

## University of Glasgow

### Academic Standards Committee – Friday 28 May 2010

#### Departmental Programmes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (DPTLA): Report of the Review of Glasgow University, Dumfries (GUD) held on 18 and 19 February 2010

Ms Rona Miller, Clerk to the Review Panel

#### REVIEW PANEL:

Professor Andrea Nolan	Senior Vice-Principal
Ms Morven Boyd	SRC VP (Learning and Development)
Dr Karen Boyle	Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies (Cognate Member)
Dr Anna Gough-Yates	London Metropolitan University (External Subject Specialist)
Professor Richard Finlay	University of Strathclyde (External Subject Specialist)
Professor Billy Martin	Senate Assessor on Court
Dr Velda McCune	Learning and Teaching Centre
Ms Rona Miller	Senate Office (Clerk)
Mrs Marjory Wright	Senate Office (Observer)

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 A Departmental Programmes of Teaching Learning and Assessment (DPTLA) review is intended to provide a formal opportunity for a department to reflect on, and critically evaluate, its provision and to benefit from constructive dialogue with academics and students outwith their department. The role of the Review Panel is to ensure that academic standards are being maintained and to review the quality of the learning and teaching and enhancement of the student experience.
- 1.2 Glasgow University, Dumfries Campus (GUD) is a Department within the Faculty of Arts, although, since Spring 2008, the Head of Department has reported directly to the Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources). From 1 August 2010 it will become part of the College of Social Sciences and will be renamed the School of Interdisciplinary and Applied Studies.
- 1.3 GUD's previous internal review took place in February 2004 (when it was referred to as Crichton Campus). At this time there were six undergraduate programmes, all MA (Liberal Arts) with different specialisms. There were seven postgraduate research students in 2003-04. The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) for the 2009-10 Review reflected on progress since the previous review, including how the majority of recommendations from the 2004 Crichton Campus DPTLA had been addressed.
- 1.4 The SER was compiled initially by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) Officer, with contributions from members of staff and students. The Review Panel verified during the Review visit that it had been available to students for comment through their Staff-Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs); on the student Virtual

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Learning Environment (VLE) and students were emailed to alert them to its availability. However, from discussions, while undergraduate students' awareness of their opportunities to comment were evident, this was not the case with postgraduate students.

- 1.5 The Review Panel met with: the Director of GUD; the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Officer; 22 other members of academic and administrative staff, including three graduate teaching assistants; and 14 undergraduate and six postgraduate students. A written submission was received from the Probationary academic staff member. This Report reflects the Review Panel's findings from the information submitted by GUD and through discussions with the different constituents.

*Historical Context*

- 1.6.1 The Crichton Campus was created in 1999 with funded student places allocated by the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC), now the Scottish Funding Council for Higher and Further Education (SFC), along with a Strategic Change Grant. The University of Glasgow (UoG) and University of Paisley had a presence on Campus and shared responsibility and funding for student services, IT provision and Library facilities.
- 1.6.2 There had been a period of uncertainty over the continued operation of the University of Glasgow there from January to August 2007, resulting in suspension of student recruitment in Semester 2 of 2006-07 and Semesters 1 and 2 of 2007-08, since the financial model at the time was not sustainable. Once it was confirmed that the UoG would retain its presence on the subsequently named Dumfries Campus, it was agreed that the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), formerly the University of Paisley, would take responsibility for: management of buildings; IT infrastructure and support; Library services and Student Support. A SFC grant was provided to GUD for 168.3 undergraduate FTE (80 allocated to Primary Education and 88 to Liberal Arts and Health and Social Studies) and 44 postgraduate FTE places, of which 20 are allocated to the MSc Carbon Management programme.
- 1.6.3 Dumfries and Galloway College (D & G College) moved to a site adjacent to the Dumfries Campus and, in summer 2008, a joint library for the three institutions was incorporated in D & G College's purpose-built premises.
- 1.6.4 Following the retirement of Professor E Cowan in September 2009, Professor David Clark took up the position of Director of GUD on 1 October 2009. The Director currently reports directly to the Vice Principal, Strategy and Resources. Once the Department becomes a School within the College of Social Sciences, the Director will report to the Head of College.

*Background information*

- 1.7.1 The Review Panel considered the following range of provision offered by GUD.

**Ordinary and Honours degrees in:**

- MA Liberal Arts (History)
- MA Liberal Arts (Humanities)
- MA Liberal Arts (Literature)
- MA Liberal Arts (Philosophy)
- MA Health and Social Studies
- MA (Hons) Primary Education with Teaching Qualification – developed in collaboration with the Faculty of Education and accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

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**Postgraduate taught programmes in:**

- MSc Carbon Management
- MLitt Robert Burns Studies
- MLitt Managing Health and Wellbeing
- MLitt Scottish Cultural Heritage
- MLitt Scottish Folklore
- MLitt Tourism, Heritage and Development

1.7.2 Staff and Student Numbers and Composition

<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Total Staff	26	21.9
Academic staff	18	14.4

<b>Students</b> (includes first semester 2009 intake only)	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Level 1	60	53.5
Level 2	36	35
Level 3	13	9.5
Level 4	15	15
<b><i>Undergraduate Total</i></b>	<b><i>124</i></b>	<b><i>113</i></b>
<b><i>Postgraduate Taught</i></b>	<b><i>37</i></b>	<b><i>25.5</i></b>
Postgraduate Research (for information only - research is not covered by the DPTLA Review)	16	10.5

1.7.3 The Staff: Student ratio for taught students is **1: 9.6**. Around 10% of GUD's students are international and around 77% from Dumfries and Galloway, the local region. There are two student intake periods: full-time and part-time students in September and part-time only in January.

1.8 Good Practice

The Panel believed that the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by GUD and its supporting documentation provided substantial evidence that it had a flexible, creative and highly motivated staff, committed to providing a very high quality educational experience for their students. They particularly noted reported good practice in terms of GUD's:

- Scope of their academic provision;
- Emphasis on ethical citizenship;
- Range of flexible learning practices;
- Emphasis on interdisciplinarity;
- Wide range of assessment mechanisms;
- Rich array of measures to improve student engagement and retention; and
- Real engagement in using pedagogic approaches that develop independent and reflective learners.

## 2 Overall Aims of GUD's Provision and how it supports the University's Strategic Plan

2.1 On discussion with the Review Panel, the Director summarised his view of GUD's main strengths and attractions as being:

- The interdisciplinary approach to curriculum development;
- Preparing students for a wider role of citizenship with underpinning ethical values; and

and its main challenges as:

- The absence of sufficient external recognition of their provision with

The Director noted that the funding package agreed with the SFC, would assure their immediate future and allow the staff build a sustainable School.

2.2 The Director expressed GUD's aims for the next three or four years as to:

- Be in a better position to select and retain the best students;
- Expand interdisciplinarity to more programmes
- Move to a more applied provision;
- Launch a BSc in Environmental Stewardship;
- Increase Continuing Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) with its wide market potential;
- Improve the research profile of the department;
- Increase the postgraduate population, and progression from undergraduate to postgraduate taught programmes and postgraduate research;
- Prepare a business plan for a research centre around 'Environment, Culture and Wellbeing', drawing on their rural location; and
- Ensure a world class experience in a remote campus.

