

# Student Written Submission to the QAA Review of the University of East Anglia

Union of UEA Students





# Student Written Submission to the QAA Review of the University of East Anglia

---

## Introduction from the Academic Officer

Compiling this Student Written Submission has been a thoroughly rewarding experience. Sifting through the evidence and trying to spot trends in the experiences of UEA students has hardly been easy; fourteen thousand people rarely agree on anything. But the students that I represent are agreed on one thing: they are overwhelmingly happy with the teaching, learning and academic support they receive at the University of East Anglia. It is no accident that UEA is so successful in the National Student Survey for undergraduates.

Since the previous Audit in 2003/4 UEA students have also seen massive steps forward with the bread-and-butter issues in their education; longer library opening hours, guaranteed amounts of thesis supervision and improved skills training for postgraduate research students, a system of anonymous coursework marking for taught students, a student charter, improved support for students with a specific learning difficulty, shorter turnaround times for feedback on essays, more accessible student information and electronic resources on the Portal and a University that each year is improving the ways it listens, and then reacts, to student opinions.

Where evidence suggests that the University can improve, we have not only presented the moans and groans but offered clear steps forward. Students, through their Union, are already working alongside the University to improve the quality of information and communication, to widen feedback on examinations, to improve the postgraduate taught experience, to achieve earlier timetables and reading lists, to enhance the provision of facilities and resources and to improve student induction. We look forward to continuing this work in the future.

A whole team of people made this document possible and I want to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to all of them. Firstly, to the President of the Graduate Students Association, Rebecca Pinner, who offered valuable insights into the postgraduate student experience. Secondly to my colleagues, Martin Jopp, Rowena Boddington and Tom Sutton who kept me on track and helped out in so many ways. Thirdly, thank you to Bill Rhodes who facilitated the focus groups that proved so valuable. Thanks also to the Union Student Support Services Manager, Jo Spiro, and all the Advice Centre team who looked back through five years of casework and offered important suggestions. A further thank you to the Union Representation and Democracy Support Worker, Anthony Moore, whose support and enthusiasm for representation kept us all going. I have saved my final thank you for the student representatives that I meet each week who give up hours of their time to improve things for their coursemates. Thanks to all of them.

I hope this document will prove illuminating and will help to enhance the student experience at the University of East Anglia.

**David Sheppard**  
**Academic Officer**  
**Union of UEA Students**  
**2008-09**

# Glossary

---

The **Union of UEA Students** (Union) is the representative organisation of UEA students.

**Union Council** is where Union policy is debated and decided. The **Union Executive Committee** is responsible for implementation of Union policy. It comprises four full time and seven part time Union Officers, all elected annually by a cross-campus ballot of all students.

**Union Academic Officer** is responsible for representing the interests of students across the University on all aspects of learning and teaching. The **Welfare, Finance and Communications Officers** are responsible for the other areas of the Union's activities. The **Equal Opportunities Campaign Convenors** are elected by autonomous groups to represent their interests. Currently there are four Campaigns with a Convenor; Women's, Students with Disabilities, Black and Ethnic Minority and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT).

**Union Student Support Services Manager** is responsible for coordinating and managing all aspects of the Union's delivery of student support services including the Union Advice Centre. **The Union Advice Centre and Union Advice Workers** provide information, support and advice on a range of issues including academic appeals and complaints, legal issues, health, financial problems, employment and housing rights. The **Union Representation and Democracy Support Worker** is responsible for providing support to Union democratic functions and for supporting and training all School and Union representatives.

**Concrete** is the independent newspaper for UEA Students.

**The Graduate Students Association** (GSA) is an association that represents the interests of **Postgraduate Research (PGR)** and **Postgraduate Taught (PGT)** students. **The President of the GSA** is the individual who represents the interests of postgraduate students.

**Council** sets University strategy and is responsible for finance and governance matters. *Senate* is responsible for all academic matters. **Planning and Resources Committee** is a joint sub-committee of both **Senate** and **Council**. The **Learning and Teaching Committee** (LTC) is responsible for defining, implementing and reviewing the University's strategies for learning and teaching. **Student Experience Committee** is responsible for examining and developing all aspects of the student experience across the University. The **Equality and Diversity Committee** is responsible for equality and diversity issues throughout the University.

**Dean of Students** (DOS) is the member of University staff responsible for a range of student services. Many of these services fall under the umbrella of the **Dean of Students' Office**.

The **Information Services Directorate** is the division that is home to the Library and the Information Technology and Computer Services. **Student Information Systems** supports all forms of communication with students and student focussed information. The **Portal and Blackboard** are names given to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) at UEA.

**Student Charter** is a document finalised in 2008 setting out the rights and responsibilities of students at UEA. The **Calendar** is the reference book detailing the University's academic and administrative structure, charter, statutes, ordinances and regulations. The **Corporate Plan** is the University's outline of its strategies and objectives for 2008 to 2012.

A **School** is a department through which learning and teaching is delivered, organised around a single or group of recognised disciplines. A **School Representative** is a student recruited to represent their fellow students within their School. **Staff Student Liaison Committees** (SSLCs) allow School representatives to raise issues or problems concerning their education within their School. **School Board** is the primary decision-making body within a School, dealing with all proposals for changes, new courses and strategic direction of that School.

**Faculties** group together Schools that share similar approaches and interests. The **Faculty Convenor** is the student responsible for co-ordinating the work of all School representatives across the Faculty and for representing students at Faculty level.

**The Faculty of Arts and Humanities** (HUM) comprises the Schools of *American Studies* (AMS), *World Art Studies and Museology* (ART), *Film and Television Studies* (FTV), *History* (HIS), *Language, Linguistics and Translation Studies* (LLT), *Literature and Creative Writing* (LIT/LCW), *Philosophy* (PHI) and *Political, Social and International Studies* (PSI).

**The Faculty of Science** (SCI) comprises the Schools of *Biological Sciences* (BIO), *Chemical Sciences and Pharmacy* (CAP), *Computing Sciences* (CMP), *Environmental Sciences* (ENV) and *Mathematics* (MTH).

**The Faculty of Social Science** (SSF) comprises the Schools of *Development Studies* (DEV), *Economics* (ECO), *Education and Life Long Learning* (EDU), *Law* (LAW), *Social Work and Psychosocial Sciences* (SWK or SWP) and *Norwich Business School* (NBS).

**The Faculty of Health** (FOH) comprises the Schools of *Allied Health Professions* (AHP), *Medicine, Health Policy and Practice* (MED) and *Nursing and Midwifery* (NAM).

The *Drama Sector* (DRA) is part of the School of Literature and Creative Writing (LIT or LCW). *Chemistry* (CHE) and *Pharmacy* (PHA) are part of the *School of Chemistry and Pharmacy* (CAP). The **National Student Survey 2008** places relevant students in DRA, CHE and PHA as opposed to their Schools.

The **John Innes Centre** and the **Institute of Food Research** (JIC/IFR) are independent research centres that work in partnership with UEA.

# Contents

---

## **0.0 Methodology**

- 0.1 Student Surveys
- 0.2 Focus Groups
- 0.3 Additional Methods
- 0.4 A note on Collaborative Provision

## **1.0 What is the student experience as a learner like?**

- 1.1 Undergraduate Teaching and Learning: Staff-Student Ratios [SSRs] and Contact Hours
- 1.2 Undergraduate Students: Academic Support
- 1.3 Undergraduate Teaching and Learning: Placements and Years Abroad/In Industry
- 1.4 Undergraduate Learning: Group Work
- 1.5 Postgraduate supervision
- 1.6 Teaching and Learning Spaces
- 1.7 Library and Learning Resources
- 1.8 Student Services
- 1.9 Employability and Personal Development
- 1.10 Action Points

## **2.0 How accurate is the information that the institution publishes about itself?**

- 2.1 Prospectuses, Websites and Advertisements
- 2.2 Student Information
- 2.3 Student Regulations
- 2.4 Induction Week
- 2.5 Timetables
- 2.6 Reading lists
- 2.7 Course Organisation
- 2.8 Action Points

## **3.0 Do students know what is expected of them in order to be successful?**

- 3.1 Assessment and Feedback
  - 3.1.1 Taught Students: Assignments
  - 3.1.2 Taught Students: Examinations
  - 3.1.3 Promptness of feedback
  - 3.1.4 Taught Students: Fairness and equality in assessment
  - 3.1.5 Plagiarism
- 3.2 Action Points

## **4.0 Do students have a voice in the institution and is it listened to?**

- 4.1 Representation
  - 4.1.1 Staff-Student Liaison Committees

- 4.2 The National Student Survey
- 4.3 Module Monitoring and Programme Review
- 4.5 Student Voice and the Strategic Direction of the University
- 4.6 Action Points

## **5. What has changed? The 2003 Student Written Submission**

## **6. Executive Summaries of Action Points**

## **7. Bibliography**

## **8. Appendices**

- Appendix A Union of UEA Students
- Appendix B The Graduate Students Association
- Appendix C Membership of Focus Groups
- Appendix D Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate Academic Advising Policy
- Appendix E Student Charter
- Appendix F Code of Practice on Placement Learning
- Appendix G Timetable slotting system
- Appendix H Research Degrees Code of Practice
- Appendix I Student Representation and Staff Student Liaison A Code Of Practice
- Appendix J Academic Governance Structure
- Appendix K Induction Week Survey
- Appendix L Library Opening Hours Survey
- Appendix M Advising Survey carried out by the Dean of Students' Office
- Appendix N National Student Survey 2008
- Appendix O Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2008
- Appendix P Postgraduate Taught WaveGoodbye Survey
- Appendix Q Union Advice Centre Statistics
- Appendix R Anonymous Marking survey 2006

## o.o Methodology

---

This submission has been compiled and edited by the Academic Officer of The Union of UEA Students (hereafter the 'Union') [see Appendix A]. The Academic Officer was supported by the President of The Graduate Students Association (hereafter the 'GSA') [see Appendix B] and the Welfare Officer, Communications Officer and Finance Officer of the Union. The chapters are structured in line with the four key questions published in the *QAA Audit handbook for student representatives*<sup>1</sup>. Those key questions are:

- What is the student experience as a learner like, including teaching and learning opportunities, support received and access to learning facilities?
- How accurate is the information that the institution publishes about itself, such as prospectuses, programme descriptors and advertisements?
- Do students know what is expected of them in order to be successful?
- Do students have a voice in the institution and is it listened to?

The authors make a set of recommendations at the end of each chapter that are summarised in section 6 and the changes that the University has made since the last QAA Audit in 2003 are analysed in section 5.

A variety of sources were used to respond to the four questions outlined above. Sources include student surveys, individual responses, statistics from the Union Advice Centre and the data provided by a set of focus groups. These sources have then been woven together to inform and support the conclusions of this document.

### 0.1 Student Surveys

Table 0.1 outlines the different student survey data that has been used:

Source	Year	Population	Number of Respondents	Type of survey	Abbreviation (Appendix)
National Student Survey	2007 and 2008	Final year undergraduates	2007 - 1500 2008 - 1590	Quantitative and Qualitative	NSS2007 and NSS 2008 (N)
Postgraduate Research Experience Survey	2008	Postgraduate Research students	224 [NB: this is a 22% response rate]	Quantitative	PRES 2008 (O)
PostGraduate Taught WaveGoodbye	2008	PGT students	143	Qualitative	PGT WaveGoodbye (P)
Library Opening Hours Survey	2007	All students	772	Quantitative and Qualitative	None (L)
Advising System Survey	2007	Undergraduates	846	Quantitative and Qualitative	None (M)

---

<sup>1</sup>See "Institutional audit: a guide for student representatives"  
><http://www.qaa.ac.uk/students/guides/institauditguide06.asp#p19>< [Accessed 25/11/08]

Induction Week Survey	2006	All students	967	Quantitative	None (K)
Anonymous Marking Survey	2006	All students	1465	Quantitative and Qualitative	None (R)

*Table 0.1: Different survey data used for submission*

## **0.2 Focus Groups**

Building on the data from the surveys above, and to ensure that the submission was truly representative of all students, the authors also organised five focus groups. Those groups were:

- Local, Mature and Part-Time students (abbreviated to [LMPT FG])
- Stage One students or “First Impressions” [FI FG]
- International students [I FG]
- Postgraduate Research students [PGR FG]
- Students whose courses included placement [PLA FG]

Members were recruited via their University email addresses. Information about the membership of each focus group can be found in Appendix C. These sessions had two facilitators – one facilitator who had specialist experience in that area (for instance, the President of the GSA was the facilitator of the group of Postgraduate Research students) and a second facilitator (the Deputy General Manager of the Union) who provided continuity and ensured that each focus group did not become transfixed with one single issue or duplicated discussions that had taken place elsewhere. Each focus group had a similar structure based around the four key questions and lasted 90 minutes. Attendees were paid £10 for their participation.

