PAIS Feedback Mechanisms – A Quick Guide

A Quick Guide to understanding the feedback mechanisms Warwick PAIS Department has put in place, and examples of successes each mechanism has brought to the Department.

Including the **National Student Survey (NSS)**, the Warwick Student Survey, module surveys, the SSLC, your meetings with DSEP, focus groups, Head of Department lunches and individual conversations.

### NSS – Nation Student Survey

- A national external survey – carried out by IPSOS MORI/HEFCE – completed by finalists throughout the UK
- Opens in February – completed online
- It is about the course overall (e.g. not individual modules or lecturers).
- It enables students to give feedback on their entire three or four years at university
- It provides detailed quantitative and qualitative feedback
- 27 questions. One is on ‘overall satisfaction’. The other 26 questions are on all aspects of the teaching and learning experience.
- As it has high visibility (e.g. it goes into league tables) feedback given has high impact
- When students give feedback in the NSS it isn’t just going to their department or lecturer – it is going to university management, to the VC.
- Because the results are published nationally (e.g. Unistats, etc.) it helps prospective students decide where to go to university – e.g. PAIS or somewhere else (very useful on open days etc.)
- Helps future cohorts of students benefit from feedback
- A high response rate ensures it is representative of student opinion
- Feedback given is anonymous/whether students respond is anonymous

### Examples of successes

- Free hot drinks machine
- Common room improvements
- More detailed feedback [and continuing individual written feedback on exams]
- Wider module choice
- £100K library spend (highest in University)
- Social events (including PAIS party)
- UG Dissertation conference
- Student ambassador scheme
- Research assistant scheme
- Essay workshops
- Creation of the DSEP role
- Enhanced career provision and workshops (including alumni and sector events)

### SSLC - Student-Staff Liaison Committee

- Helpful ongoing qualitative feedback and ‘real time’ conversations
- A useful way of improving courses for students during their time at university.
- It can be about the course as a whole or individual modules – but individual teachers should not be named.
- Enables students and staff to work together and resolve problems
- Democratic accountability
- Minutes of meetings available online - transparency
- Course reps sit on departmental committees – bringing students into the heart of decision making
### Examples of successes

- More 15 CAT modules (including for finalists)
- Equal split of first year modules across terms 1 and 2 for first years (so as to ensure better balancing of workload)
- Opportunity for PAIS students to take QM modules
- Enhanced IT systems and Career provision
- Changing of degree name from Politics with International Studies to Politics and International Studies to better reflect the international dimension of the programme.

### Module Evaluations

- Carried out in class towards the end of term 2 (30 CAT modules) and towards the end of term 1 and term 2 (15 CAT modules)
- Hard copies, not online
- Allows students to give feedback on individual modules and individual lecturers and seminar tutors
- It provides detailed quantitative and qualitative feedback which is discussed in detail in Education Committee and our Teaching Away Day
- The aim is to spot trends, identify where we’re not doing so well so we can improve and, where justified, celebrate your perceptions of our teaching quality.
- We provide an annual summary of its students to our students
- Anonymous

### Examples of successes

- Changes to PR21 (new name, introduction of conspiracy theories and counterfactuals, lecture recording, 2 out of 3 assessment method)
- Prioritising of library spending on modules with lower scores
- Improvements across modules more generally as shown by improving scores in recent years

### Head of Department Lunches

- Informal feedback from students over lunch for finalists, enabling us to benefit from their experiences over three years in the department.
- In some cases, changes can be actioned for current students so that they benefit from them.
- Has led to small but important changes
- Supplements the formal provision of SSLCs etc. and enables us to reach our wider student body

### Examples of successes

- List of potential supervisors given to dissertation students
- Kettle in the Common Room
- Ongoing recognition/work of importance of improving personal tutoring

### One to one conversations (personal tutors, DSEP, etc.)

### Examples of successes

- The names of markers being placed on assessed essays and exam feedback so that students can seek additional oral feedback/clarification
- Improving communications to students (e.g. new email communication policy and who to contact guide?)
- Common room improvements
- Improved UG webpages

### Focus Groups

- We have held a range of focus groups with students - e.g. on the Liberated Curriculum etc.

### Examples of successes

- Increased focus on equality and diversity, including Liberated Curriculum
### Head of Department Drop-in
- Termly drop-in when students can go and see Nick
- Important to offer to ensure the accessibility/approachability of the HOD

### Inviting Undergraduate students to presentations given by Teaching Fellow Applicants
- Allows our students to influence who may be teaching them in the future
- Enables our students to gain valuable experience of what is involved in giving presentations for job applications (applicable to many different fields of employment)