### *Implementation of the Vision*

2.3 **Service Level Agreement with UWS:** An important aspect of implementation of GUD's vision was the Service Level Agreement with the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) to confirm access to facilities, services and clarify the responsibilities of both parties (discussed further in paragraphs 3.7.13 and 3.7.14). This remains unsigned.

2.4 **Partnership with Gilmorehill Campus:** Effective partnership between GUD and the Gilmorehill Campus was seen as very important in terms of delivery of teaching, as well as sharing good practice and access to services (discussed further in paragraphs 3.7.19 – 3.7.22).

2.5 **Raising the profile of GUD locally and further afield:** GUD had a Recruitment Officer on Campus and they were raising their profile through –

- Meeting and working with Heads of Dumfries and Galloway's Secondary Schools;
- Monthly inclusion of a page on GUD in a Dumfries and Galloway Magazine (Dumfries and Galloway Life); and
- A regular e-newsletter to prospective students and others.

(Discussed further under section 3.4)

2.6 **Seeking a transfer of SFC funding from PG to UG places:** The Director reported that a verbal agreement was in place with the SFC for a transfer of funded places from postgraduate to undergraduate, to enable further development of undergraduate student numbers. The Review Panel noted that, should GUD over-recruit postgraduate students, there would be no penalty.

## 2.7 Alignment with University's Strategic Plan

The SER refers to GUD's links to the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy and evidenced initiatives in place to improve its position in all nine of the strategic objectives (Appendix 1), in particular:

- Increasing its standing internationally and developing as a culturally diverse learning community;
- Improving its postgraduate opportunities; and
- Adopting a wide range of assessment methods.

## **3 An Evaluation of the Student Learning Experience**

### *3.1 Intended Learning Outcomes*

3.1.1 The Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) or aims of the different programmes are detailed in the SER and website, and a number of them are briefly summarised in Appendix 2. Paragraph 4.6 provides further information on the relationship between ILOs and QAA Subject Benchmark Statements.

3.1.2 The SER (3.2.11) identifies that the ILOs for the liberal arts core courses could be developed to better articulate a requirement that students make connections between their learning on these courses and discipline specific learning. The Panel supports future refinement of this nature.

### *3.2 Assessment, Feedback and Achievement*

3.2.1 Undergraduate students reported that they understood the University's Code of Assessment. Discussing how well students understood what was required to get a good mark, postgraduate students found guidance to be clear, but some indicated that clear instruction in advance of assessment would be welcome (MLitt Scottish Folklore).

3.2.2 The Review Panel was pleased to note from the SER the wide range of assessment mechanisms used, including those which enabled understanding and critical awareness, such as: assessed debates, oral presentations, problem-based learning and work-based diaries.

### *Assessment Workload*

3.2.3 The Review Panel noted from the SER that individual courses normally had three summative assessments and that there was an opportunity for the first two of these to provide formative feedback, directed towards later assignments.

3.2.4 The Review Panel discussed with GUD staff the potential for 'flattening' of grades when there were typically three assessments contributing to a final grade. Staff members did not believe this to be the case and thought that it was to the advantage of students to balance a mix of assessment methods. The Review Panel **recommends** that, when planning new courses and programmes or making changes to existing provision, the Department reflects on the balance and timing of formative and summative assessment to ensure that students are not over-assessed (see 3.2.5 below) and that the opportunities to receive formative feedback to support their learning are optimal.

3.2.5 Undergraduate students considered the volume of assessment intensive and the reduction of the semesters from 12 to 11 weeks, with little space between end of term and exams, very stressful. The Review Panel undertook to advise the Academic Structures Implementation Group (ASIG) of students' comments. [**Action:** Clerk]

### *Second Marking*

3.2.6 The Review Panel asked for clarification on how effective academic staff felt second marking was, and whether this was only applied to Level 3 and above. Staff members confirmed that they did not 'double mark' Levels 1 and 2 assessments, but did so at levels 3 and above. However, all assessments were moderated by external examiners. Where there was double marking, it often crossed disciplinary boundaries, which was seen as enhancing the interdisciplinary understanding between courses.

### *Feedback on Assessment*

3.2.7 The Review Panel had noted with interest from the SER the use of a feedback viva to engage students with reflecting on the feedback provided on their work, and complemented the staff on this approach. This was adopted in 'Issues in Contemporary Society', a core course on the MA Liberal Arts (all pathways) and the MA (Hons) with Teaching Qualification.

3.2.8 The Review Panel explored with undergraduate and postgraduate students their perceptions of feedback and guidance on assessment. Undergraduate students reported that they found feedback on essays very useful, but they did not receive feedback on examinations other than a grade, and that the final grade from examinations was not broken down into its contributory components. Those postgraduate students who had undertaken a course at Gilmorehill, found marking from Gilmorehill both fast and detailed. On the MSc Carbon Management, marking was found to be extremely slow and organisation of the programme in general was perceived as poor. The Review Panel **recommends** that realistic timescales for feedback on all assignments be agreed by programme teams, and communicated clearly to students in advance. The Review Panel also **recommends** that the distribution and breakdown of performance in individual questions in credit bearing examinations be provided to students, with a view to informing their future learning.

### *Performance Indicators*

3.2.9 The Review Panel noted from the SER that it did not adequately incorporate student success performance indicators and that there was an absence of critical analysis of performance data for individual courses. The Panel noted that, when benchmarking against the Faculty of Arts, there was a wide variation in student attainment (GPAs and pass rates) with some excellent and some poorer. The Review Panel **recommends** that Dumfries Campus staff routinely collate and analyse the management data relating to student entry routes, performance and progression with a view to benchmarking against the College of Social Sciences and/or the College of Arts profile as appropriate and to informing future planning and changes to existing provision.

### *Student Achievement*

3.2.10 The Review Panel noted that Liberal Arts honours classifications in GUD were comparable with the Faculty of Arts. However, the profile was much poorer for Creative Enquiry. On discussion, the QAE Officer reported that there was direct comparability in student achievement in courses taught through video-conference from Gilmorehill. However, benchmarking was not applied consistently, in part because of the small class sizes.

## *3.3 Curriculum Design, Development and Content*

3.3.1 The Panel had noted with interest in the SER:

- the contribution to the curriculum of staff who were active in research and dissemination of pedagogical methods;
- embedding of reflection on learning in a range of courses;

- students' encouragement to read journals in their fields as early as possible; and
- an 'Employability Finishing School'.

They explored the following aspects of the curriculum with students and key members of staff:

- 3.3.2 The Review Panel discussed how, in practice, students developed their independent and group working. Students reported understanding that they were expected to take responsibility for their own learning. Undergraduate students referred to opportunities provided by Moodle, where this was in place, to communicate with each other remotely. However, not all courses had Moodle. Students also referred to 'autonomous tutorials' in which they chose to meet and discuss their learning. The Panel believed that the provision of more social space would enable students to do so more readily. The Review Panel **recommends** that suitable, permanent space be identified for the use of students to meet for independent working. The Review Panel **recommends** that the use of Moodle be extended across all courses.
- 3.3.3 The Review Panel discussed the style of lectures and tutorials with students. Undergraduate students felt encouraged to engage and question. They felt challenged to learn and to think critically.
- 3.3.4 Not all postgraduate students felt encouraged to question the course content or to provide feedback on it. This appeared to be somewhat problematic where an Adviser was on sabbatical. The Panel **encourages** GUD to ensure that there are opportunities for discussion on all programmes and the Review Panel **recommends** that, in instances of staff absences, their roles with students be attributed to other staff members and communicated to students as early as possible.