## **0.3 Additional Methods**

The qualitative responses of key members of Union staff – e.g. the Union Student Support Services Manager who comments on appeals and complaints – and student representatives also form a key part of our evidence.

The Union’s Advice Centre statistics are also used as evidence and statistics regarding to the last five years of casework are included in Appendix Q.

Finally, student members of the Union were consulted on drafts of the document between 1<sup>st</sup> December and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

## **0.4 A note on Collaborative Provision**

The University of East Anglia has several collaborative partners. These include City College Norwich, Easton College, INTO UEA, Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts, Sir George Monoux College, Institute of Health and Social Care Guernsey and Lowestoft College. As it is only INTO UEA students that are members of the Union of UEA Students the authors did not feel they had either the understanding or the evidence to discuss the learning environment for students at partner institutions and colleges and so an analysis of their experiences is not included in this document.



# 1. What is the student experience as a learner like?

It is clear that UEA students are very happy with the quality of the teaching on their course. This table shows the scores from Q1, 2, 3 and 4 from the NSS for undergraduates.

	Student Satisfaction (%)	
	NSS2008	NSS2007
1. Staff are good at explaining things	95	93
2. Staff have made the subject interesting	87	87
3. Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	92	90
4. The course is intellectually stimulating	92	89

Table 1.1: Scores from NSS Q1-4

The University compares favourably to other institutions, lying only behind Cambridge in the satisfaction scores of English mainstream universities<sup>2</sup>.

Commenting on the student experience at UEA, the Communications Officer writes:

"UEA is a fantastic place to study – a beautiful campus with great facilities. The interdisciplinary nature of the learning experience is a prized part of the teaching and it produces graduates willing to go out and "do different". Lecturers are supportive and are experts in their fields, delivering interesting and creative teaching in excellent facilities. UEA ensures that its students feel supported as they study and empowers them to enter a rapidly changing world."

Especially impressive are the satisfaction scores for NSS Q1:

Staff are good at explaining things (Definitely agree or mostly agree %)			
MUS 75	LLT 93	UEA 95	BIO 99
AHP 86	DEV 93	ECO 96	MED 99
NBS 89	LAW 94	SWK 96	PSI 99
CMP 92	PHI 95	LCW 96	AMS 100
ENV 92	FTV 95	HIS 97	NAM 100
PHA 93	ART 95	MTH 98	DRA 100

Table 1.2: NSS Q1 results

Similarly, in the WaveGoodbye survey of Postgraduate Taught [PGT] students many commented positively on their time spent at UEA:

"I found the University and teaching staff in particular extremely helpful and leaders in their field... I believe I could not have had this experience anywhere else."  
[LAW PGT WaveGoodbye]

<sup>2</sup> See Newman, M. 'Students more satisfied than ever before' *Times Higher Education* 11 September 2008 ><http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=403497> <  
[Accessed 25/11/08]

"The campus life was amazing ... The social and cultural life is unforgettable. I have now friends from all over the world."

[DEV PGT WaveGoodbye]

"Brilliant, well structured course with excellent tutors."

[LIT PGT WaveGoodbye]

"Overall the course was fantastic, it was very hard work and time consuming but I felt it was effective and I learnt a lot very quickly. It really prepares you for a job in this competitive field."

[BIO PGT WaveGoodbye]

"Thought the course content was excellent and very well put together. The standard of teaching was very high."

[ECO PGT WaveGoodbye]

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey [PRES] also shows postgraduate research students are satisfied with their overall experience:

	Faculty (% satisfaction)					UEA
	HUM	SSF	SCI	FOH	JIC/IFR	
14.g. Overall experience of my research programme	83	61	76	76	89	77

Table 1.3 PRES 2008

Commenting on the experiences of postgraduate research students, The President of the Graduate Students Association [GSA] writes:

"Many postgraduate research students are attracted to UEA by its reputation for interdisciplinarity and research excellence. The variety of research expertise allows PGRs to pursue innovative projects which are often at the forefront of their respective fields."

It is clear that interdisciplinarity, creativity and research-led teaching and learning are highly valued by UEA students. We hope that the University will be committed to these values long into the future. Whilst being very satisfied with their education, students have also expressed a number of concerns that are outlined in this document and we look forward to working in partnership with the University to address them over the coming months and years.

### 1.1 Undergraduate Teaching and Learning: Staff-Student Ratios [SSRs] and Contact Hours

The Staff-Student Ratio is an area that the University has identified for improvement. The University's Corporate Plan identifies notional Staff-Student Ratios as a Key Performance Indicator<sup>3</sup> and the Times Good University Guide suggests that the Staff-Student Ratio at UEA is 17.9, higher than most other comparable institutions<sup>4</sup>. There is no specific measure of satisfaction with contact hours in the NSS, but a number of students have commented on this as an area in which their School could improve. For example:

<sup>3</sup> UEA Corporate Plan 2008-2012 >[http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.74259!corporateplan.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.74259!corporateplan.pdf) < [2/12/08] p. 13

<sup>4</sup> 'Good University Guide 2009' >[http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/tol\\_gug/gooduniversityguide.php](http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/tol_gug/gooduniversityguide.php) < [15/12/08]

"Not enough contact time and not enough direction – I feel as though I have received too little guidance... at the moment I only have 4.5 hours of teaching a week, last term it was only 2 hours as I was doing a dissertation. I would have loved to have more guidance, more teaching!"  
[LIT NSS2008]

"Little contact time with lecturers and a lot of reading and self-study"  
[SWK NSS2008]

"Lack of tutored and assisted hours for seminar and lab work"  
[CMP NSS2008]

These related issues have regularly been raised by student representatives<sup>5</sup> and following on from this the Academic Officer comments:

"UEA has already begun work to decrease the staff-student ratio and is working on increasing contact hours. This is to be commended. The easiest way the University could improve in this area is to fully engage with students; uncovering what should be prioritised on each course and in each school. For students in some schools it may well be that increased contact time would not be desirable; students might prefer emphasis placed upon smaller seminar groups and more tutorials instead. Other students would clearly prefer more contact hours. Whichever it is, it will be the students on those courses who will be best able to tell."

## 1.2 Undergraduate Students: Academic Support

"Students have the right... to receive appropriate guidance through contact with academic staff [and] advice from an academic adviser."<sup>6</sup>  
The Student Charter

UEA students value the support and advice they receive from academic staff. Table 1.4 shows recent results from the NSS in this area:

	Student Satisfaction (%)	
	NSS2008	NSS2007
10. I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies	79	74
11. I have been able to contact staff when I needed to	89	85
12. Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices	76	72

Table 1.4: NSS scores about support and advice from academic staff

Students have also commented positively on the atmosphere in their School:

"Whenever I have needed help, the lecturer has always e-mailed me back within a day. In addition, the enthusiasm that I have encountered from all the lecturers has incited me to take more interest and have a real passion for what I am studying."  
[HIS NSS2008]

<sup>5</sup> For instance, at *Student Experience Committee 21/02/2007*

<sup>6</sup> 'The Student Charter' *UEA Calendar 2008-9* p181

"Environmental Science as a school is amazingly friendly, helpful and down to earth. Students and lecturers have a brilliant relationship, whereby one... can ask for extra help or further explanation when needed."  
[ENV NSS2008]

"There is fantastic support from teaching staff for any problems or questions you have whether they relate to your course, career, or anything else. There is always someone to talk to and gain from their experience."  
[BIO NSS2008]

Students are assigned an academic adviser at the beginning of their course and are encouraged to meet with them at least three times in an academic year. An adviser will provide advice, or direct students towards other sources of advice, on "module choice [and] enrolment, coursework feedback, academic progress, personal and skills development, career development, generic study [and] course concerns; personal concerns and on health [and] wellbeing."<sup>7</sup>

When the advising system was last reviewed [10/06/08] a survey was conducted by the Dean of Students' Office. The results were summarised in a document to the Learning and Teaching Committee [LTC] and are included in Appendix M. That document emphasised the importance students placed on the advising system and outlined their high levels of satisfaction with it:

"Ninety five percent of students said that academic support and 74 percent that personal support was important to them...Three quarters of students were satisfied with both their academic and personal support. Satisfaction rates for support were highest for SCI (80%) and lowest for HUM (66%); for personal support they were again highest for SCI (78%) and lowest for HUM (66%)... Three quarters of all respondents agreed that academic staff had cared about their wellbeing (80% in FOH, 79% in SCI, 75% in HUM and 65% in SSF)."<sup>8</sup>

The document also outlined some key themes from student feedback:

"the unreliability of some advisers' availability and responsiveness to emails; the importance for students of having an adviser who would be able get to know them and provide references; the need for advice to be available by email when students were studying away from campus; the importance of advisers understanding their particular circumstances (for example, the impact of a disability or being a single parent or mature student); and the importance of the availability of good information on the advisory system."<sup>9</sup>

Academic advisers regularly help students who are choosing modules for subsequent semesters of study. Table 1.5 shows the school by school NSS results for the question relevant to study choice advice:

---

<sup>7</sup> See 'Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate Academic Advising Policy' Appendix D

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix M 'Document 3: Key findings from the survey of undergraduate students' experiences of the UEA advisory system' *Learning and Teaching Committee 10/06/08* [02/12/08]

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<b>Q.12 'Good advice was available when I need to make study choices'</b>			
<i>MUS 55</i>	<i>LAW 70</i>	<i>UEA 2008 76</i>	<i>ART 84</i>
<i>ENV 64</i>	<i>LCW 72</i>	<i>PSI 77</i>	<b>AHP 84</b>
<i>FTV 63</i>	<i>LLT 72</i>	<i>DEV 78</i>	<b>NAM 85</b>
<i>NBS 67</i>	<i>CMP 72</i>	<i>MTH 80</i>	<i>HIS 88</i>
<i>PHI 69</i>	<i>DRA 75</i>	<i>ECO 80</i>	<b>MED 88</b>
<i>AMS 69</i>	<i>BIO 76</i>	<b>SWK 81</b>	<b>PHA 93</b>

Table 1.5: NSS 2008 – study choice advice

If we discount the scores of predominantly 'professional' schools (highlighted above) because of the small amount of choice on the courses they offer<sup>10</sup>, then it is clear that scores are lower in schools where advice on study choices is widely sought. It may well be that the commitment to interdisciplinary study and free choice that UEA students value so highly creates a far more complex system. However, the information provided about selecting modules could be an area of potential improvement. One student commented:

"More information and assistance [is needed] when picking units – it was not made clear that there is flexibility picking units outside of what is required"  
[PHI NSS2008]

A PGT student agreed:

"There was not enough information available in advance to inform decisions about which modules to take - there was a lot of choice but the module descriptions were inadequate, and some combinations which the website suggested were not actually possible."  
[ENV PGT WaveGoodbye]

The Academic Officer concludes:

"It is clear that the culture of advising at UEA is strong. Problems emerge mainly from breakdowns in communication and a lack of quality information. Students must always be made aware who their adviser is, how to contact them and the nature of their role. Schools must also take care to ensure that students are transferred to a different adviser when their regular adviser is on study leave.<sup>11</sup> However, problems of information and communication should not be allowed to detract from the excellent academic support available at UEA and it is obvious that students value this highly."

