

## Annual Programme Evaluations – Thematic & Good Practice Review 2016/17

### Executive Summary:

Each year a review of the quality, best practice and themes arising from Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) is conducted and reports made to Senate. This reporting forms part of our annual assurance process, supports the dissemination of good practice and enables oversight of the way in which strategic priorities are being implemented at programme level.

This report summarises the key observations from the thematic reviews for the 2016/17 academic year, together with areas of good practice noted by Associate Deans Education following a review of all APEs within their Schools.

The individual thematic reports were considered at the meeting of Educational Quality Committee in September 2018.

### Recommended Actions

Senate is asked to **note** the Thematic & Good Practice Summary Reports.

**Publication: Open**

## **Annual Programme Evaluations – Thematic & Good Practice Review 2016/17**

Each year a review of the quality, best practice and themes arising from Annual Programme Evaluation is conducted and a report made to Senate. This reporting forms part of our annual assurance process, supports the dissemination of good practice and enables oversight of the way in which strategic priorities are being implemented at programme level.

This is the third year we have used a thematic element to explore a particular area in more depth; the 2016/17 round element was 'Assessment Strategy' to help inform the undergraduate assessment review, and 'progression' to align to City's Vision and Strategy KPIs.

All Undergraduate Programme Directors were asked to provide information about the assessment strategy and ongoing/planned Progression Improvement initiatives as part of the Annual Programme Evaluations (APEs) for each programme.

This report summarises the key observations from the thematic reviews for 2016/17, together with areas of good practice noted by Associate Deans Education following a review of all APEs within their Schools. It focusses on the following areas:

- Undergraduate Annual Programme Evaluation – Assessment Thematic Review
- Undergraduate Annual Programme Evaluation – Progression Thematic Review
- Undergraduate & Postgraduate Annual Programme Evaluation - Good Practice Summary Report

Links are provided within this summary to each of the full reports listed above. The full reports provide further School level details and data.

### **Next Steps**

- As a result of the Assessment Thematic review Schools have been asked to identify two programmes for further development on either assessment or feedback. Students will be recruited in the Autumn term to engage in documenting the time they spend on their assessment preparation.
- The full Annual Programme Evaluation Good Practice Summary report considered by Educational Quality Committee will be disseminated at Learning and Teaching Committees for discussion and sharing of good practice within and across Schools. Additionally any good practice items which can be disseminated and utilised more broadly will be considered by the City Learning & Teaching Committee.

Georgia Moustaka  
Quality and Standards Officer (Quality and Academic Development, Student & Academic Services)

## **Undergraduate Annual Programme Evaluation – Assessment Thematic Review Summary**

*Full Report including programme specific data: [https://www.city.ac.uk/ media/city-site/documents/about/education/academic-committees/education-quality-committee/2018-19/18.10.18/Item-16a-UG-APE-Assessment-Thematic-Report.pdf](https://www.city.ac.uk/media/city-site/documents/about/education/academic-committees/education-quality-committee/2018-19/18.10.18/Item-16a-UG-APE-Assessment-Thematic-Report.pdf)*

### **1. Introduction**

The 2016/17 the Annual Programme Evaluations for Undergraduate Programmes included an additional area for completion that focused on the assessment strategy for each programme. There were four key areas that all programmes were asked to comment upon which included questions on the:

- Range of assessments specified in the programme specification.
- Standard credit multiple for each module and average number of assessments for each within the programme
- Last review of the assessments across the programme and outcome
- Student feedback regarding Assessment

### **2. Overview of Assessment Practice for Schools**

The bullet points below provide a summary of the assessment practice for programmes in each School and highlight both areas of good practice as well as any areas for future development that have been identified.

#### **2.1 Cass**

- A full range of assessment approaches are being used in most programmes and where there is less variety this is often related to professional/accreditation requirements.
- Most modules have a balance of between 1-3 assessments with a few exceptions.
- With the exception of a few programmes there does not seem to be a process for regular review of assessments at programme level although some modules are reviewed.
- Student feedback did not indicate any issues with the type/quantity of assessment but, issues were raised in terms of assessment bunching and around the timeliness and quality of assessment feedback. The APE action plans have identified actions related to the student concerns.

#### **2.2 City Law School**

- Some variety in the assessment types was noted although there does tend to be a heavy use of examinations. This is however often related to professional/accreditation requirements.
- Most modules have 1-2 assessments.
- Assessments across programmes are reviewed when requests go to Programme Approval and Review Committee to change assessments.
- Student feedback mostly focused on wanting more diversity of assessment and higher quality feedback with clear assessment criteria. The APE action plans have identified actions related to the student concerns.