#### *Interdisciplinarity*

- 3.3.5 The Panel noted from the SER the interdisciplinarity provided in the undergraduate programmes by courses shared across different programmes and was impressed by the level of commitment of staff to this agenda and the recognition and appreciation of students of interdisciplinary learning.
- 3.3.6 The Review Panel had noted with concern from the SER that GUD were considering discontinuing, for the Humanities options of the Creative Enquiry Project (CEP), a full fourth year honours group project which combined independent research, a substantial dissertation and other elements into a common theme. The Project, within all pathways of the MA (Hons) Liberal Arts (i.e. Health, History, Literature, Philosophy and Humanities) was seen by the Panel as an excellent opportunity for students to develop their capacity for interdisciplinary problem solving and other key graduate attributes.
- 3.3.7 During the meeting with Key Staff, staff reported that while the current cohort was engaging well with the Project, there was a danger of the Project being jeopardised if a cohort did not interface well, or if they delayed identifying a suitable topic. There would be no Level 4 cohort during 2010-11 (due to the suspension of student intake in to first year in 2007-08 – see paragraph 1.6.2) and staff would reflect further on the CEP before the next Level 4 cohort is in place. Staff members were considering revising the course content, maintaining its positive aspects and divesting of less beneficial aspects, or instead offering two 60 credit courses. The Review Panel **recommends** that the course team for the Creative Enquiry Project consider dividing the project up into several assessed tasks to provide additional opportunities for formative feedback and to make it easier to provide early assistance to students who are struggling with the project. They could, for example, assess a project plan and a draft of one of the chapters.

### *Honours Split*

3.3.8 The Review Panel discussed with staff members the 50: 50 split diet of Honours assessments between the Junior and Senior Honours years. Staff members had wondered whether, given the 'exit velocity' and increase in student attainment in the Senior Honours Year, this was the optimal way of assessing students. The Review Panel **suggests** programme teams review past Junior and Senior Honours marks with reference to College of Social Sciences practice, to assess the potential impact of different weighting between these years. This should be done in light of and with reference to policy development at University level.

### *Employability*

3.3.9 The SER refers to employability and generic skills developed in the curriculum in relation to Personal Development Planning embedded in a range of their courses and including critical and creative thinking; communication skills; self-reflection; effective learning; working in groups; applying theory to practice and other attributes such as self-motivation, time management and independent thinking. The range of assessment methods used by the Department are designed to reflect these capabilities and attributes.

3.3.10 The Review Panel discussed with the postgraduate students their work placement options. Students of the MSc Carbon Management reported very good access to placements promoted through Moodle, which could be taken up in lieu of the dissertation, and they were enthused by the opportunities available for learning in a work based context.

3.3.11 The Review Panel learned from the SER and discussions with key staff that, in response to student requests, the Campus Student Services team had introduced an 'Employability Finishing School' in 2009-10, which provided tuition to Level 3 and 4 students in: how to look for jobs; preparation of CVs; and interview skills. The Panel **commends** this helpful initiative and **encourages** the team to consider how to extend this aspect of employability and other elements to students in the early years.

### *Curriculum Development*

3.3.12 The Review Panel discussed with students and staff the mechanisms for students to contribute their views on curriculum development. They learnt that staff: student liaison committee meetings include discussion on matters of curriculum design which students are encouraged to feed into. Students are also invited to comment on new courses and there is an Annual Curriculum Review Group which considers course design.

3.3.13 Experience in the area of problem based learning in the MLitt Health and Wellbeing had been reported in the meeting with postgraduate students as being variable and not always positive: learning objectives were not clear and there was not always a facilitator in place. The Panel **encourages** the programme team for the MLitt Managing Health and Wellbeing to explore the effectiveness of problem based learning with students and consider whether changes are required to improve the consistency of the student learning experience on this programme.

3.3.14 Students drew attention to the value of local resources such as the library and people in the community. It was believed that these could be made explicit within programme information. It was suggested by some students that a core course on research methods might include the introduction of students to local resources. The Department is encouraged to consider these suggestions.

3.3.15 Both undergraduate and postgraduate students reported being encouraged from the outset of courses to email staff with any suggestions for course improvements.



Furthermore, they had the opportunity to provide feedback through their Adviser of Studies whom they met each semester.

3.3.16 In discussion with the Director and QAE Officer, the Review Panel noted that decisions to discontinue courses were taken where there was no provision of funded places or through insufficient student numbers, rather than as a result of poor student performance.

### *3.4 Student Recruitment*

3.4.1 The Review Panel noted the high staff:student ratio, at under 1:10 (see paragraph 1.7.3) and the desire of the Director to increase student numbers.

3.4.2 The Review Panel explored with the Director and QAE Officer the meaning of 'widening participation'. GUD recruited from a diverse range of backgrounds, including SWAP<sup>1</sup> Access routes; FE-HE articulation; University Summer School; as well as traditional routes. The Panel noted that the staff considered widening participation in relation to mixed ability rather than socio-economic derivation. The Director reported that the scarcity of high calibre applications led to an over-reliance on 'Clearing' and, despite exceptional tutor support, students entering through this route were not necessarily easy to retain. The Panel believe that greater focus on marketing the distinctiveness of GUD provision and recruitment of students well matched to the programmes, will improve retention. The Review Panel **recommends** that Dumfries Campus monitor more robustly the performance of its students with respect to their intake routes. Information such as the proportion of local students who are first generation in Higher Education and social class data would enable them to monitor the effectiveness of their widening participation initiatives, as had been done in the first four years of campus operations.

3.4.3 The proportion of international students at GUD was 10%, predominantly postgraduates, with around 20% on the MSc Carbon Management. The student undergraduate community included some Erasmus European Exchange students who reported enjoying the Campus and the small town and rural environment.

3.4.4 The Review Panel discussed with both undergraduate and postgraduate students their reasons for choosing GUD. Undergraduates reported its accessibility; the physical environment; the small size of the student population; and having progressed to their programme from a positive GUD summer school experience. Postgraduate taught students referred to their preference for a small town locality; their programmes' uniqueness; prior experience of school liaison and team building activities held on Campus; and progression from their undergraduate degree.

### *Recruitment Mechanisms*

3.4.5 GUD previously had a Student Recruitment/ Marketing Officer who had provided effective recruitment outwith the locality. However, this role had not been in place for some time, and staff believed that marketing budgetary constraints curtailed adequate marketing activity beyond the local region.