### 1.3 Undergraduate Teaching and Learning: Placements and Years Abroad/In Industry

UEA students highly value their experiences on placements and years spent abroad or in industry. The table below shows the high satisfaction levels with placements of students in NAM and AHP:

	<b>Student Satisfaction (%)</b>	
	<b>NSS2008</b>	<b>NSS2007</b>

<sup>10</sup> For instance, the Five Year MB/BS in MED only has a small amount of Student Selected Study [SSS]. See 'Five Year MB/BS' ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/med/course/mbbs>< [Accessed 02/12/08]

<sup>11</sup> One student commented: "Many [academics] travel often, including those acting as advisors, or worse as dissertation supervisors, making it difficult to contact them and consequently very stressful for the student who then has no one to turn to with their academic problems" [ENV NSS2008]



N3.1 I received sufficient preparatory information prior to my placement(s)	86	76
N3.2 I was allocated placement(s) suitable for my course	92	87
N3.3 I received appropriate supervision on placement(s)	91	93
N3.4 I was given opportunities to meet my required practice learning outcomes/competences	94	91
N3.5 My contribution during placement(s) as part of the clinical team was valued	91	89
N3.6 My practice supervisor(s) understood how my placement(s) related to the broader requirements of my course	87	80

*Table 1.6: Student satisfaction in NAM and AHP*

Students also commented positively on placements and years abroad:

"I have benefited a lot from having patient contact since the start of the course. I feel that this has dramatically improved my communication skills and relationships with the patients I see. I also feel a lot more confident in the clinical skills and examinations as we have the opportunity to practice this every year..."

[MED NSS2008]

"The course is well balanced, focussing on the practical aspects, and applying the theory. This is shown through placements from the very beginning, building our confidence with patients and clinical experience."

[AHP NSS2008]

"Year abroad was the most fantastic part of the course and skills and disciplines I learnt helped me in my fourth year and my life in general. Definitely an experience not to be missed."

[AMS NSS: 2008]

The quality of information of placements scores lowest in this area in the NSS2008 and the NSS2007 (see table 1.5) and student comments suggest that information, communication and organisation are the main areas in which the University could improve:

"Placement locations sometimes do not make sense. Although there are a limited range of placements available, students were sometimes placed in areas miles away from home where they have had to spend money on accommodation, whereas others that actually live in that area have been placed where that other student lives. This is frustrating since both clinical areas were the same."

[AHP NSS2008]

"Administration of my year abroad is appalling, my grades are still unknown, organisation before I went was sparse, communication while I was there was regular but unhelpful as they didn't know what to advise, and on return I am expected to have documents I wasn't told to obtain."

[BIO NSS2008]

"The department's very bad communication with me, and bad communication within the department when trying to arrange my year's study in Australia and whilst in Australia."

[MTH NSS2008]

Members of the Placement Learner Focus Group agreed. One SWK student was uncertain as to whether the logistics had been thought out:

"This placement is a children's respite. I've got to be there at 7 in the morning, and then of course they go off to school, so I'm not sure what I'm going to do for the 6 hours these children are at school". [PLA FG]

If the University could solve some of the problems in the areas of information and communication, then UEA students would be even more satisfied with their placements than they already are. The recently developed Code of Practice on Placement Learning [Appendix F] highlights the importance of the provision of quality information for students learning away from the University and we hope that this document will signal an improvement in the flow of information to students on placement.

## **1.4 Undergraduate Learning: Group Work**

Qualitative comments from NSS2008 identify a strong desire for more collaborative study. One HIS student wrote that: "to build confidence and communication skills... students should do more group work and projects. I have only ever done one group project out of the three years; I would like to do more."  
[HIS NSS2008]

However, there are some concerns about how groups are assessed on a shared piece of work; all members of a group receiving the same mark causing particular unhappiness:

"Of course we're supposed to be learning teamwork but it's different in a University environment when if someone doesn't pull their weight there's no real punishment whereas in a company they've got their job to look out for so they will pull their weight in the team."  
[CMP NSS2008]

"I think there's been a lot of group work where every person in the group is given the same mark which doesn't take into account the effort of the individual in the group."  
[NBS NSS2008]"

"Group presentations - being marked as a group was unfair due to some students not doing much work which was consequently reflected in the grade."  
[ECO NSS2008]

## **1.5 Postgraduate supervision**

PRES2008 indicates that the relationship between PGR students and their supervisor(s) is perceived to be the most important factor for successful completion.<sup>12</sup> Although over three quarters of students were satisfied with their experience of supervision, there are still a significant minority for whom arrangements were not satisfactory.<sup>13</sup> The alterations made to the PGR Code of Practice [Appendix H] in August 2008 ensured that suitable minimums were set for the frequency of formal contact between students and supervisors<sup>14</sup>. This should translate into increased satisfaction for the minority of students frustrated by a lack

---

<sup>12</sup> 97% of UEA students suggested that "Supervisory support and guidance" was of high importance. See PRES2008 [Appendix O].

<sup>13</sup> 76% of the 224 PGR students surveyed said that 'Supervisory support and guidance' had met or exceeded expectations. However 23.9% disagreed.

<sup>14</sup> 'Formal supervisory meetings for full-time students will take place at a minimum frequency of once every four months and for part-time students once every six months during the entire Period of Registration, including both the Period of Study and the Registration-Only Period.' See PGR Code of Practice [Appendix H]

of contact. The PRES data also demonstrates that UEA PGRs are less satisfied with their research environment than students at other UK institutions<sup>15</sup>.

PGT students also suggested that improvements could be made to the supervision received for dissertations:

"There is little or no teaching on the dissertation which makes up a significant portion of the final assessment."

[WAM PGT WaveGoodbye]

"I felt however that I was very much left to my own devices to do the work - perhaps because my supervisor seemed too involved in other issues to be able to give me much help."

[ENV PGT WaveGoodbye]

"Being currently in the process of writing my dissertation, I am finding it sometimes quite hard getting in touch with my supervisor - I don't know if there is anything the department can do to help this in future years!"

[LIT PGT WaveGoodbye]

"The lecturers were very friendly and helpful during lectures. However, when it came to supervising individual students' dissertations, they were a lot less helpful and effective. Most of them went on holidays and would not check their emails or give helpful advice. Some of them even told their students not to meet other lecturers for supervision even though they were not in the country or inaccessible."

[LAW PGT WaveGoodbye]

## 1.6 Teaching and Learning Spaces

For many years students have complained about Congregation Hall as a venue for teaching and learning.<sup>16</sup> The new Academic Building East, due to be completed in 2009, will provide an exciting new space for students to learn in and we hope that the University will continue to renew existing spaces such as the iconic Teaching Wall. In redeveloping teaching space we also hope that the University will retain the communal identity of Schools. Schools that have managed to retain student common rooms, whilst demands on space become ever greater, deserve strong praise. Sadly only a handful of common rooms remain<sup>17</sup> It is vital that students have a space in which to interact with fellow students and to discuss ideas within their School and as the University redevelops the campus, it must ensure that shared areas, like common rooms, are retained.<sup>18</sup>

## 1.7 Library and Learning Resources

Table 1.7 illustrates recent levels of satisfaction for Library and Learning Resources:

	Student Satisfaction (%)	
	NSS2008	NSS2007
16. The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	85	84

<sup>15</sup> Only 69% of PGR students surveyed suggested that the research environment met or exceeded expectations. This compares to a national average of 75%. See Appendix O.

<sup>16</sup> See *Student Experience Committee: 20/03/08, 20/06/06, 08/03/06, 03/11/05 and 09/03/05*.

<sup>17</sup> See 'DEV lose Common Room' *Concrete* 2/12/08

<sup>18</sup> See *Student Experience Committee 20/02/08*.

17. I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	90	90
18. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to	80	80

*Table 1.7: NSS data for satisfaction with library and learning resources*

Since the previous Audit in 2003, and following on from a close working relationship between the Library and the Union, longer opening hours have been introduced in standard semester time. The Library now opens until midnight six days a week and this change had overwhelming support from students<sup>19</sup>:

<b>Q10. How late would you like the Library to be open?</b>	
Stay the same (9pm on weekdays)	17.1%
Between 9pm and midnight	46.6%
After midnight	4.0%
24 hours	32.3%

*Table 1.8 Library Opening Hours Survey*

Recent moves towards automation have allowed more flexibility in opening hours. However, there are some students who still feel their needs are not being met. As was included in the *2003 Union/GSA QAA Institutional Audit submission* it is still the case that the "Reduction of opening hours outside of undergraduate semesters has a negative effect on postgraduate students"<sup>20</sup>. PGT students have regularly commented on the problems that reduced Library opening hours during the summer months causes them:

"My main complaint is the way that the library seems to regard post-grad students as unimportant - I was informed by the library that as it was the vacation period... and there was no need for the library to be open more than the bare minimum: this was 36 hours before my final dissertation was due in - continuously over the summer period I found that things were not available simply because it was not deemed necessary to have them there when undergraduates wouldn't be needing them... it would be nice for the library to accommodate for their [postgraduate] needs - it is, after all, nearly fully automated!"  
[PHI PGT Wave Goodbye]

Other groups of students face similar issues:

"There are far too many times each year where it feels like the wider University fails to acknowledge that MED students are around longer than everyone else and so important material, i.e., Intranet access, is unavailable when we need it the most."  
[MED NSS2008]

For PGR students the provision of Library materials varies considerably depending on discipline and subject area. Members of the PGR focus group indicated that there may be some areas, particularly with regards to scientific journals, where the range of available titles could be improved [PGR FG].

Many students in Humanities schools have complained that they could not access sufficient books<sup>21</sup> and there were further complaints from a number of students about a lack of specialist resources:

<sup>19</sup> See *Library Opening Hours Survey 2007* (Appendix L)

<sup>20</sup> See *Union/GSA QAA Institutional Audit Submission 2003* p.29

<sup>21</sup> For instance there were 21 negative comments from the school of HIS regarding the paucity of learning resources [HIS NSS2008]

"Although the library gave students access to films, whether that is on video or DVD, we were not allowed to take them away from the Library, unlike books or CDs. As a student of film, I think this should be different, even if we were only allowed to take the films for a maximum of one or two days."

[FTV NSS2008]

"Accessing specialist resources has at times been difficult & I feel this issue needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency as this can contribute considerably to stress levels... It would be helpful if there were read only or 1-day loan copies available in the Library."

[AHP NSS2008]

"The lab (PC Lab 5) for graphics work has a limited number of PCs, at times I have found that the lab has been full when I have needed to use a graphics PC.... This has been a problem especially when graphics coursework deadlines approach and most graphics students come in to use the graphics lab to find that they are booked by non-graphics units."

[CMP NSS2008]

In the Focus Groups similar opinions were voiced but one member had met a solution that worked in his School:

"What's particularly good about one of my units is that they put every bit of reading on Blackboard. You don't have to go to the Library, you can just go straight there..."

[LMPT FG]

Improved integration of Library resources and the Portal would help students locate and use the resources they need. The *Information Services Directorate [ISD] Strategy 2008-13* has identified this as an area of growth; it promises a "continued enhancement of the VLE and Portal, including introduction of reading lists"<sup>22</sup>.

Electronic resources have improved in recent years; the new student Portal is exceptional and the recent addition of Broadsearch<sup>23</sup> shows a commitment to improve. However, members of the focus groups indicated that training for the Portal and other electronic resources is vital. The following examples are from first year undergraduates:

"Odd that in the first week you don't get a 5 minute talk – 'this is what Blackboard is, this is where you click...'"

[FI FG]

"People kept mentioning Blackboard and the Portal, and I had no idea what they were."

[FI FG]

We would hope to see instruction or training given to all students in order for them to make the most of the excellent resources available and we hope that members of academic staff will maximise the full benefits of Portal during teaching.

The *ISD Strategy 2008-13* recognises that the Library could also improve so as to support a wider diversity of learning styles. It promises "proposals for repurposed library space to

---

<sup>22</sup> See 'ISD Strategy 2008-13' *Information Strategy and Services Committee 18/11/08*  
>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/ISSC/2008-2009/Agenda/ISSC\\_agenda\\_18\\_11\\_08.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/ISSC/2008-2009/Agenda/ISSC_agenda_18_11_08.pdf)<  
[02/12/08] p.10.

