improve the learning experience for distance learning students	Continue using developments in Teams to enhance DL provision	Ongoing	Academic staff / SSos and IT department	Improved online engagement amongst students	Ongoing process
Widen the diversity of students on all programmes	Monitor the student diversity Review progression rates Extra resources provided to support recruitment from broader population of students	Ongoing	HoS / Graduate Marketing Support Officer (GMSO)	Broader diversity of students, progressing on courses	Additional applications and success from students with minority characteristics Diversity information included in CAM/CME reports Diversity of student intake on programmes largely consistent despite larger intake.

	Review documentation for unconscious bias Contribute to CAT EDI forum	Ongoing		New and revised policy documents checked for use of pronouns	Student led activities on diversity CAT re-launched staff diversity forum June 2022
Increase and widen the support for students with learning difficulties	Extra resources to be made available to support students	September 2022	HoS	Improved retention rates for students with learning difficulties	Develop new ALN strategy to support students including additional support with assessment
Develop stronger links with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)	Develop further PSRB links with programmes	Sept 2023	HoS / PLs	PSRB accredit programmes	Links developed for new courses. Progress made on accreditation
Create a strong alumni	Creation of formal alumni network	Spring 2023	HoS / PLs / GMSO	Creation of alumni network Alumni event to be held 2023	Numbers of ex-students engaging with the GSE and CAT. GSE students offered free CAT membership during study and for 1 year after graduation - complete Number of network opportunities available for student body with ex-students

Develop formal student engagement strategy	Creation of formal engagement strategy that enhances current enhancement strategy	Spring / Summer 2023	JoS	Meet recommendations of QAA review	Clearer policy on student engagement Lead to improvements on student engagement and progression
--	---	----------------------	-----	------------------------------------	--