3.4.6 Undergraduate student recruitment is now undertaken as a joint service between UWS<sub>2</sub> and GUD via the schools liaison officer. However, this appeared to constrain recruitment options beyond the Dumfries and Galloway region. The Director reported initiatives being taken to improve their profile locally through: a monthly article in a Dumfries and Galloway Magazine (Dumfries and Galloway Life), promotion of their e-newsletter, and invitations to heads of secondary schools (as discussed also in paragraph 2.6) to encourage more school leavers to consider a GUD programme as their next step.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scottishwideraccess.org/>

- 3.4.7 As indicated in the SER, the 2007 viability discussions had led to the perceptions, amongst teaching staff in local schools and others, that UoG retained a tenuous presence on the Dumfries Campus. The continuing perception that the UoG might withdraw from the Campus was believed to impact on recruitment potential. Furthermore, while 77% of students come from the region, the local association of the Campus with the former Crichton Mental Hospital was also believed to undermine recruitment initiatives. It was therefore important to dispel these misconceptions.
- 3.4.8 Facilities, such as a shared Campus nursery, were seen as likely to enable local recruitment. However, the low student numbers impacted on the student infrastructure and potential to generate student clubs, societies and activities to attract students. The Director believed that the Campus had to be seen as a viable place to study and work, to stimulate recruitment.
- 3.4.9 The Review Panel recognises the benefits which could be gained by capitalising on existing student enthusiasm for their programmes in recruitment materials and initiatives and encourages the Director to include students in the meetings scheduled with Heads of Secondary Schools to enable them to hear students' views of GUD provision at first hand.
- 3.4.10 The Review Panel **recommends** that the Dumfries Campus Director/staff seek advice from the University's International Director and Head of Student Recruitment with a view to improving marketing of courses and programmes, both nationally and internationally.

### 3.5 *Student Progression, Retention, and Support*

- 3.5.1 The Review Panel noted with concern from the SER that progression rates from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Year at GUD were well below the Faculty of Arts norm. Pass rates were also lower in GUD than the Faculty of Arts. While recognising that low student numbers made meaningful analysis in some instances difficult, the Panel would have welcomed more critical analysis of GUD's relative performance in these areas, and encourages GUD to reflect further on progression and retention with a view to achieving greater parity.
- 3.5.2 The Review Panel were pleased to learn from GUD:
- that an Induction and Retention Working Group was in place with student representation, and that this was linked in to the University of Glasgow Retention Working Group
  - the increased focus on induction;
  - the range of measures being put in place to enhance retention;
  - the recognition that potentially good students might need guidance to adapt to learning effectively in a new context; and
  - the provision of additional support to international students in English language skills and of UK expectations in academic writing.

#### *Induction*

- 3.5.3 The Review Panel was pleased to learn of the extended induction activities reported in the SER. Prospective students were provided with a pack of information relevant to their programme and the Campus, including the E-newsletter. Induction activities are managed by the GUD Induction and Retention Working Group and campus tours are undertaken by Student Ambassadors.
- 3.5.4 Some undergraduate students believed that the future consequences of certain course choices in the early years were not always clear and that better information on the implications of their choices early on would be welcomed. Students suggested

that a pre-induction video to inform students of relevant matters would be helpful, as would a buddy system, particularly for international students. The Review Panel **recommends** that academic induction and social events, appropriate to the needs of students who may have a range of competing commitments, are included in the Department's planned extended induction activities, with a view to assisting students to adjust to the challenges of University education and to improving student retention.

#### *International Student Induction*

3.5.5 The Review Panel noted that some difficulties had been experienced by international students, which related to integration and support. E.g.

- Computer internet problems in the externally-managed student residences; it was noted that access to the internet was vitally important for students new to the campus as this was often their only source of contact with family.
- The apparently remote location of the Campus student accommodation to newcomers led to initial feelings of isolation, particularly at weekends.
- The lack of students on the campus at weekends.

The Director reported that GUD was investigating the provision of student accommodation within the town centre.

3.5.6 The Review Panel **recommends** that improved induction procedures for international students be put in place, for 2010-11, in consultation with international students and with staff in the recruitment and International Support Office and the international student advisers based in the Careers Service at the Gilmorehill campus. This might include:

- Clearer pre-entry information;
- Robust registration procedures;
- IT provision in Campus student accommodation;
- A buddy system, extending to weekends;
- Introduction to the local area;
- Clear information on how to access finance in a crisis situation; and
- Access to University web pages <http://www.gla.ac.uk/faculties/lbss/forstudents/international/preparingforstudy/> from Dr Gayle Pringle, designed to enable international students to adapt to University life.

#### *Retention and Support*

3.5.7 The Review Panel recognised the dedication of staff at GUD to students. Tutor and lecturer engagement with students was reported by undergraduate students as being exceptional.

3.5.8 Undergraduate students reported having a strong GUD identity, while proud of their links with UoG. They also valued their relationship with UWS. Postgraduate students reported limited involvement with either the Gilmorehill Campus or UWS.

3.5.9 The Review Panel discussed with the Director and QAE Officer the social amenities available to support student community and engagement. While GUD put on programmes of social events, many students had families and did not attend. The Panel learned from the Director that there were plans for space in Easterbrook Hall to be converted for Campus student union facilities. It was understood that there were no resource implications in relation to this for the University.

- 3.5.10 PDP was incorporated in the curriculum throughout and there was a careers and employability member of UWS staff within the Student Services provided by UWS to GUD students. His availability has decreased under the provision (as opposed to shared) model of service delivery.
- 3.5.11 GUD was represented on the University's Retention Working Group, and had adapted the University Early Warning System to local needs. The Review Panel considers that GUD's focus on improving recruitment and induction, and its use of the early warning system are important aspects of improving GUD's retention and **recommends** that they monitor future retention figures, along with undertaking annual critical analysis of the success of their range of activities designed to improve student retention and progression.

### *3.6 Quality of Learning Opportunities*

- 3.6.1 The Review Panel was pleased to note from the SER the contribution to GUD's learning environment from interdisciplinarity; flexible learning practice; and work-based learning. Students reported valuing inter-disciplinarity for enabling them to transfer skills, such as critical thinking or citizenship, between seemingly unrelated courses.
- 3.6.2 The Review Panel noted from the SER the accessibility to lecture theatres through ramps and the availability of audio equipment in one lecture theatre. There was discussion of dyslexia management with key staff, and whether anonymous marking prevented dyslexic students being recognised. Students with disabilities are referred to the students' service Enabling Support adviser provided by UWS. The Review Panel would **encourage** the Dumfries Campus Director to ensure all staff are aware of University policy in relation to students with disabilities.
- 3.6.3 Undergraduate students reported that they found the small class sizes made it easier to develop dialogue with their tutors, who were very good at encouraging participation. They reported that the programmes were challenging but enjoyable and they appreciated the challenge to think critically. Students felt responsible for their own learning. Students believed their higher visibility in a small class encouraged them to be well prepared for tutorials.

### *Learning spaces*

- 3.6.4 Undergraduate students reported inadequate provision of social space or study areas, which would be useful for independent learning. While rooms could be identified for study on an ad hoc basis, students said they would welcome a dedicated facility. There was an unwelcoming atmosphere in the library which discouraged students from using it except when accessing books. (See also paragraph 3.7.15.) The students felt that where Moodle operated, they had a chance to develop virtual learning communities through it (see recommendation in paragraph 3.3.2). Furthermore, the Review Panel **suggests** that Dumfries Campus seek to provide a more hospitable postgraduate computer room.

### *Use of Plagiarism Software*

- 3.6.5 Both undergraduate and postgraduate students reported technical difficulties with TURNITIN, the plagiarism software, causing problems. The Panel noted that difficulties were likely to arise using the software without training or due regard for University policy. The Review Panel **recommends** Dumfries Campus staff adhere to University policy in relation to use of TURNITIN.