<sup>23</sup> See *Broadsearch* >[https://portal.uea.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_id=\\_155\\_1](https://portal.uea.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_155_1)<  
[02/12/08]



connect intellectual, social, solitary and remote aspects of learners.”<sup>24</sup> Initial draft proposals have included, amongst other things, a dedicated PGR reading room which would go some way to meeting the requirements of many PGRs for quiet, secure study space. Other PGR resources, particularly those provided at Faculty level, continue to provoke controversy amongst the PGR community. There is perceived to be inequity between the facilities available to students in different Schools, with some receiving dedicated desk and storage space in an office or laboratory, whilst others are required to share limited facilities with undergraduates [PGR FG]. Whilst it is recognised that resources vary between Schools the ability to work in a quiet, secure space is, for many, an essential requirement which is not available to all students.

There might also be a need to identify changes that can be made to improve the Library’s ease-of-use, changes that will better equip students to use the current resources. One student commented:

“Although I feel there are plentiful Library resources available I do not feel we were given sufficient information in first year and throughout the course on how to use the Library. I’m still unsure how to access journals in the Library despite going to a Library induction which I had to find out about by myself.”  
[HIS NSS2008]

## 1.8 Student Services

Non-academic support is provided at UEA under the banner ‘Student Services’. Student Services at UEA includes the Counselling service, the Careers Centre, the International Students Office, the Chaplaincy, Physical Education and Sport and the Dean of Students’ Office. The Dean of Students’ Office provides the service of resident tutors, financial guidance, childcare advice, learning enhancement, international student advice and support for students with specific learning difficulties, disabilities and mental health concerns. The Dean of Students’ Office also “represents students’ interests on key University committees” and “liaises with schools of study, including senior advisors”<sup>25</sup>.

Of student services at UEA the Welfare Officer writes:

“UEA’s non-academic support is wide-ranging and delivered at a high standard. International students give the International Office and the international student advisory team within the Dean of Students’ Office praise. The advisory team runs a comprehensive orientation programme on their first days at the University which many find helpful.”

In 2008 the University introduced a sticker system for students with a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD). These stickers, in use for examinations and course tests, “emphasise the importance of marking for content and not penalising unduly for errors of grammar and spelling where the meaning is clear. The exception will be where correct grammar and spelling are a learning outcome of the unit (e.g. in modern languages or linguistics). In such cases, this should be made clear to students in advance.”<sup>26</sup> These changes have received a positive response from students, and we hope the university will consider introducing the system for all anonymous assessed work in the near future.

---

<sup>24</sup> See ‘ISD Strategy 2008-13’ *Information Strategy and Services Committee 18/11/08* p.8

<sup>25</sup> “The role of the Dean of Students” ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/dos/role>< [08/12/08]

<sup>26</sup> See ‘The Sticker system’ >[http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/disability/sticker\\_intro](http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/disability/sticker_intro)< [17/12/08]

However on the support provided for students with specific learning difficulties, disabilities and mental health concerns, the Union's Students with Disabilities Campaign Convenor comments:

"The level of support the Dean of Students' Office provides for specific learning difficulties, disabilities and mental health concerns is small and currently provision comes from a very small contingent of staff who require greater support. It is understood, however, that the department is in the process of being expanded and we hope these improvements prove adequate."

The results of NSS Q18 ("I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to.") for students with disabilities highlight an area of concern. Only 64% of students with disabilities (excluding dyslexic students) were satisfied that they could access the equipment and facilities they needed compared to a UEA average satisfaction of 80%. We hope the University will prioritise improving accessibility around campus in the near future.

## 1.9 Employability and Personal Development

The Careers Centre states its aim: "To provide information, advice and guidance services for all UEA students and graduates, enhancing the effectiveness of transitions into employment and further study and providing services to external organisations, employers and the wider University and community."<sup>27</sup>

The Welfare Officer writes:

"The Careers Centre offers UEA students and recent graduates a bank of useful information relating to employment and further steps in education through its well-resourced library and trained career advisors. It also runs the 'Employability' service aimed to aid students looking for part-time jobs and UEA Volunteers which recruits students to volunteering opportunities to expand their CV. The Careers Centre is in constant communication with the student body - frequent emails about employment opportunities and careers fairs are sent to students. It can be said, however, that information of the services the Careers Centre provides could be better targeted - often students feel bombarded with too much unnecessary information and fail to pick up on the important detail."

The recently opened 'Employability' centre will hopefully improve the employment prospects for UEA students<sup>28</sup>. Certainly the NSS results suggest that undergraduate students are satisfied with their personal development during their course:

	Student Satisfaction (%)	
	NSS 2008	NSS 2007
19. The course has helped me to present myself with confidence	84	81
20. My communication skills have improved	87	85
21. As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	83	81

*Table 1.9: NSS satisfaction scores for personal development*

However, training and development for PGR students has been an on-going issue for a number of years. The review of the PGR skills programme, Transitions, finalised by a panel

<sup>27</sup> See 'Careers Centre': ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/careers/aboutus/>< [19/11/08]

<sup>28</sup> See *Union Executive Committee* 23/05/08

in April 2008 was therefore both welcome and timely. Recommendation II of the review that “With effect from the 2008-9 session, no modules in the Transitions Programme should be compulsory”<sup>29</sup> should satisfy those who had previously questioned the relevance of the courses to PGR students. Similarly, Recommendation IV that “responsibility for the delivery of... ‘An Introduction to Postgraduate Research at UEA’ should be moved to Faculty level”<sup>30</sup> should embed the training more securely within each student’s programme of study. We hope the University will build on the positive outcomes of the review in the years ahead.

---

<sup>29</sup> Recommendation II of the Transitions Review See ‘Document E’ *Learning and Teaching Committee 10/06/08* ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2007-2008/Documents/10062008/LTC07D109DividerE.pdf> < [08/12/08] p.5

<sup>30</sup> Recommendation IV of the Transitions Review. Ibid. p.5

## 1.10 Action Points

---

We recommend that the University should:

Continue to provide the excellent, interdisciplinary and research-led teaching that it currently offers.

Continue to work with students to gauge priorities with regards to improvements in teaching.

Widen access to learning resources especially taking in to account the needs of PGT and PGR students studying through vacation periods.

Continue to develop and improve electronic resources and ensure that students are trained in how to use these resources.

Ensure that the Library and all other resources meet all learning styles.

Retain communal space within Schools.

As it renews the campus, keep the needs of disabled students at the forefront of planning and design.

Consider widening the sticker system for students with a Specific Learning Difficulty to all assessed work that is submitted anonymously.

Continue to provide the wide range of high-quality and well-respected Student Services.

Continue to develop collaborative modes of learning but review assessment methods for group work.

Continue to offer excellent opportunities for placement study and improve communication and information to students on placement.

Ensure that students possess all the information they need to use the advising system effectively.

Ensure that all information relating to module choices is kept up to date and is presented in an accessible form to the students who need it.

Ensure that all postgraduate students have access to the facilities they need for study.

Ensure that postgraduate students, both taught and research, are fully aware of the arrangements and expectations regarding supervision.

Build on the work of the Transitions review, ensuring that research skills are tailored to suit the needs of individual PGR students.

## 2.0 How accurate is the information that the institution publishes?

---

"Students have the right to... study within a structure which is governed by clearly articulated and easily accessible policies, procedures and regulations."  
The Student Charter<sup>31</sup>

### 2.1 Prospectuses, Websites and Advertisements

The Focus Group of Stage One Taught students found that all prospectuses and other information received pre-registration were a fair reflection of their University experience on arrival. They commented that the information received on Open Days was useful and the welcome packs were praised too [FI FG]. A number of international and postgraduate students did however express concern about the heavy reliance on internet sources, particularly relating to activities it is necessary to complete before arrival<sup>32</sup>. A number of students have also raised concerns about the inaccessible language in the information that UEA sends out.<sup>33</sup>

The Communications Officer comments:

"It's important that the University ensures that information sent out prior to arrival or given out in the first week or so to new students is carefully considered; many new undergraduate students are not familiar with UK University jargon. It's also important that websites and information packs display as much information about the programmes as possible – from the very basic to the more detailed."

### 2.2 Student Information

Each School or Faculty produces its own handbook and the quality of information varies. The SCI handbooks are generally excellent and cover a broad range of topics<sup>34</sup>. Several of the schools in SCI also have intranet pages that provide student centred information<sup>35</sup>. However there is a variance between Faculties; for instance the HUM Faculty handbook 2008-09 does not include information on appeals and complaints<sup>36</sup> and unfortunately not all schools have intranet sites that give students the information they need<sup>37</sup>. Other schools use Blackboard or Portal sites to disseminate information [e.g. HIS] but this means that students pursuing interdisciplinary study in multiple schools struggle to access the information they need as access to Blackboard sites is often restricted. PGT Students have

---

<sup>31</sup> 'The Student Charter' *UEA Calendar 2008-9*: p182

<sup>32</sup> An international student commented: "In Kenya you have to go to an internet café – not everyone has the internet in their houses. And even then the internet connection is really slow. So in terms of accessing information, the internet is not best for everyone." [I FG]

<sup>33</sup> For instance; "Before arriving information was difficult to come by. There was an assumption that students knew the University and the British University system. Web pages were out of date, and often didn't say much of use in any case." [LIT PGT WaveGoodbye]

<sup>34</sup> See 'Faculty of Science' handbooks' ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/sci/teaching/hbooks/Undergraduate>< [2/12/08]

<sup>35</sup> Some examples of School intranet sites: ENV ><https://www.uea.ac.uk/env/ueanetwk/><; BIO ><https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/bio/intranet>< and CAP ><https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/cap/intranet>< [all 02/12/08]

<sup>36</sup> *Faculty of Arts and Humanities Undergraduate Student Handbook 2008-09* >[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.94388!hum%20ug%20handbook%202008%20v2.pdf](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.94388!hum%20ug%20handbook%202008%20v2.pdf)< [02/12/08]

<sup>37</sup> A list of the ten Schools that provide intranet sites can be found here: >[https://portal.uea.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_id=\\_135\\_1](https://portal.uea.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_135_1)< [02/12/08]



also suggested that web pages are often out of date and that their handbook was “full of errors, contradictions and omissions” [BIO PGT WaveGoodbye] and “inconsistencies” [HIS PGT WaveGoodbye].

The President of the GSA also explains that problems with communication and information are not restricted to taught students:

“As with the UG and PGT communities, a number of issues which continue to be of concern to PGRs could in many cases be addressed by improved communication. This is certainly the case regarding the rules and regulations surrounding the thesis which can be difficult to locate for students unfamiliar with the central University structure and documentation. A number of recent cases of confusion between supervisors and students regarding the required length of the thesis or the availability of extensions could have been resolved by improved familiarity with these documents.”

However, international students spoke positively about the amount of information they received during their course [I FG]. One international student commented:

“I think international students are better informed than home students because of the international student orientation programme where they introduced us to the British University system including aspects like plagiarism and the common course structure. I do think international students have more information because everyone feels they have to inform us more than anyone else.” [I FG]

### 2.3 Student Regulations

Despite the University responding positively to feedback from the last Student Written Submission<sup>38</sup>, most notably in reviewing the Academic Appeals procedure<sup>39</sup>, University regulations remain inaccessible to many students. For example, many students remain unaware of the rules regarding reassessment where a fail in a module made up of coursework and examinations may be reassessed through examinations alone.

Information about appeals and complaints, progression and reassessment, plagiarism and collusion, representation and advice and the submission of assignments and theses need to be easily accessible to all students from all schools and as such deserve a single accessible and up-to-date home. We hope that the student information minisite currently in development for the Portal will help improve the quality of information available to students.

### 2.4 Induction Week

In 2006 over 81% of students surveyed wanted a full induction week (see Appendix K). The lack of an induction week was also covered by the previous submission in 2003<sup>40</sup>. Registration and arrivals remains well-organised but huge difficulties are caused when returning students and new students arrive at the University at the same time. We remain convinced that students would greatly benefit from an opportunity to settle into a new environment before the start of teaching. In 2006, 64% of students suggested they'd like to see “More time to prepare for lectures/acquire reading texts etc”, 52% wanted

---

<sup>38</sup> In 2003, 37.5% had no knowledge of the existence of the academic appeals and academic complaints procedures. *Union/GSA QAA Institutional Audit Submission 2003* p.10

<sup>39</sup> See *Policy Development* p.33

<sup>40</sup> For instance, the situation that “Large numbers of undergraduate students are dissatisfied with the lack of ‘Freshers Week’ or formal induction programme within the University and their schools of study” remains the same. *Union/GSA QAA Institutional Audit Submission 2003* pp.8-9

"Information and guidance on what's available in Norwich and how to get around" and 65% wanted "More time available for joining clubs and societies". The University also needs to ensure that those students (e.g., MED, NAM, DRA) who arrive earlier than their counterparts in other Schools receive a comprehensive induction. Postgraduate students have also indicated that induction could be improved:

"I would suggest that an induction programme is established to ensure that all students know what is to be expected of them throughout the duration of their course..."  
[HIS PGT WaveGoodbye]

We believe, as we did in 2003, that a full induction week would improve the student experience at UEA.