#### **2.3 School of Arts and Social Sciences**

- A wide variety of assessment types are being used across the undergraduate programmes in the School and this reflects the nature of the various disciplines.
- The number of assessments within modules normally ranges from 1-3 and reflects the credit of the module, although some instances of over assessment were recognised.
- The majority of programmes have been involved in the undergraduate assessment review and have made amendments and reductions to assessment as a result of this.
- Student feedback has been very positive for the majority of programmes. However some issues were raised regarding the quality of feedback. For the programmes where student feedback has noted as a concern the action plans have been noted to identify appropriate actions. Some actions have already been implemented and these include staff development activities.

## **2.4 School of Health Sciences**

- A wide variety of assessment types used across the health programmes including practice based assessment.
- Number of assessments in most modules ranges between 1-3 dependent upon credit value.
- Many of the programmes have mentioned undergoing reviews in the last three years and have been engaged in the undergraduate assessment review.
- Student feedback has been mostly very positive and where issues were raised the programme teams have identified appropriate actions for these. Some of the issues have been about assessment criteria clarity and where this has been an issue all criteria have been reviewed.

## **2.5 School of Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering**

- A variety of assessment types used across the programmes but mostly exams and coursework.
- Number of assessments in modules is typically 1-3 related to the credit value.
- Most programmes have undergone a review in the last year and all engineering programmes were reviewed for a 2017/18 start.
- Student feedback was positive overall but limited feedback was provided around assessment. Feedback suggested that in some programmes there is too much assessment and that assessments deadlines are too close together.

## **3. Undergraduate Assessment Project**

Throughout 2017/18 the Undergraduate Assessment Review was undertaken which aimed to examine and revise assessment strategies across City's programmes to ensure that:

- assessments for each programme were clearly mapped against learning outcomes
- the volume and spread of assessment across each programme was appropriate
- assessments were authentic and inclusive
- each programme had a clear plan for ongoing evaluation of impact against the academic output KPIs

Funding for a second year of the project has been secured and will focus on working with Schools on assessment and/or feedback development.

## **4. Future Activity for 2018/19**

As a result of the Assessment Thematic review Schools have been asked to identify a minimum of two programmes that require some further development on either their assessment or feedback processes. It is likely Schools may identify these programmes following the 2017/18 NSS results if the results indicate a need to improve student satisfaction within areas of assessment and feedback. Students will be recruited towards the end of the Autumn term in 2018/19 to engage in documenting the time they spend on their assessment preparation.

Full Report including programme specific data: <https://www.city.ac.uk/media/city-site/documents/about/education/academic-committees/education-quality-committee/2018-19/18.10.18/Item-16b-Undergraduate-Annual-Programme-Evaluation-Final.pdf>

## **1. Introduction**

Improving student progression is a City-wide strategic priority, is an Academic Output KPI within City's Vision and Strategy 2026 and is a key metric for the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF). 'Progression Improvement' was therefore introduced as one of the thematic elements within the 2016/17 Annual Programme Evaluations (APE) for all Undergraduate programmes. The responses for each programme have been reviewed and key themes, areas of good practice and areas for development have been noted in this paper.

## **2. Institutional Priorities**

APEs across Schools reflected ongoing engagement with City-wide initiatives to address progression improvement.

### **2.1 Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring**

Schools undertook manual attendance monitoring of all Year 1 students and were in agreement that monitoring attendance had enabled programme teams to identify and sign-post at risk students to appropriate support. This included referrals to personal tutors and central support services. ExCo received assurance reports throughout the academic year which confirmed these trends.

### **2.2 Personal Tutorials**

Schools have been working to implement the revised policy and adhere to its requirements. The Personal Tutorial Records System was rolled out across City with 85% of all personal tutors accessing the system in 17/18. Assurance reports prepared for ExCo indicated that a high number of Personal Tutorials were taking place across Schools, signalling successful implementation of the Policy.

## **3. Programme Level Priorities & Key Themes**

The APE required programme teams to detail the initiatives or activities introduced to address progression issues. The following questions were posed:

1. Following on from planning meetings with the Deputy President and Provost in the autumn term 2016 which initiatives or activities have you introduced to address progression issues, and why?
2. What initiatives or activities have been particularly successful?

The key themes arising from the review of responses to two questions above are as follows:

- All Schools planned to increase lecture capture across programmes and to offer additional revision sessions both for main and resit assessments, including summer revision sessions.
- Reviewing of assessment criteria and in particular modules with high failure rates to investigate the root cause.
- Implementation of additional study skills or study support activities for students.
- Additional preparatory assessment activities were needed to support students.
- Supporting students' transition to City and to higher education.