### *Research –teaching linkages*

- 3.6.6 The Review Panel referred to the growing research culture in GUD and its impact on programme development. There was evidence that staff were integrating their

research within the curriculum. The Panel believed that this had been apparent from student handbooks.

- 3.6.7 The Review Panel explored with Postgraduate Taught students whether they perceived themselves to be at the cutting edge of their disciplinary areas and whether they felt part of a culture of research. There was general agreement among the students that the programmes were at the leading edge academically and students were excited and enthused about the curriculum.

### *3.7 Resources for Learning and Teaching*

- 3.7.1 The Director informed the Review Panel that GUD had, over the last two academic sessions, moved from a deficit of £1m to one of £180k with prospects for further improvements in the near future. Staff understood the existing strain on resources and appeared to be working as a team towards a common goal. They reported on the open and interactive leadership style of the Director.
- 3.7.2 The Review Panel explored with the Director the impact of the diseconomies of scale that resulted from the low student and staff numbers (albeit with a favourable staff student ratio) and the effect this had on interdisciplinarity and potential inclusion of staff in the Research Excellence Framework (REF).
- 3.7.3 The Director and other members of staff referred to the disproportionate administrative burden which resulted from the requirement to participate in the same number of University of Glasgow and GUD Committees with fewer staff numbers, along with travel time involved to attend meetings at Gilmorehill. Additionally, student support called on staff time. However, GUD was aiming to increase its student numbers (as discussed in paragraphs 2.6 and 3.4.3) while maintaining the high quality student experience. They sought to maximise the core curriculum, gaining value in cross-over between different disciplines, and continuing to link with Gilmorehill for delivery of some course.

### *Staff*

- 3.7.4 The Director reported that every member of lecturing staff had a plan to be REF returnable and that he was seeking to elevate their expectations to win research funding. Support and mentoring was being provided to staff, who had all completed REF reviews and had individual research plans. Given the range of disciplines within GUD, opportunities presented themselves for interdisciplinary research.
- 3.7.5 It had been the practice in GUD since 2004-05 for a member of full-time lecturing staff to have study leave for one semester. All lecturing staff had now had one period of study leave. This had been accommodated by either resting courses or calling on other staff members to deliver them. The Director was aware that Faculty procedures had not been adhered to in the past and confirmed his intention to fully implement University and Faculty study leave policies and procedures. The Review Panel refers the Director to the detail of University Policy, available at: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/humanresources/policies/h-o/leave/academicleave/> and Faculty of Arts guidelines, available at: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/faculties/arts/informationforstaff/researchleave/#d.en.52752>.<sup>2</sup>
- 3.7.6 The SER referred to staff having been appointed as University Teachers, to focus on Teaching and free up the time of Lecturers for research. However, it was noted by the panel that the University Teachers had aspirations to undertake research and have sabbatical leave for that purpose. The Panel clarified with the Director that the University had two separate but equally valued contracts with independent career paths, one based on teaching and scholarship (University Teacher) and the other

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<sup>2</sup> Once the Department becomes a School within the College of Social Science, School and College policies will apply.

based on teaching and research (University Lecturer), and that, should a member of staff want to pursue a career encompassing research, they ought to be on the relevant contract. The Review Panel **recommends** that Human Resources / Staff Development Service and the Learning and Teaching Centre provide information and training as appropriate on career pathways for University Teachers and the scholarship of learning and teaching, ensuring that staff are clear on the roles and responsibilities of the different academic career pathways.

#### *Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)*

- 3.7.7 The Panel discussed with the Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) and hourly paid staff how much training they had received for teaching, what ongoing support they received and what they provided in teaching.
- 3.7.8 The GTAs reported having received initial training on the Main Campus (core module) with good quality follow up course-specific training and support from GUD teaching staff and advisers. Training had been provided by a member of the Learning and Teaching Centre, who had visited the Dumfries Campus to deliver the University's core module for graduate teaching assistants. The GTAs understood they could access postgraduate seminars from the Faculty of Arts where relevant, and would be provided with support to attend external conferences, should they request it.
- 3.7.9 The GTAs were involved mainly in taking weekly seminars and marking students' work on the First Year course, Text and Communication (a core course on all undergraduate degree programmes), or taking laboratory sessions (experimental design project). Feedback on their teaching was provided mainly through student feedback forms. The GTAs believed the teaching environment to be good and resources appropriate. While the GTAs did not feed into Annual Monitoring reporting formally, they did provide feedback to programme conveners who would consider their views.

#### *Probationary Staff*

- 3.7.10 There is one member of probationary staff at GUD, who provided comments to the Review Panel by email. He commenced his probation in November 2008 and in January 2010 he had attended his first session of the New Lecturer and Teacher Programme (NLTP), with another one scheduled. He had found interaction with other probationers useful. He felt free to discuss teaching matters with a colleague and his recently appointed mentor.

#### *IT and Learning Resources*

- 3.7.11 Absence of economies of scale (also discussed under paragraphs 3.7.3 and 3.7.4) was considered by the Review Panel likely to impact on physical resources. GUD was addressing this through:
- linking with the Faculty of Arts, through video-conferencing of lectures;
  - the interdisciplinarity between programmes allowing the sharing of resource as well as bringing additional benefits; and
  - combining different cohorts in classes.

#### *Service Level Agreement with UWS and D & G College*

- 3.7.12 The Panel recognised the issue of shared facilities with UWS and D & G College, with responsibility for: management of buildings, IT infrastructure and support, Library services and Student Support Services attributed to UWS. The library, shared between the three institutions, is housed within the D&G College building.
- 3.7.13 From the SER and discussions with the Director, the Review Panel learned that the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the three institutions remains unsigned,

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despite the building and services management arrangements having been in place since August 2007 and the library having been available since summer 2008. The delay was creating some anxiety amongst staff and was liable to leave areas of responsibility unclear. The SLA was being finalised by Vice-Principals of the UoG and UWS and the Principal of D & G College, all of whom were committed to the joint Campus. Once this is signed it was believed that the future strategy and vision for the Campus could be presented publicly more clearly, and GUD would be able to take a lead amongst the institutions in the area of research.

3.7.14 The Panel discussed with the Director, students and members of staff the sharing of facilities. The following difficulties were being experienced:

- Some students and staff have difficulty accessing UoG e-journals via the library PCs UWS interface;
- Students are unable to access a number of websites as a result of the interface;
- The library environment, although very bright and seemingly well stocked, is found noisy and even threatening by some students;
- There are delays (around a week) in receiving texts ordered from the Gilmorehill Campus, and some shortage in availability;
- PCs within the Rutherford-McCowan building IT laboratories, tend to be block booked by UWS, preventing access by GUD students on a regular basis;
- IT support had been centrally managed and there had been resultant delays in solving problems. However, local provision and a newly appointed Helpdesk has improved this.
- Neither staff nor students can access GU networks when on Gilmorehill Campus.
- As reported in the SER, video-conferencing hardware is aging and, being managed by UWS, its pathway is through the Hamilton headquarters of UWS, degrading its quality. Furthermore, there are restrictions on re-watching videoed lectures, through Gilmorehill restrictions on keeping copies.
- There is a shortage of social space and catering within the Rutherford-McCowan building;
- Shared student recruitment seems to favour GUD recruitment within the D & G Region (see paragraph 3.4.6);
- Shared management of facilities dilutes the GUD voice.