## 2.5 Timetables

According to NSS2008, 85% of UEA Students are satisfied with their timetabling arrangements. However, qualitative comments offer a number of words of caution. For instance:

"The system of signing up for new units, especially while we were still on our year abroad, is awful, particularly trying to figure out the timetable system"  
[AMS NSS2008]

"Timetable clashes are not made explicit at time of picking units"  
[NBS NSS2008]

"I hate the timetable system. How difficult would it be for them to e-mail them to us? Instead, we have to go onto campus to pick it up."  
[PSI NSS2008]

There are three definite recurring concerns with the current arrangements: that timetables appear in a form that is inaccessible, that changes to timetables are not effectively communicated to students and that timetables are released far too late.

The timetable is formed using the slotting system [see Appendix G], which many students find difficult to understand. From the Focus Groups, two people said that they found the layout of their timetables very confusing, with too much information crammed into them.

A number of other complaints concerned last minute changes to timetables. An Occupational Therapy student commented:

"They keep cancelling things on mine all the time. We went to one the other day... and no-one turned up. They failed to tell us the person was not there"  
[PLA FG]

An international student also commented:

"Unless you carry a laptop with you 24/7, you won't know (about changes)"  
[I FG]

Similarly:

"Announcements about timetable changes and project work were sometimes made at rather short notice. That is particularly problematic for people with other duties such as work and family."  
[BIO NSS2008]

"Timetables [are] sometimes problematic mostly related to changes, the originals are fine but when they change something its not very clear."  
[MED NSS2008]

The release of timetables, exam timetables and information about placements also occurs far too late. This may explain why, when we examine the NSS data for Q13, it is clear that some groups are considerably less satisfied than others:

	Mean Score		Satisfaction (Definitely Agree or Mostly Agree %)	
	NSS2008	NSS2007	NSS2008	NSS2007
Overall	4.2	4.1	85	82
Mature	3.9	3.8	76	75
Young	4.2	4.2	86	83
Full-Time	4.2	4.1	85	82
Part-Time	4.0	4.1	70	n/a

*Table 2.1: NSS satisfaction scores for Q13. "The timetable works efficiently as far as my activities are concerned"*

The Welfare Officer outlines some of the problems that the late release of timetable causes students:

"The late release of timetables negatively impacts upon students who have caring responsibilities, students who have to organise shifts with their employers, students who wish to participate in social, cultural and religious activities and students who need to organise car shares or other transport arrangements. The University's inability to supply students with timetabling information early enough produces particular difficulties for student parents, particularly those with no extra family support, that need to make childcare arrangements early. In one recent case a student had to remove her child from the University's nursery as full time nursery contracts are signed and session appointments made from the 1<sup>st</sup> August, long before students can access their timetable. When the timetable is made available to students, some of the nursery's sessions are already booked up. The University must improve in this area."

Other students' comments also focus on accessing timetables:

"As a mature part time student living a considerable distance from UEA getting information in advance about timetables, events, seminars etc has been a constant battle. Right from the start of the course I was misled having been told that I would only be required to be on campus one day per week - this was instantly increased to 2 days at the point I registered. It is great that students with other commitments etc are welcomed to the University but the planning and communication of information needs to see this commitment through into practical realities."  
[HIS PGT WaveGoodbye]

"My course is not child friendly especially for people like myself who are single parents and find it difficult with the shift patterns to find childcare. Working outside the course to be able to support myself financially has proven to be hard work."  
[NAM NSS2008]

"Communication with part-time, post-grad. students is not good... I am one of two p/t students on... [my] course. Both of us combine our studies with professional work and family life. Last year, we both found it very hard indeed to get information in advance of mid-September about the timetable of classes. That information is vital to us if we are to arrange work commitments around seminars effectively."  
[LLT PGT WaveGoodbye]

The President of the GSA confirms that PGR students face similar concerns:

"There is increasing discontent amongst part-time PGR students that the scheduling of research seminars, training courses and other events which they are required to attend does not take into account the diversity of the PGR community."

For taught student timetabling at least, it has been mooted for several years that the Student Information System [SIS] will be able to offer a solution. And yet the early release of timetables has dominated the agenda of the Student Experience Committee since the committee's well-received inception in 2005<sup>41</sup>. It is regrettable that the same problems are referred to each year without resolution.

## 2.6 Reading lists

Students would prefer the lists of their recommended reading to be published in advance of the start of the module. This would allow them to plan their time better and begin their reading earlier – particularly in reference to the demands on students that are referred to above. Student representatives have regularly raised the issue of the early release of reading lists at the Student Experience Committee<sup>42</sup> but some students still only receive this information at their first class:

"The only negative aspect to my course is that reading lists aren't available to students before semester begins."  
[SWK NSS2008]

"Occasionally, compulsory readings for a unit were hard to obtain"  
[DEV NSS2008]

## 2.7 Course Organisation

Table 2.2 shows how satisfied UEA students are with the organisation of their courses:

	Student Satisfaction (%)	
	NSS2008	NSS2007
14. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively	81	77

<sup>41</sup> See *Student Experience Committee*: 25/10/08, 10/10/07, 20/02/07, 25/10/06, 03/05/06 11/05/05 and 09/03/05.

<sup>42</sup> See *Student Experience Committee* 07/05/08, 10/10/07, 06/05/07, 25/10/07, 21/02/07.

15. The course is well organised and is running smoothly	83	80
--	----	----

*Table 2.2: NSS satisfaction scores for organisation of courses*

In 2005-6 significant changes were introduced to differentiate between level two and level three modules in the Faculty of Humanities on undergraduate degrees. Students were disappointed in the changes as they felt it might lead to reduced contact time in their final year<sup>43</sup>, but students were particularly dissatisfied about the way the changes were communicated to them. One student who had been on a year abroad when the changes were made commented:

"The change to the course structure... caused huge problems. While studying abroad... the school radically changed the process of the final year, severely restricting choices of units and reclassifying the units according to difficulty. This meant that in my second year I took three classes that are now deemed to be of final year difficulty, and since I am not allowed to take these classes again, my choices of classes was diminished even further. The implementation of this system was unfair and confusing."  
[AMS NSS2007]

The issue was also raised by the then Academic Officer at Student Experience Committee<sup>44</sup>. The University needs to ensure that students are consulted on any changes to courses. Once a decision has been taken the information must then be disseminated as widely as is possible and should include reasons as to why the changes have to take place.

---

<sup>43</sup> For instance, see *LIT SSLC 01/02/06*

<sup>44</sup> See *Student Experience Committee 16/05/07*

## 2.8 Action Points

---

We recommend that the University should:

Maintain the high quality of pre-application information in prospectuses and at Open Days.

Ensure that pre-arrival information uses accessible language and is easily available to students who may not have regular internet access.

Prioritise developments that will improve the quality of information that students receive, especially regarding university policy and practice.

Continue to review, and then improve, the quality of its electronic resources and relevant information, and offer comprehensive training to enable students to use it.

Ensure that timetables, exam timetables, reading lists and information about placements are available weeks in advance and that this information is presented in an accessible manner.

Continue to review and improve induction including considering whether to use the entire first week of the standard semester for a full orientation programme.

Consult students about any changes that might be made to their course and then inform students of the decision that has been made.

## 3.0 Do students know what is expected of them in order to be successful?

---

"Students have the right to receive fair and transparent assessments with coursework returned in a timely manner which allows constructive feedback."  
[The Student Charter] <sup>45</sup>

### 3.1 Assessment and Feedback

As with almost all universities UEA scores lowest in the NSS in the category entitled "Assessment and Feedback":

	Mean Score		Satisfaction in %	
	NSS2008	NSS2007	NSS2008	NSS2007
5. The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance	3.9	3.9	75	72
6. Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	4	3.9	80	76
7. Feedback on my work has been prompt	3.5	3.5	61	60
8. I have received detailed comments on my work	3.9	3.8	73	69
9. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	3.7	3.6	62	59

Table 3.1: NSS scores for Assessment and Feedback

#### 3.1.1 Taught Students: Assignments

Members of the focus groups were happy with the quality of the feedback they received on assignments. Many schools in HUM scored excellently in NSS2008 Q8. For instance, 95% of HIS students, 94% of DRA students, 93% of LIT students, 92% of FTV students and 90% of AMS students definitely agreed or mostly agreed with the statement "I have received detailed comments on my work". Student comments support this:

"Staff are also available for essay guidance and feedback, which is a great help."  
[HIS NSS2008]

"Really detailed feedback on essays."  
[LIT NSS2008]

"Quite a few of my lecturers gave good feedback on essays, which helped a lot."  
[PSI NSS2008]

We hope that students will continue to receive comprehensive feedback on assignments.

#### 3.1.2 Taught Students: Examinations

---

<sup>45</sup> 'The Student Charter' *Calendar* 2008-9 p.181

The role of examinations is being reviewed in 2008-9<sup>46</sup> and we feel the time is right for such a review to take place. From the focus groups a large majority wanted feedback on their exams and other students agree:

"[I received] little advice on how to improve your exam marks"  
[BIO NSS2008]

"[I am unhappy with] the universities policy [sic] of not allowing students exam scripts back for observation, or providing any additional feedback about them."  
[HIS NSS2008]

"Poor amount of feedback on work, especially exams. We get given scores, but no actual feedback, and we can't see our exam papers even when we are given scores, nor are we allowed to take the question papers home with us, so when we are given the numerical scores months later we can't remember what they relate to so we don't know what went well and what went badly."  
[MED NSS2008]

Perhaps improvements could also be made to the study skills for exams:

"I feel we should have been told how to approach exams, how to structure them and what sort of content they would like. I have got good marks in my coursework, but terrible marks in my exams. Despite this I class myself as a good student and feel having exams like this where I really don't know what to put in the answers is a major stumbling block for me."  
[BIO NSS2008]

"There is too little feedback and few opportunities to practice exam style questions prior to the exams. While lecturers are busy and unable to set essays or problem questions once a week, once a month should be feasible, and very few members of the faculty are willing to check over attempted exam answers."  
[LAW NSS2008]

"Not enough focus on exam preparation- courses are needed to explain how to answer questions in University exams" [ENV NSS2008]

On the subject of exams the Academic Officer writes:

"It is recognised that giving feedback on all exam scripts would require significant changes but it is impossible to continue to justify assessment without feedback. It is one of the main sources of dissatisfaction for students. I hope in the near future we will see UEA providing feedback on exams."

### 3.1.3 Promptness of feedback

In NSS2008 the lowest score that UEA achieved was on Q7 "feedback on my work has been prompt" and only 61% of undergraduate students were satisfied. The table below shows the large range of scores from across Schools at UEA:

---

<sup>46</sup> See 'Proposed review of policy on examinations' *Learning and Teaching Committee 10/06/08*.  
><http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2007-2008/Documents/10062008/LTC07D107DividerC.pdf>< [04/12/08]



<b>"Feedback on my work has been prompt" (Satisfaction %)</b>			
<i>NBS 33</i>	<i>CMP 53</i>	<i>LLT 62</i>	<i>PSI 71</i>
<i>AHP 35</i>	<i>MED 53</i>	<i>ECO 62</i>	<i>BIO 73</i>
<i>DEV 41</i>	<i>LAW 68</i>	<i>PHA 66</i>	<i>ART 80</i>
<i>MUS 47</i>	<i>LCW 61</i>	<i>SWK 67</i>	<i>HIS 85</i>
<i>PHI 49</i>	<i>FTV 61</i>	<i>NAM 69</i>	<i>AMS 87</i>
<i>ENV 51</i>	<i>UEA 61</i>	<i>DRA 69</i>	<i>MTH 93</i>

Table 3.2: NSS scores for Q7

Similarly, Postgraduate students also experienced delays receiving feedback. One student commented:

"There appears to be a double standard - students are not allowed to submit coursework late, yet staff are allowed to return coursework late with no penalisation at all. Exam results were also later than originally indicated. This is frustrating to students who are concerned about their progress."  
[NBS PGT WaveGoodbye]

The President of the GSA agreed:

"Postgraduate Research students do not always receive prompt and detailed feedback on written work. Whilst "turnaround times" have quite rightly been formalised for undergraduates, the nature of PGR work, especially at MPhil and PhD level, makes it difficult to legislate on this issue. Whilst many students are happy with the feedback provided by their supervisors, there are some who expressed discontent about the length of time taken for supervisors to respond and the quality of feedback provided."