## **4. Areas of Good Practice/ Successful Initiatives**

There were a variety of areas of good practice highlighted within the APEs and these will be explored further with the Schools and Programmes in 2018/19, to ascertain whether the initiatives are scalable and the practice can be shared more widely across City. Specific examples include:

- **BSc Economics with Accounting:** Targeted support for students identified as from a Widening Participation background.
- **BSc Politics:** Peer-to-peer mentoring programme to be further expanded
- **BA Journalism:** 'Introduction to Higher Education' workshops for all year 1 students in the first 5 weeks of term
- **LLB:** Academic staff required to attend Personal Tutorial training course in Term 1
- **BSc Management:** Aim to build on student/staff collaboration on development of materials and concepts around personalised learning
- **Radiography:** Opportunity for first years to meet senior students who are based in the same placement they will attend
- **Optometry:** Introduction of 'MyProgress' an online platform for providing a logbook, feedback and attendance monitoring

### **Future City-Wide Developments**

The information gathered from the 2016/17 APEs will inform the development of our approach to access and participation as part of a City-wide progression improvement programme in 2018/19. Highlights for the forthcoming academic year include:

- Transitions to City activities to support the successful transition of new undergraduates to life as a student at City have been bolstered this year with a successful pre-induction event, Start@City targeted at a range of widening participation students. Over 100 students took part in the 2 day event.
- 'CityBuddies', our flagship peer mentoring scheme has been expanded for this year to enable up to 1,800 first year students to have access to peer support via a student mentor (buddy).
- The Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring Policy will be implemented in 2018/19 across all year 1 undergraduate programmes. This is a significant change initiative for City and is the focus of current work to improve progression.
- In parallel, the SEAM project will pilot SEAtS, a technological solution to deliver real-time attendance data allowing for early identification of students who may be disengaged from their studies. A pilot across UG Law and Music will be taking place before further roll-out in 19/20.

Full Report: [https://www.city.ac.uk/media/city-site/documents/about/education/academic-committees/education-quality-committee/2018-19/18.10.18/Item-16c-APE-Good-Practice-16-17\\_Summary-Report.For-EQC.pdf](https://www.city.ac.uk/media/city-site/documents/about/education/academic-committees/education-quality-committee/2018-19/18.10.18/Item-16c-APE-Good-Practice-16-17_Summary-Report.For-EQC.pdf)

## 1. Introduction

In response to feedback from the Educational Quality Committee (14/06/18) a Good Practice template was produced for use by the Associate Deans Education (ADEs) to be completed retrospectively and capture examples of good practice identified within the 2016/2017 APEs.

A summary of the Good Practice items identified by each School and the impact these have had, has been summarised in this report.

## 2. Summary of Key Good Practice Items Identified

**2.1 Student Experience** – The majority of Good Practice items identified across all Schools were related to maintaining and enhancing a high quality student experience. Some good practice item activities include:

- Staff Development opportunities (Law)
- CLS Professional Fresher's Fair (Law)
- 'Introduction to Higher Education' Workshops & Extended VL Induction (SASS)
- Third Year Academic & Alumni Mentors (SASS)
- Revision Tutors & Summer Revision School (SASS)

**2.2 Student Employability** – Good Practice items categorised as 'student employability' relate to enhancing and offering high quality student employability opportunities. Some good practice item activities include:

- Annual Careers Fair (Stage 3) (SHS)
- Micro-Placements & Volunteering (SHS)
- Micro-Placement Schemes (CASS)
- Personal Development Plan (PDP) Module (SHS)
- Employability activities embedded within modules (SASS)
- Professional Liaison Unit (SMCSE)
- Speed Networking (SMCSE)

**2.3 Student Progression** – Good Practice categorised as 'student progression' relate to high quality assessment activities and the impact these have on student progression. Some good practice item activities include:

- Well-run assessment processes and assessment boards (Law)
- Feedback 'surgeries' for face-to-face feedback (SHS)
- Formative assessments for feed forward guidance (SHS)
- Use of shadowing/fieldwork modules (CASS)
- Updating chronology and issues in progress documents (Law)
- Personal Tutoring Programmes (SMCSE)

*The Good Practice items identified within each School's template have been categorised within the headings of 'Student Experience', 'Student Progression' and 'Student Employability' in line with the Annual Programme Evaluations (APEs) categories of good practice. It is however recognised that a number of good practice items identified in both the Good Practice Templates and the APEs can often span across more than one category.*

School: City Law School	
Good Practice Identified	Impact

1. The commitment to a range of staff development activities to enhance the BPTC, particularly the course in technology-enabled learning	Improving student learning, student experience and student engagement, both in-class and through use of Moodle etc. in private study
2. The positive way that staff have embraced the change in the Litigation subject assessments to include single best answers and the development of a SBA bank	Student learning and experience - Approx. 25% improvement in student scores in litigation assessments between 2016-17 and 2017-18
3. Updating Chronology and Issues in Progress documents used when updating assessments	Progression and outcomes - Ensured integrity of assessment process.
4. Well-run assessment processes and assessment boards	Student progression - Assessment outcomes
5. The efforts to raise awareness about the forms of support available to students, for example through holding the CLS Professional Fresher's Fair	Student experience - Designed to assist with students feeling at home and supported at CLS. In particular, to make known to students support services to cope with student stress. Also employability, as includes career progression stalls.