3.7.15 Some undergraduate students reported to the Panel good reciprocal access with UWS texts from the library. Some reported good access to e-journals and availability of digital texts. Use of the local Dumfries Library was also reported. Those students who were in a position to use the Campus library in evenings and weekends found it quieter and more pleasant. Sunday opening could be beneficial. The Review Panel **suggests** that Dumfries Campus consider proposing a review of the library opening hours, with a view to extending them further at weekends.

3.7.16 The Review Panel **recommends** that the Dumfries Campus make more use of electronic library resources such as e-books, key chapters of books provided electronically and choosing journals for reading which are available electronically.

3.7.17 The Director was preparing an inventory of difficulties experienced, drawing on staff and student feedback, which he would provide to UWS to focus resolution of these matters. However, the importance of a clearly articulated Service Level Agreement was considered crucial in moving forward to implement a more effective Service Users Group. The Review Panel **recommends** that the finalising and signing of the Service Level Agreement with UWS be prioritised by the Vice-Principal (Strategy and Resources) with a view to improving the student learning experience and allowing for more effective resources management.

*Memorandum of Agreement with the Crichton Carbon Centre*

- 3.7.18 Collaboration with the Crichton Carbon Centre to provide the MSc Carbon Management is considered to have great opportunities, with access to research income, very rich 'real life' student learning opportunities, and the potential to expand the international student recruitment market. However, the organisation and management of the programme was reported as poor by students and GUD staff and, the as yet unsigned Memorandum of Agreement, means that there is no course board in place to manage the programme. Two years of retrospective funding for the programme had been agreed. However, the signing of the Agreement needs to be resolved as soon as possible. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Director of Dumfries Campus continues with his efforts to ensure that the Memorandum of Agreement with the Crichton Carbon Centre is funded and signed as swiftly as possible, to ensure that students on the MSc Carbon Management receive a high quality learning experience and that the return of assessed work is timely.
- 3.7.19 The Review Panel also **encourages** the course team to notify students that they are aware of the delays that they have experienced in relation to the return of assessed work and other problems and are working towards resolving these.

*Interface between GUD and UoG*

- 3.7.20 A number of resource issues in relation to the interface between GUD and UoG came to light through the SER and discussions. For resource efficiency, and to access the additional teaching expertise of the Gilmorehill Campus, a number of courses are delivered through lectures at Gilmorehill being linked by video-conference to GUD. There are reciprocal arrangements for both lecturing and marking. However, the video connections are found to be poor (see section 12.3), with some lecturers not speaking towards the camera and handouts required for lectures not always being posted in advance on Moodle for GUD students' access. GUD staff deliver some lectures on Gilmorehill, however, this is not reciprocated. In order to enhance the quality of the student experience of video-linked lectures between Gilmorehill and Dumfries, the Review Panel **recommends** that a written agreement is established between the School of Interdisciplinary and Applied Studies at Dumfries and the College of Arts, detailing expectations regarding the delivery of video-linked lectures. The agreement should include the minimum expectations in relation to:
- the provision of handouts to students in advance of lectures where the content will be referred to during the lecture;
  - lecturer experience in the use of visualisers and making eye contact with the camera;
  - the availability of technical staff to deal with any transmission problems that may arise.
- 3.7.21 GUD reported being optimistic about plans that they become a School of Interdisciplinary and Applied Studies within the College of Social Sciences with links to partners in other Colleges. They considered that this provided them with a clear identity as a School within a College with direct representation on relevant College boards, committees and cross-University groups.
- 3.7.22 Some undergraduate students had experienced problems with administration in terms of acknowledgement that their fees had been paid. The Review Panel **recommends** dialogue between GUD's administration and the Registry to identify the cause of miscommunications in relation to payment of fees, and resolution of this.



#### **4 Maintaining the Standards of Awards**

4.1 The Panel noted from the SER the means by which GUD maintained and enhanced the standards of their awards through:

- Compliance with relevant subject benchmark statements;
- Adhering to UoG procedures;
- Liaising with external examiners on the design of assessments and student grades; and
- Final Degree Boards, with good representation from academic staff and an external examiner.

4.2 However, the Panel also noted the absence of supporting data in relation to student completion and awards, and the absence of benchmarking against the Faculty of Arts and external courses, as discussed under paragraph 3.2.9.

##### *Professional Accreditation*

4.3 The Panel sought to clarify how professional accreditation was assured. It was clarified that within the MSc Carbon Management, a certificate from the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) is granted to students on successful completion of one of its courses, 'Carbon Auditing and Management'. The MA Primary Education is accredited by the General Teaching Council. This is accredited through the Faculty of Education along with the Gilmorehill Campus B Ed Primary Education. GUD are asked to keep Senate Office informed of any future professional accreditation notifications.

##### *Quality Assurance and Enhancement*

4.4 GUD have Quality Assurance and Enhancement Procedures documentation with reporting templates, which define their quality assurance practices. They make these available to all staff. Annual Monitoring Reports are prepared by conveners for all undergraduate courses and postgraduate programmes. Student questionnaires and external examiners' reports are provided to inform the Annual Monitoring process. Staff Student Liaison Committees and an Academic Initiatives Forum provide students and staff respectively with the opportunity to contribute to course and programme developments. Students confirmed having opportunities to feedback on their courses through the Staff Student Liaison Committees.

4.5 All courses and programmes are formally reviewed as part of an Annual Curriculum Review with representation from the Crichton Management Group, members of the GUD Learning and Teaching Committee, the Departmental QAE Officer and programme leaders. This Review takes into account input from students, external examiners and course conveners.

##### *QAA Subject Benchmarks*

4.6 As stated in the SER, the ILOs on the MA Health and Social Studies and MLitt Managing Health and Wellbeing programmes are based on The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Health Studies benchmark (2002). The MA Liberal Arts (Literature) degrees specialisms in English, History and Philosophy are aligned with the relevant QAA Benchmark statements. However, the Department consider that the distinctive nature of other courses makes this form of external measure less applicable.

## 5 Assuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Students' Learning Experience

### *Annual Monitoring Reports and Student Data*

- 5.1 The Review Panel raised with the Director and QAE Officer the absence of a number of Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs), and in some instances, an absence of student data and information on student performance, which it considered to be the cornerstone of Quality Assurance. It was noted that the postgraduate taught AMRs were less complete. It was also noted that, where AMRs had been produced, these were using the format of previous years and so did not conform to the University's current expectations. It was noted that once GUD became a School within a College structure, reporting would align with the expectations of all the Schools. The Review Panel **recommends** that Dumfries Campus adopts a more reflective and analytical approach to Annual Monitoring, as described in the Code of Practice on the Annual Monitoring Process. This should include the systematic reporting of good practice and enhancements in courses and programmes, critical reflection on enrolments, results, trends in progression, data and commentary on the analysis of data sets, where appropriate, to allow the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Officer to compare outcomes with the College profile, better disseminate examples of good practice from GUD within the college and University more widely, and alert the College to any matters that require its attention.