Following on from analysis of the NSS and other data, dialogue with student representatives<sup>47</sup> and discussions regarding the Student Charter UEA has recently developed a policy for taught students that states "The University is moving to a norm where feedback and provisional marks on summative coursework are returned to students no later than 20 working days after the published deadline for submission...". This policy was implemented in September 2008 and improved turnaround times should follow. We also hope improvements will be made for PGR students in the near future. Some Schools also previously published dates when taught students could expect their work returned by and we are pleased to see this introduced University-wide this year<sup>48</sup>.

### 3.1.4 Taught Students: Fairness and equality in assessment

The introduction of anonymous coursework marking in September 2008 is a brilliant step forward in the assessment of taught students<sup>49</sup>. Anonymous marking has, for a long time, had widespread support from UEA students: in 2006 71.7% of students supported calls for its implementation across the University (See Appendix R). Similarly, the Schools of LAW, ART and SWK have had anonymous marking for an extended period of time and have regularly scored highly for NSS Q6<sup>50</sup>. Alongside the introduction of anonymous marking the University's commitment to equality and diversity has also been demonstrated by the

<sup>47</sup> See *Student Experience Committee 16/05/08*

<sup>48</sup> See 'Submission of Work for Assessment' *UEA Calendar* p.241

<sup>49</sup> See *Senate 21/06/06*

<sup>50</sup> In NSS2008 SWK was the third highest scoring school for "Q.6 Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair.", ART was the sixth highest and LAW the ninth highest. In 2008, there were 22 schools and sectors with undergraduate finalists at UEA.

creation of a new post of Equality and Diversity Manager and the formation of an Equality and Diversity Committee<sup>51</sup>.

The introduction of anonymous marking will may also allay some students' worries about "subjective" marking. Anonymous marking will not do this in isolation however, and the subjectivity of assessment remains an important concern for students:

"I felt there was inconsistency with the marking scheme as I delivered two presentations, both in the same format and very similar delivery styles yet received 73% for one and only 60% for the other which I didn't understand"  
[ENV NSS2008]

"Marking standards sometimes seemed inconsistent between different lecturers/seminar leaders."  
[AMS NSS2008]

"The assessment process has been ambiguous and often biased depending on which lecturer marked the assignment. This has been discussed with personal advisors, but the only explanation was that they are all double marked, and there should not be any unfair marks. However, on numerous occasions, I feel this was not completely fulfilled."  
[AHP NSS2008]

Students on placement have similar worries:

"On placement I feel the marking system for our outcomes needs to be fairer due to different mentor's subjective expectations of a student."  
[NAM NSS2008]

Schools throughout the University use different methods to assess examinations, coursework, projects and dissertations. Projects and dissertations must be blind double-marked, some written assignments must be moderated and examinations can be double-marked in one of four ways:

"two examiners/assessors mark the script independently and subsequently agree a mark.

the script is marked by one examiner/assessor according to a marking scheme or model answer and is then audited (checked) by a second examiner/assessor.

the script is marked by an examiner/assessor other than the teacher of the unit concerned and the teacher (as an examiner/assessor) audits the mark.

the script is marked by the teacher of the unit and his or her marks are moderated by a second examiner/assessor. (Note: This option requires the second examiner/assessor to selectively but carefully read whole answers or whole scripts across the range of marks awarded.)"<sup>52</sup>

Union Advice Centre casework indicates that many students who contest a mark are unclear which definition of "double marked" has been used and are frequently unhappy with the "double marking" position that some schools adopt. For example, in a recent case a student was obliged to submit a formal academic appeal to have their work blind double marked. The appeal was upheld and the outcome was that the whole module group had their marks revised upwards. Had it not been for one student's concerns then a whole group of students would have been disadvantaged. This process took many weeks; had the

---

<sup>51</sup> See *Equality and Diversity Committee* 23/10/08

<sup>52</sup> See 'Double-marking' ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2006-2007/Documents/30052007/LTC06D089DividerF.pdf> < [12/06/08]

student been able to ask for their work to be independently marked it would have taken a number of days. In response the Student Support Services Manager comments that:

"Not all students are confident that the moderation and double-marking process is fair; students would prefer work to be marked by one academic, and then blind second marked on request, or blind double marked. These students would also welcome the opportunity to see feedback from both markers in order to have full confidence in the process."

The Academic Officer also comments:

"To improve in this area and to allay the fears of some students that marking is subjective the University should improve communication with students and so enhance their understanding of what is expected of them for assessment. This might include being more explicit about learning outcomes, publishing and discussing marking criteria and relating subsequent feedback to it, always giving feedback that offers clear suggestions for improvement and fully explaining the systems of moderation or double-marking in operation in each School."

### **3.1.5 Plagiarism**

The number of plagiarism cases seen by Union Advice Workers has risen considerably in the last two years. The Union Advice Centre saw 2 cases of plagiarism or collusion in 2005/6, there were 11 cases in 2006/7 and 24 cases in 2007/8 [See Appendix R]. The Union Student Support Services Manager outlines the common themes that have emerged from these cases:

"Several international undergraduate and postgraduate students accused of plagiarism have been unaware that a penalty can be appealed and that extenuating circumstances can be presented in mitigation. It is not uncommon for international students accused of plagiarism to have weak English language skills which further hinders their ability to understand the procedure. Unfamiliar with University procedure and uncomfortable with a formal plagiarism meeting, it has often emerged that international students have been unwilling to explain relevant circumstances at plagiarism meetings. These circumstance frequently only come to light when a student submits an academic appeal."

Certainly it would be helpful for students accused of plagiarism or collusion to receive the support and advice of a Union Advice Worker at an early stage. Whenever formal procedures are invoked it is crucial that in any correspondence the University advises students to contact the Union Advice Centre.

Whilst the University advises students in group inductions and handbooks as well as on the UEA intranet<sup>53</sup> of the seriousness of plagiarism it is clear that many international students remain unaware of the appropriate referencing system to follow and what constitutes plagiarism. It is also evident that the approach currently adopted is insufficient to educate a student who is new to the issue of plagiarism. In the first three months of the academic year 2008-09 alone the Union Advice Centre have already seen 11 allegations of plagiarism, and in 8 of these cases plagiarism was confirmed (See Appendix Q).

---

<sup>53</sup> See 'Plagiarism Awareness'

>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let\\_service/let\\_plagiarism\\_aware](http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let_service/let_plagiarism_aware)< [10/12/08]

The University has also begun to use the text-matching software TURNITIN<sup>54</sup> to help prove the guilt of a student expected of plagiarism. The Academic Officer comments on TURNITIN:

"We remain disappointed with the way that TURNITIN has been adopted. In an ideal world the software would have been introduced with education, as opposed to detection, as the foremost influence. In the future the University might want to consider allowing students access to the software as a tool to educate them about plagiarism. It is clear that an annual explanation of the rules and potential consequences is having no impact on the rising number of plagiarism cases. Any explanation of plagiarism must be embedded in learning and teaching for it to have any obvious effect."

---

<sup>54</sup> "TURNITIN is a piece of software that has been created as a tool to help universities deal with plagiarism. Its main function is to help lecturers identify plagiarism in students' assignments and locate the sources of the plagiarised material." TURNITIN Frequently Asked Questions  
>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let\\_service/let\\_plagiarism\\_aware/TURNITIN](http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let_service/let_plagiarism_aware/TURNITIN)<. [10/12/08]

## 3.2 Action Points

---

We recommend that the University should:

Ensure that students receive comprehensive feedback on all pieces of assessed work including exams.

Ensure that reducing 'turnaround' times remains a focus.

Deal with plagiarism in a positive and proactive manner.

Continue to assess all pieces of work in a fair and open manner, through anonymous marking wherever practicable, and with feedback that is clearly related to assessment criteria and learning outcomes.

Review the definition of double-marked work.

Increase awareness amongst students of appeals and complaints.

Encourage students to contact the Union Advice Centre when they are facing any type of disciplinary, professional misconduct or plagiarism or collusion case, or are wishing to make an appeal or complaint.

## 4.0 Do students have a voice in the institution and is it listened to?

---

"The Charter rests on the guiding principle that students are to be active partners in their own education and in the academic development of the University."  
[The Student Charter]<sup>55</sup>

### 4.1 Representation

The Code of Practice: Student Representation and Staff Student Liaison' [Appendix I] is the University's guide to representation. The Code states that:

"student representation is a key component of quality assurance in higher education in the twenty-first century. Students have a significant role too in helping to enhance the quality of their University experience."<sup>56</sup>

To this end all Schools have a version of a Staff/Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) which acts as a forum for students to raise any issues they may have. Student representatives also sit on the formal decision making body of their School, the School Board. Since the implementation in 2004-5 of a Faculty structure, students have also been represented at Faculty level by their Faculty Convenor, a student elected annually in a Faculty-wide ballot. Members of the Union Executive Committee are students elected by a cross-campus ballot and represent students on a variety of University committees. The Graduate Students Association also represents the interest of postgraduate students on committees like the Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group and the Learning and Teaching Committee [See 'Academic Governance Structure' Appendix J].

#### 4.1.1 Staff-Student Liaison Committees

SSLCs are the centrepiece of school-level student representation. They must meet twice in an academic year and students always form the majority of members. The Code of Practice [Appendix I] offers a number of suggestions of best practice for SSLC meetings:

- Guaranteed presence of first year undergraduates, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research representatives.

- Provision for students on joint courses.

- The Chair of meetings should be determined by the group at its first meeting. (Some schools elect student chairs.<sup>57</sup>)

- The discussion of NSS results should appear on the agenda each year.