<b>School: School of Arts &amp; Social Sciences</b>	
<b>Good Practice Identified</b>	<b>Impact</b>
1. Introduction to Higher Education workshops: Journalism designed a series of workshops over the first 5 weeks covering transition to University, transferable skill learning, study skills, essay writing skills, study support, wellness	Student experience, student learning
2. Employability embedded in to new modules for Journalism, IP/Politics and Sociology	Employability
3. Third Year Academic Mentors: High performing 3rd years acted as academic mentors tutored first years in statistics modules	Student experience, student learning
4. Revision Tutors/Summer Revision School: These programmes piloted a School initiative to run Summer Revision and also Spring revision sessions for revision support. This comprises of one-on-one tutor sessions or workshops depending on number of students and module	Student experience, student learning
5. Extended VL Induction: Departments have now introduced a day-long VL induction (with contribution from LEaD who are providing VL reflective teaching sessions over the year to ensure that our VLs are able to develop and stay up-to-date with City's Educational strategies)	Student experience, student learning

<b>School: School of Health Sciences</b>	
<b>Good Practice Identified</b>	<b>Impact</b>

1. Feedback Strategies - Feedback 'surgeries' have been implemented in order to give students the opportunity to receive face-to-face feedback in addition to written feedback for assessments such as essays and OSCEs	Student Progression - Students are able to book a 30 minutes slot with the academic who marked their work so that they can get help and advice to improve further
2. Careers day expansion - The annual Stage 3 Careers Fair, where representatives of NHS organisations are available for students to discuss future careers and opportunities has been expanded to include primary health care and practice nursing employers	Student Employability - Students have a greater opportunity to request specific areas for their Final Placement. This provides new experiences and may facilitate the transition from student to Registered Nurse
3. Micro-placements/volunteering - A number of initiatives were being implemented to support graduates including the micro-placements, core module excursions and international exchange, in addition to the SHS Career Day and mentoring scheme	Student Employability - Students continue to benefit from optional placements and volunteering opportunities which give them additional experiences which are extremely valuable in boosting their chances in the jobs-market
4. Personal Development Plan (PDP) module - This module allows students to enhance their academic life at City by acquiring skills that are valuable in their career post-graduation	Student Employability - PDP will allow students to build up their portfolio, showcasing skills that will make them stand out to employers
5. Formative assessments - Ensuring formative assessment was in place in all modules to support student learning, to provide feed forward guidance and to prepare for summative assessment	Student Progression - Use of formative quizzes (via Quodl, Moodle and WileyPlus) to help students identify areas of weakness and get immediate feedback in order to be able to focus their revision on the necessary areas. Variation of method ensures students don't get bored with the same method being repeated

<b>School: CASS Business School</b>	
<b>Good Practice Identified</b>	<b>Impact</b>
1. Introduction of micro placements scheme	Student Employability - Practical application of student learning; anticipated impact on employability
2. Introduction of revision lectures in the week before resits	Student Progression - To secure improvements in progression
3. Use of shadowing/fieldwork module	Student Progression
4. Use of alumni as course mentors	Student Experience
5. 'Explorer' brand of degree to assist greater diversity in recruitment	Student Progression

<b>School: School of Mathematics, Computer Science &amp; Engineering</b>	
<b>Good Practice Identified</b>	<b>Impact</b>

1. Redesign of the Personal Tutorial programme to introduce students to core concepts of the field	Student Progression - This was used to appropriately set students expectations on the course
2. Feedback and Assessment Information Sheet on each module's Moodle page	Student Experience - Clear setting of students' expectations with respect to assessments
3. We have an extensive set of modules and activities supporting student employability (including modules taught by and supported by the Professional Liaison Unit and others focused on IT in business, teamwork and project management). We also provide emphasis on opportunities for workplace study either via one-year placement or part-time Professional Pathway	Student Employability - Employability rates for our students engaging with workplace study is close to 100%
4. Introduced a Stage 1 compulsory 5 credit module, "Skills, Careers and Employability Analysis for Mathematics Students"	Student Employability - Expected future impact (impossible to ascertain impact for the time being)
5. Speed networking events to allow students to meet senior industry representatives	Student Employability - Employability networking