### *Employability*

- 5.2 The Panel discussed with staff whether they monitored graduate destinations. Graduate employment information was reported as being informal. Undergraduate students who took up placements in their programme were found to at least achieve an interview with the relevant organisation subsequently. However, staff recognised that it would be feasible for them to maintain contact with their graduates and keep data on employment destinations in the future. The Review Panel **recommends** systematic gathering of graduate destination data for ongoing monitoring and critical analysis; and that GUD work with the Careers Service for advice on gathering and presenting such data.

## 6 Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Improvement

### *Summary of Key Strengths:*

- 6.1 GUD's key strengths, identified by the SER and commended by the Panel, were<sup>3</sup>:
- GUD's vision and strategy for the coming years along with its underpinning ethos (paragraphs 2.1 and 2.3 – 2.8);
  - The range of effective and appropriate teaching methods: lectures, tutorials, seminars, field trips and guest speakers; (the SER);
  - The range of effective and appropriate assessment methods, such as: presentations, debates, group projects, problem-based learning, essays, and dissertations (paragraph 3.2.2) and the feedback viva in 'Issues in Contemporary Society' for engagement of students with the feedback they received (paragraph 3.2.7).
  - Availability and promotion of work placements as part of the MSc Carbon Management (paragraph 3.3.4);
  - Interdisciplinary teaching (SER and paragraph 3.3.5);

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<sup>3</sup> Note: References are to paragraphs in this Report, unless otherwise indicated.

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- The dedication of the staff to their students (paragraph 3.5.7);
- The real appreciation by its students of their learning experience, and recognition of the value of their inter-disciplinary courses (paragraph 3.3.5);
- Small class sizes and use of these to support a more student centred learning environment (paragraph 3.6.6);
- Research-led teaching (paragraph 3.6.4 and 3.6.5);
- Developing students as critical thinkers and independent learners (paragraphs 3.6.6 and 3.6.7) as evidenced by staff and students
- Engagement with the research and local community (the SER), for example:
  - Offering short courses and public lectures. E.g. a series of lectures at the Wigtown Book Festival; talks for regional heritage and literary societies; involvement in the Franco-Scottish Society;
  - The University of the Third Age;
  - Participation in Science Fairs;
  - Academic conferences disseminating research findings;
  - Distinguished speakers (Noam Campbell; Sir Magnus Magnusson; Professor David McLellan; and a range of Scottish writers)
  - Schools-based initiatives - e.g. Crichton Challenge, a debating competition; and Schools 'taster days' introducing school pupils to the University experience.

## 6.2 *Areas for improvement.*

The SER and the panel together identified areas for improvement:

- Management information data in relation to student recruitment, progression, achievement, completion and graduate destinations, to enable them to monitor implementation of their strategy (paragraph 3.2.9).
- Student facilities – requirement for more leisure and social space and informal, independent learning rooms (paragraph 3.6.4).
- Pressure on staff workload and lack of expertise in some specialist areas (paragraphs 3.7.3, 3.7.4 and SER);
- Approaches to recruitment
- GUD – UWS interaction (conclusion and signing of SLA; improved service levels in shared facilities and accommodation; Library access) (see 3.7.14 and 3.7.15)
- GUD – Crichton Carbon Centre Memorandum of Agreement to be finalised (paragraph 3.7.18)
- GUD-GU interaction (including administrative hierarchy, communication links; course-level interactions; research interactions) (see paragraphs 3.7.20 – 3.7.22) ;
- Consistency, completeness and current format of Annual Monitoring Reports for all courses (paragraph 5.2).
- International student support

## 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 Conclusions

The Review Panel **commends** GUD for its newly developing vision and strategy, dedicated Director and staff and vibrant learning environment, so clearly valued by its students. It supports their prioritisation of finalising the Service Level Agreement with UWS and the Memorandum of Agreement with the Crichton Carbon Centre, and desire to improve and standardise liaison arrangements with the Gilmorehill Campus. The Panel recognise the importance to GUD of improving their external profile and student recruitment over the next few years and improving student retention.

### 7.2 Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations are interspersed in the preceding report and summarised below. The majority of these recommendations refer to tasks or issues identified by the Department for action, either prior to the Review or in the SER.

The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer and are not ranked in any particular order.

**In light of the restructuring of the University, recommendations have been redirected to the appropriate designates. Please note that the text of the recommendations has not been updated.**

## Assessment, Feedback and Achievement

### Recommendation 1

The Review Panel **recommends** that, when planning new courses and programmes or making changes to existing provision, the Department reflects on the balance and timing of formative and summative assessment to ensure that students are not over-assessed (see paragraph 3.2.5) and that the opportunities to receive formative feedback to support their learning are optimal (paragraph 3.2.4).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

### Recommendation 2

The Review Panel **recommends** that realistic timescales for feedback on all assignments be agreed by programme teams, and communicated clearly to students in advance (paragraph 3.2.8).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

### Recommendation 3

The Review Panel **recommends** that the distribution and breakdown of performance in individual questions in credit bearing examinations be provided to students, with a view to informing their future learning (paragraph 3.2.8).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 4*

The Review Panel **recommends** that Dumfries Campus staff routinely collate and analyse the management data relating to student entry routes, performance and progression with a view to benchmarking against the College of Social Sciences profile and to informing future planning and changes to existing provision (paragraph 3.2.9).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

**Curriculum Design, Development and Content**

*Recommendation 5*

The Review Panel **recommends** that suitable, permanent space be identified for the use of students to meet for independent working (paragraph 3.3.2).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 6*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the use of Moodle be extended across all courses . (paragraph 3.3.2)

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 7*

The Review Panel **recommends** that, in instances of staff absences, their roles with students be attributed to other staff members and communicated to students as early as possible (paragraph 3.3.4).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 8*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the course team for the Creative Enquiry Project consider dividing the project up into several assessed tasks to provide additional opportunities for formative feedback and to make it easier to provide early assistance to students who are struggling with the project. They could, for example, assess a project plan and a draft of one of the chapters (3.3.7).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

**Student Recruitment**

*Recommendation 9*

The Review Panel **recommends** that Dumfries Campus monitor more robustly the performance of its students with respect to their intake routes. Information such as the proportion of local students who are first generation in Higher Education and social class data would enable them to monitor the effectiveness of their widening participation initiatives (paragraph 3.4.2).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 10*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Dumfries Campus Director/staff seek advice from the University's International Director and Head of Student Recruitment and International Office, with a view to improving marketing of GUD courses and programmes both nationally and internationally (paragraph 3.4.10).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies and International Director and Head of Student Recruitment***

**Student Progression, Retention and Support**

*Recommendation 11*

The Review Panel **recommends** that academic induction and social events, appropriate to the needs of students who may have a range of competing commitments, are included in the Dumfries Campus planned extended induction activities, with a view to assisting students to adjust to the challenges of University education and to improving student retention (paragraph 3.5.4).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 12*

The Review Panel **recommends** that improved induction procedures for international students be put in place, for 2010-11, in consultation with international students and with staff in the recruitment and International Support Office and the international student advisers based in the Careers Service at the Gilmorehill campus. This might include:

- Clearer pre-entry information;
- Robust registration procedures;
- IT provision in Campus student accommodation;
- A buddy system, extending to weekends;
- Introduction to the local area;
- Clear information on how to access finance in a crisis situation; and
- Access to University web pages  
<http://www.gla.ac.uk/faculties/lbss/forstudents/international/preparingforstudy/> from Dr Gayle Pringle, designed to enable international students to adapt to University life.