The Union is responsible for the training of School Representatives. The newly created role of Representation and Democracy Support Worker will, it is hoped, lead to an increased number of student representatives receiving training. The Representation and Democracy Support Worker writes:

"I hope that after their training student representatives are able to use the skills they learnt to add value to the learning experience in their schools. Some Schools finalise their lists of representatives quicker than others, and this may explain the variations in the number of representatives that the Union have been able to train by the end of 2008. Some Schools

---

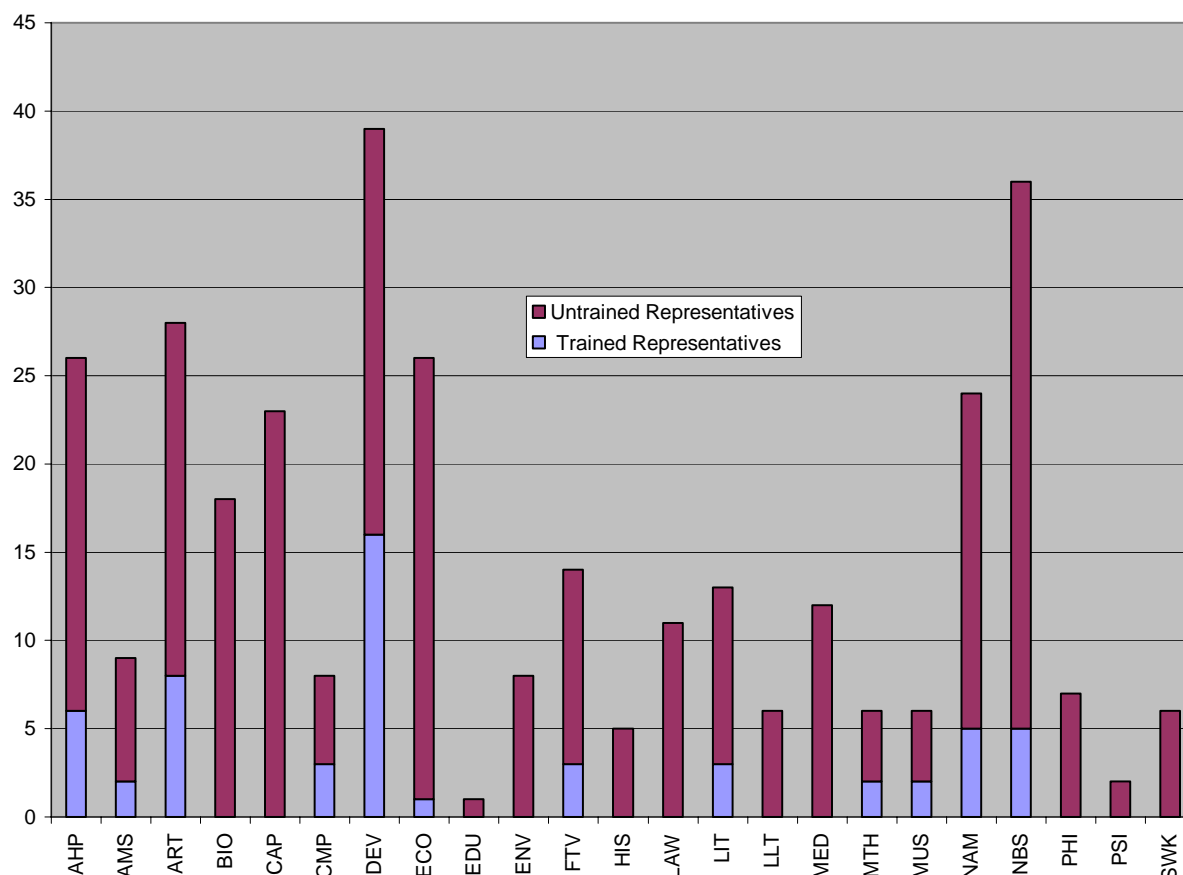
<sup>55</sup> 'The Student Charter' *UEA Calendar 2008-9*: p181

<sup>56</sup> Code of Practice: Student Representation and Staff Student Liaison' Appendix G p.5

<sup>57</sup> For instance, in the schools of NAM, HIS or ENV.

do also struggle to recruit representatives and so perhaps the University would consider getting the Union more involved in their recruitment."

No figures are available for last year, but for 2008-9 of the 278 student representatives known to the Union, 56 were trained (20.14%). Some Schools have had many of their representatives trained whilst others have none:



Graph 4.1: Trained and Untrained Representatives

The Union has set a target of 40% of all representatives trained. We hope the University will help us meet that target in the near future.

At a school level, students feel their voices are heard. Students in the Faculty of Health were particularly positive about the opportunities to shape their education:

"As an active member of student council, I feel the school, and University as a whole are keen to listen to students, and make changes accordingly."

[NAM NSS2008]

[The school was] "very interested in our views on how to improve the course and [we] have been able to influence improvements for future cohorts."

[AHP NSS2008]

"Staff student liaison works effectively and efficiently to resolve nearly all problems we have had."

[MED NSS2008]

## 4.2 The National Student Survey

Given the growing importance of the National Students Survey (NSS) as a tool for monitoring the satisfaction of final year undergraduate students with their University experience, all SSLCs have the school's NSS results as an agenda item for discussion. The Academic Officer comments:

"This has been an excellent move, allowing student representatives to participate in an informed discussion of how to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their School. The University could enhance this process by asking Schools to produce action plans as a result of NSS. Certainly, the National Student Survey has helped students develop evidence-based arguments for educational change. We want the Union to continue to develop in this area; improving the student experience through the presentation of our members' opinions and experiences. The University might want to consider giving students, through their Union, greater ownership over student surveys. This would further empower representatives to make independent, well-informed and constructive arguments to improve their education. Anything that cements both evidence-based decision-making and independent student feedback at the heart of University business can only be a good thing."

## 4.3 Module Monitoring and Programme Review

The University's systems of Module Monitoring and Programme Review guarantee student involvement in quality enhancement. For Programme Review a student representative from outside the School, normally the relevant Faculty Convenor or the Academic Officer sits on the Review Panel. Through the system of Module Monitoring, students also provide feedback through a form circulated towards the end of the teaching on a module. This feedback is then analysed and discussed at school and faculty level. The Academic Officer writes:

"Module monitoring ensures that the education that students receive is reflexive to their needs. To enhance this process the University might want to consider online module evaluation in order to guarantee student anonymity and thereby improve the quality of feedback received. Hopefully, an online evaluation would also allow the Union of UEA Student to access regular and direct feedback. Access to this kind of direct evidence would allow the Union to fully participate, with evidence, in the process of quality enhancement. The University should also publicise more widely how it made changes as a result of feedback so that students are aware of how valuable their feedback is. From my own experience, I know that Course Reviews are an excellent way for current students to help shape and improve the learning of the students that will follow them."

## 4.4 Policy Development

On April 7<sup>th</sup> 2004, the Learning and Teaching Committee commissioned a review into the academic appeals procedure<sup>58</sup>. The subsequent dialogue between many parties from disparate parts of the University community, including Union Officers and Union Advice Workers, led to real improvements in the system. The long timeframe of this review allowed the Union to participate fully in the development of the new policy. This review would be an excellent model to use as a basis when other changes to regulations are being considered. Occasionally, student representatives are not consulted on proposed changes until they appear on agenda papers for approval. This does not allow sufficient time for the

---

<sup>58</sup> See *Learning and Teaching Committee 07/04/04*



analysis that the Union could offer, analysis that has led to considerable improvements in the past.

#### **4.5 Student Voice and the Strategic Direction of the University**

The Union of UEA Students has retained two places (for the Communications Officer and Finance Officer) on University Council following changes to the Council's membership between 2004 and 2006. This has allowed the Council to make long-term decisions that take into account the experiences of students. It is not only beneficial to students that this high-level representation continues, but also to the Council, who find the contribution of the student representatives invaluable. The Chair of University Council comments:

"The Council is the executive governing body of the University with responsibility to act in a way that promotes the University's interests. An important part of that role is developing the University in such a way as to provide the very best student experience that it can. Great importance is attached to engaging with students in ways that involve them appropriately in the consultation and decision taking processes of the University. This happens at a number of levels and through formal and informal devices including membership of Council. Our students are very active participants in Council debate and provide an invaluable student perspective over a wide range of issues. They have worked constructively in meetings and outside them, always respecting our protocols over confidentiality and sharing our commitment to enhancing the opportunities that UEA can offer."

In the University's governance structure, however, many strategic decisions are first discussed by the Planning and Resources Committee (PRC) before being considered by its parent committees, Council and Senate. Whilst students are represented on Senate (by the Academic and Welfare Officers, and the President of the GSA) and on Council, the Union of UEA Students has for the past nine years called for student representation on PRC in order to feed into key decisions at a more formative stage. We hope the University will add student representatives to PRC in the near future.

The Academic Officer comments:

"The Union representatives on Council offer a valuable perspective that help shape the University's strategic direction and we are pleased that the Corporate Plan 2008-12 recognised the role of student representatives<sup>59</sup>. However, we feel our role as a strategic partner is currently underdeveloped. The University needs to dedicate time, energy and resources in to developing a Union of UEA Students that more effectively represents its members. The University would certainly benefit from an independent and expert voice of UEA students that is fully contributing to the process of quality enhancement. Hopefully, the relationship between the Union, as the legitimate voice of UEA students, and the University, will be a focus for improvement during the next five years."

---

<sup>59</sup> See *Corporate Plan* >[http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.74259!corporateplan.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.74259!corporateplan.pdf)< [09/12/08] p.6

## 4.6 Action Points

---

We recommend that the University should:

Enter into a strategic partnership with the Union.

Continue to support the healthy culture of representation at School and Faculty level.

Help to increase the number of representatives attending training and consider giving the Union more ownership over representation in the area of recruitment.

Encourage Schools to produce action plans as a result of discussions of NSS results.

Show students how their feedback has been used to improve their course.

Build the capacity of the Union of UEA Students to survey its members.

Consider online module evaluation.

Widen formal and informal collaboration with elected representatives and members of Union staff on reviews of policy and practice.

Review the membership of the Planning and Resources Committee with a view to allowing student representation at a formative stage of University strategy development.

## 5.0 What has changed?

### The 2003 Union/GSA QAA Submission

---

Comment in the 2003 written submission (2003)	Have things changed? (2008)
"Large numbers of undergraduate students are dissatisfied with the lack of "Freshers Week" or formal induction programme within the University and their schools of study." (p.7)	No formal induction week. See <i>2.4 Induction Week</i> .
"Strong desire by both UUEAS and GSA to increase student involvement in the University's decision-making processes." (p.37)	Some positive steps. Examples of best practice include the review of appeals (4.4). However, Union has limited role in the collection and analysis of student feedback and there is little evidence of a 'strategic' relationship. (4.5).
"Studying away from UEA is seen as a valuable opportunity for many students." AND "A minority of students consider the support and information they receive before and during placements to be inadequate." (p.27)	Placements are still seen as absolutely valuable and the main source of frustration is still with information and communication. See <i>Undergraduate Teaching and Learning: Placements and Years spent abroad or in industry</i> . (1.3)
"A large number of students do not feel their opinions and feedback is taken into account in course and unit reviews" (p.15)	Definite improvement. Although schools could demonstrate how things have changed so students are aware that their feedback is important. (4.3)
"Exams on autumn modules in the spring is not good" (p.22)	Changes are being discussed in the review of the Common Course Structure that began on 24/11/08. <sup>60</sup>
"The quality of information provided in school handbooks and websites varies considerably across different schools." (p.13)	Improvements have been made with the introduction of the Portal. However there is still variability between Schools and Faculties. See <i>Student Information</i> (2.2)
"There is majority support for anonymous coursework marking." (p.22)	Anonymous marking for coursework was implemented in September 2008.
"A significant proportion of students are not confident their work is marked consistently." (p.21)	See <i>Fairness and equality in assessment</i> (3.1.4)
"Late work penalties are not consistent across the institution." (p.21)	Uniformity has been introduced. See 'Submission of Work for Assessment' <i>UEA Calendar</i> pp.239-242
"The library doesn't appear to take into account the needs of students... who have longer terms. Everything shuts down or opening hours are reduced significantly..." (p.31)	Although standard semester opening hours have changed, there have been little or no improvements out of standard semester time. See <i>Library and Learning Resources</i> (1.7).

## 6.o Executive Summary of Action Points

---

### 1) What is the student experience as a learner like?

We recommend that the University should:

Continue to provide the excellent, interdisciplinary and research-led teaching that it currently offers.  
Continue to work with students to gauge priorities with regards to improvements in teaching.  
Widen access to learning resources especially taking in to account the needs of PGT and PGR students studying through vacation periods.  
Continue to develop and improve electronic resources and ensure that students are trained in how to use these resources.  
Ensure that the Library and all other resources meet all learning styles.  
Retain communal space within Schools.  
As it renews the campus, keep the needs of disabled students at the forefront of planning and design.  
Consider widening the sticker system for students with a Specific Learning Difficulty to all assessed work that is submitted anonymously.  
Continue to provide the wide range of high-quality and well-respected Student Services.  
Continue to develop collaborative modes of learning but review assessment methods for group work.  
Continue to offer excellent opportunities for placement study and improve communication and information to students on placement.  
Ensure that students possess all the information they need to use the advising system effectively.  
Ensure that all information relating to module choices is kept up to date and is presented in an accessible form to the students who need it.  
Ensure that all postgraduate students have access to the facilities they need for study.  
Ensure that postgraduate students, both taught and research, are fully aware of the arrangements and expectations regarding supervision.  
Build on the work of the Transitions review, ensuring that research skills are tailored to suit the needs of individual PGR students.