(Paragraph 3.5.6)

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 13*

The Review Panel considers that GUD's focus on improving recruitment and induction, and its use of the early warning system are important aspects of improving GUD's retention and **recommends** that they monitor future retention figures, along with undertaking annual critical analysis of the success of their range of activities designed to improve student retention and progression (paragraph 3.5.11).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

## Quality of the Learning Opportunities

### *Recommendation 14*

The Review Panel **recommends** that Dumfries Campus staff adhere to University policy in relation to use of TURNITIN (paragraph 3.6.5).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

## Resources for Learning and Teaching

### *Recommendation 15*

The Review Panel **recommends** that Human Resources / the Staff Development Service and the Learning and Teaching Centre provide information and training as appropriate on career pathways for University Teachers and the scholarship of learning and teaching, ensuring that staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities of the different academic career pathways (paragraph 3.7.6).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies  
and Director of the Learning and Teaching Centre  
and Director of Human Resources***

### *Recommendation 16*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Dumfries Campus make more use of electronic library resources such as e-books, key chapters of books provided electronically and choosing journals for reading which are available electronically (3.7.16).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

### *Recommendation 17*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the finalising and signing of the Service Level Agreement with UWS be prioritised by the Director of Dumfries Campus and the Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources) with a view to improving the student learning experience and allowing for more effective resources management (paragraph 3.7.17).

*For the attention of: **Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources)  
and Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

### *Recommendation 18*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Director of Dumfries Campus continues with his efforts to ensure that the Memorandum of Agreement with the Crichton Carbon Centre is funded and signed as swiftly as possible, to ensure that students on the MSc Carbon Management receive a high quality learning experience and the return of assessed work is timely (paragraph 3.7.18).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 19*

In order to enhance the quality of the student experience of video-linked lectures between Gilmorehill and Dumfries, the Review Panel **recommends** that a written agreement is established between the School of Interdisciplinary and Applied Studies at Dumfries and the College of Arts, detailing expectations regarding the delivery of video-linked lectures. The agreement should include the minimum expectations in relation to:

- the provision of handouts to students in advance of lectures where the content will be referred to during the lecture;
- lecturer experience in the use of visualisers and making eye contact with the camera;
- the availability of technical staff to deal with any transmission problems that may arise.

(Paragraph 3.7.20)

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies  
and Head of College of Social Sciences  
and Head of College of Arts***

*Recommendation 20*

The Review Panel **recommends** dialogue between Dumfries Campus's administration and the Registry to identify the cause of miscommunications in relation to payment of fees, and resolution of this (paragraph 3.7.22).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

## **Assuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Students' Learning Experience**

*Recommendation 21*

Review Panel **recommends** that Dumfries Campus adopts a more reflective and analytical approach to Annual Monitoring, as described in the Code of Practice on the Annual Monitoring Process. This should include the systematic reporting of good practice and enhancements in courses and programmes, critical reflection on enrolments, results, trends in progression, data and commentary on the analysis of data sets, where appropriate, to allow the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Officer to compare outcomes with the College profile, better disseminate examples of good practice from GUD within the college and University more widely, and alert the College to any matters that require its attention (paragraph 5.1).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***

*Recommendation 22*

The Review Panel **recommends** systematic gathering of graduate destination data for ongoing monitoring and critical analysis; and that Dumfries Campus work with the Careers Service for advice on gathering and presenting such data (paragraph 5.2).

*For the attention of: **Head of School of Interdisciplinary Studies***



**Extract from the Learning & Teaching Strategy, 4 May 2006**

The **strategic objectives** are presented under 3 themes

Shaping the University Learning Community

1. To increase the University's reach and standing in learning and teaching internationally, and develop the University as a culturally diverse learning community.
2. To secure our position as a leading postgraduate university, through further development of postgraduate opportunities, and the provision of high quality support.
3. To consolidate our position as the leading University of choice for talented students from under-represented groups, and through targeted developments enhance our performance.

Excelling in Learning and Teaching

4. To ensure that staff have excellent skills in teaching and in motivating and supporting student learning, and that their excellence is recognised, celebrated and rewarded.
5. To develop further a wide range of assessment methods that are both effective in promoting student learning, and efficient in their use of staff time.
6. To modernise our programme structures and streamline our educational procedures in order to assure and enhance the quality of our learning and teaching and uphold our academic standards, while minimising bureaucracy.

Enhancing the Student Experience

7. To develop a student-staff partnership model that promotes student engagement with learning, and enhances student success
8. To embed and make transparent within our programmes the skills and learning opportunities that encourage entrepreneurship and enhance employability and enterprise.
9. To use new and developing technologies and associated methods of delivery to enhance student learning and promote flexibility.

## Appendix 2

1. *MA Liberal Arts*: “ILOs correspond to generic aims such as critical thinking, group work and presentation skills. Core courses emphasise multi-disciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, and informing and raising questions about students’ reflective thinking surrounding the methodological and theoretical underpinnings in their chosen disciplinary area.”
2. *MA Health and Social Studies*: “the programme ILOs are closely linked to the programme’s aims and reflect the three dimensions of knowledge, theoretical understanding and the skills associated with the practical application of this base to realistic scenarios (both general transferable and subject-specific skills) that largely define these aims.”
3. *MA (Hons) Primary Education with Teaching Qualification*: “The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, transferrable key skills and specific knowledge. This includes child development and learning, educational and pedagogical theory and practical teaching skills, giving priority to literacy and numeracy. Additionally, the programme ensures that all relevant areas in the Scottish Primary Curriculum are adequately covered in the graduates’ key skills profile.”
4. *MSc Carbon Management*: “The ILOs provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, and other attributes in a variety of areas. For example, knowledge and understanding ILOs enable students to apply the tools for tackling greenhouse gas emissions and evaluate their effectiveness. ILOs of skills apply theoretical principles of carbon management to case studies and carbon auditing analysis. By completion, students will be able to demonstrate skills in computing, modelling, presentation, problem-solving, working independently and in groups.”
5. *Mlitt Tourism, Heritage and Development*: “The ILOs focus on the meaning of heritage and its transformation through time in the West; the relationship between heritage, interpretation and the development of heritage attractions; key aspects of heritage and its relationship with history, and with identity and power. ILOs concern understanding key issues in tourism and development in a regional and international context; and deal with key concepts and models in tourism development.”
6. *Mlitt Scottish Folklore*: “ILOs seek to enable students to develop insight into the methodologies and theoretical paradigms appropriate to folklore and ethnology of Scotland: lowland and highland; urban and rural; historical past and present day. Students study at local and international level and access key sources of information: primary, secondary and orally collected sources. Multi- and interdisciplinary learning with practical skills in oral and written communication. Awareness is fostered of: cultural diversity; complex belief systems; worldviews and mentalities, past and present.”
7. *Mlitt Scottish Cultural Heritage*: “this is a cross-disciplinary set of courses, relating to Scottish history and culture, drawn from diverse complementary disciplines of literary studies, folkloristics, history, philosophy and tourism studies.”