### 2) How accurate is the information that the institution publishes about itself?

We recommend that the University should:

Maintain the high quality of pre-application information in prospectuses and at Open Days.  
Ensure that pre-arrival information uses accessible language and is easily available to students who may not have regular internet access.  
Prioritise developments that will improve the quality of information that students receive, especially regarding university policy and practice.  
Continue to review, and then improve, the quality of its electronic resources and relevant information, and offer comprehensive training to enable students to use it.

Ensure that timetables, exam timetables, reading lists and information about placements are available weeks in advance and that this information is presented in an accessible manner.

Continue to review and improve induction including considering whether to use the entire first week of the standard semester for a full orientation programme.

Consult students about any changes that might be made to their course and then inform students of the decision that has been made.

### **3) Do students know what is expected of them in order to be successful?**

We recommend that the University should:

Ensure that students receive comprehensive feedback on all pieces of assessed work including exams.

Ensure that reducing 'turnaround' times remains a focus.

Deal with plagiarism in a positive and proactive manner.

Continue to assess all pieces of work in a fair and open manner, through anonymous marking wherever practicable, and with feedback that is clearly related to assessment criteria and learning outcomes.

Review the definition of double-marked work.

Increase awareness amongst students of appeals and complaints.

Encourage students to contact the Union Advice Centre when they are facing any type of disciplinary, professional misconduct or plagiarism or collusion case, or are wishing to make an appeal or complaint.

### **4) Do students have a voice in the institution and is it listened to?**

We recommend that the University should:

Enter into a strategic partnership with the Union.

Continue to support the healthy culture of representation at School and Faculty level.

Help to increase the number of representatives attending training and consider giving the Union more ownership over representation in the area of recruitment.

Encourage Schools to produce action plans as a result of discussions of NSS results.

Show students how their feedback has been used to improve their course.

Build the capacity of the Union of UEA Students to survey its members.

Consider online module evaluation.

Widen formal and informal collaboration with elected representatives and members of Union staff on reviews of policy and practice.

Review the membership of the Planning and Resources Committee with a view to allowing student representation at a formative stage of University strategy development.

## 7.0 Bibliography

---

### Books, Documents and Publications

'The Student Charter' *UEA Calendar* 2008-9 pp.181-182

'Submission of Work for Assessment' *UEA Calendar* pp.239-242

*Union/GSA QAA Institutional Audit Submission* 2003

><http://www.ueastudent.com/newsite/repres/qaa/>< [17/12/08]

*UEA Corporate Plan 2008-2012*

>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.74259!corporateplan.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.74259!corporateplan.pdf)< [09/12/08] p.6

'Code of Practice on Placement Learning'

>[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.102656!placement%20learning.pdf](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.102656!placement%20learning.pdf)< [17/12/08]

'Research Degrees Code of Practice'

><https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/ltqo/keydocs/codesofpractice>< [02/12/08]

'ISD Strategy 2008-13' *Information Strategy and Services Committee* 18/11/08

>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/ISSC/2008-2009/Agenda/ISSC\\_agenda\\_18\\_11\\_08.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/ISSC/2008-2009/Agenda/ISSC_agenda_18_11_08.pdf)< [02/12/08]

'Student Representation and Staff Student Liaison A Code Of Practice'

>[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.92578!ssl\\_cop.pdf](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.92578!ssl_cop.pdf)< [17/12/08]

'Recommendations of the Transitions Review' *Learning and Teaching Committee* 10/06/08

><http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2007-2008/Documents/10062008/LTC07D109DividerE.pdf>< [08/12/08]

'Key findings from the survey of undergraduate students' experiences of the UEA advisory system' *Learning and Teaching Committee* 10/06/08

><http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2007-2008/Documents/10062008/LTC07D106DividerB3.pdf>< [02/12/08]

'Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate Academic Advising Policy'

>[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.93323!uea%20advising%20system%20policy.pdf](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.93323!uea%20advising%20system%20policy.pdf)< [17/12/08]

Timetable slotting system

>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.76743!/time%20table%20slotting%20system.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.76743!/time%20table%20slotting%20system.pdf)< [17/12/08]

'Proposed review of policy on examinations' *Learning and Teaching Committee* 10/06/08.

><http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2007-2008/Documents/10062008/LTC07D107DividerC.pdf>< [04/12/08]

*The minutes agendas of the Learning and Teaching Committee [LTC], Senate, Council, Equality and Diversity Committee [EDC] and the Information Strategy and Services*

*Committee [ISSC] which are available on the UEA Committee Office website:*

>[www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office](http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office)< [17/12/08]

## Articles

Newman, M. 'Students more satisfied than ever before' *Times Higher Education* 11/09/08

><http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=403497>< [Accessed 25/11/08]

Smith, M. 'DEV lose Common Room' *Concrete* 2/12/08

## Electronic Resources

*The Union of UEA Students* >[www.ueastudent.com](http://www.ueastudent.com)< [17/12/08]

*The Graduate Students Association* ><http://gsa.uea.ac.uk/>< [17/12/08]

*Broadsearch* >[https://portal.uea.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_id=\\_155\\_1](https://portal.uea.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_155_1)< [02/12/08]

'Good University Guide 2009'

>[http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/tol\\_gug/gooduniversityguide.php](http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/tol_gug/gooduniversityguide.php)< [15/12/08]

'Five Year MB/BS' ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/med/course/mbbs>< [02/12/08]

"The role of the Dean of Students" ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/dos/role>< [08/12/08]

'The Sticker system' >[http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/disability/sticker\\_intro](http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/disability/sticker_intro)< [17/12/08]

'Careers Centre': ><http://www.uea.ac.uk/careers/aboutus/>< [19/11/08]

'Faculty of Science handbooks'

><http://www.uea.ac.uk/sci/teaching/hbooks/Undergraduate>< [2/12/08]

ENV intranet ><https://www.uea.ac.uk/env/ueanetwk/>< [02/12/08]

BIO intranet ><https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/bio/intranet>< [02/12/08]

CAP intranet ><https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/cap/intranet>< [02/12/08]

*Faculty of Arts and Humanities Undergraduate Student Handbook 2008-09*

>[https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.94388!hum%20ug%20handbook%202008%20v2.pdf](https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.94388!hum%20ug%20handbook%202008%20v2.pdf)< [02/12/08]

'Double-marking' >[http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2006-](http://www.uea.ac.uk/committees/office/LTQC/LTC/2006-2007/Documents/30052007/LTC06D089DividerF.pdf)

2007/Documents/30052007/LTC06D089DividerF.pdf< [12/06/08]

'Plagiarism Awareness'

>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let\\_service/let\\_plagiarism\\_aware](http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let_service/let_plagiarism_aware)< [10/12/08]

'TURNITIN Frequently Asked

Questions'>[http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let\\_service/let\\_plagiarism\\_aware/TURNITIN](http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let_service/let_plagiarism_aware/TURNITIN)<. [10/12/08]

## Appendix A: The Union of UEA Students

---

*The Union of UEA Students Constitution* is available online:  
<http://www.ueastudent.com/repres/UUEASConstitution/view>

The 'Code of Practice Relating Students Unions' appears in the UEA Calendar 2008-09 (pp. 276-287).

The aims and objectives are included below:

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objects of the Union shall be:

- 2.1 To represent and promote the interests of its members, as a whole, in all matters.
- 2.2 To provide the recognised representative channel between the members and the University Authorities and between the members and any other body.
- 2.3 To promote co-operation amongst members for educational, religious, social, cultural and athletic activities and such other purposes as are beneficial to the community.
- 2.4 To operate commercial services through its subsidiary companies both meeting the needs of its members and making a substantial financial contribution towards meeting the costs of the above activities.
- 2.5 To carry out the objects in Clauses 2.1 to 2.4 above in a manner that is without regard to ethnic origin, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion, creed, age, disability, or physical or mental health.
- 2.6 To operate in a manner that is democratic, open and accountable and which does not discriminate against members whose place of study is not on the main campus (NR4).
- 2.7 To use the best available technology, materials and processes to minimise its impact on the environment whilst not incurring excessive cost.



## Appendix B: The Graduate Students Association

---

More information about the GSA can be found here: <http://gsa.uea.ac.uk/about/>

### Aims of the GSA

To represent and promote the interests of its members, as a whole, in all matters, both within the University and beyond.

To provide a means of communication between members and the University Authorities and between the members and any other body.

To offer support to members during their programme of study.

To provide social facilities for members, including but not limited to facilities provided in the G.S.A. Common Room (the "Grads Bar").

To promote co-operation amongst members for educational, social, and cultural activities and such other purposes as are beneficial to the community.

## Appendix C: Membership of Focus Groups

---

### **First Impressions**

Female MED  
Female ENV  
Male FTV  
Female BIO PG  
Female SWP  
Female ART  
Male EDU

### **Placements**

Female SWP  
Male AHP  
Female AHP  
Female NAM  
Female NAM  
Female MED  
Male MED

### **PGR**

Male PSI  
Female ENV  
Female LAW  
Female BIO  
Female HIS  
Female AHP

### **Local, Mature and Part-time**

Male MTH PG  
Female AHP  
Female AHP  
Male FTV

### **International**

Female MED  
Male EDU  
Male PSI  
Female LIT  
Female EDU  
Female NBS  
Female DEV

## Appendix D: Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate Academic Advising Policy

---

The following set of principles sets out the key features of UEA's Advising System for full time undergraduate and taught postgraduate students studying on programmes that run throughout the normal academic year.

1. All undergraduate and taught postgraduate students will be allocated an academic adviser who will be a member of their School teaching staff and may be:
  - a full time member of staff;
  - a part time member of staff;
  - a teaching fellow.All advisers must have the capability of meeting with their advisees in a one to one private setting.
2. Each School will have a Senior Adviser and a Deputy Senior Adviser, of opposite gender where appropriate. The Deputy Senior Adviser may share Senior Adviser responsibilities and will cover for the Senior Adviser in their absence. Each School will also be required to appoint a member of faculty to be their Disability Liaison Officer. This person may be the Senior Adviser or Deputy Senior Adviser. Job descriptions will be provided for Adviser, Senior Adviser, Deputy Senior Adviser and Disability Liaison Officer roles.
3. A minimum of three individual meetings between a student and his/her adviser will be offered per year at appropriate times. It is essential that a student attends one of these meetings each year. All students should be offered a meeting with their adviser as soon as possible after commencement of their studies at UEA, normally within their first week.  
Undergraduates, for example, will be asked to attend:
  - a meeting in year 1 to introduce the advisory system and meet adviser;
  - further meetings in years 2 and 3 to advise on timely matters, for example module selection and enrolment and skills and career development.
4. An adviser may choose to meet advisees in small groups (particularly where advisees have not responded to the offer of an individual meeting) but should not discuss personal matters pertaining to individual students in such meetings. For example, advisers may choose to see new undergraduate first year advisees in groups during week 1 provided this is followed up with individual meetings with advisees during weeks 2 or 3.
5. Each adviser will allocate a minimum of two advising hours per week during term time, when they will be available to advisees and other students. A student may choose not to use advising hours and arrange alternative appointments by email, upon reasonable request. For advisees requiring support outside term time appropriate alternative support should be provided.
6. Advisers will provide advisees with information, at registration, on:
  - advising availability hours;
  - contact details;
  - the adviser role and adviser/advisee relationship;
  - other sources of available support /advice.
7. A web-site will be established for advisers to support their work. A one page summary of the advising system will be provided for students, linked from the portal.

8. Advisers will be available to give advice to their advisees themselves, or refer appropriately to others, on all academic related matters including:
  - module choice / enrolment;
  - coursework feedback;
  - academic progress;
  - personal and skills development;
  - career development;
  - generic study / course concerns;
  - personal concerns;
  - health / wellbeing.
9. An adviser will continue on request, to provide references for advisees in all normal circumstances, provided advisees have attended their essential one to one meetings each year.
10. Advisees will evaluate their advising sessions towards the end of the Spring Semester each year. Senior Advisers will then be required to make an annual report on School advising to the Staff/Student Liaison Committee (or equivalent) and to their Head of School.
11. All new Advisers are required to attend a compulsory adviser training course run by CSED in collaboration with the Dean of Students' Office before taking on their role. Refresher training is strongly advised for advisers who have not received any training in the role over the last five years.

## Appendix E: The Student Charter

---

### THE STUDENT CHARTER

*UEA is a premier research and teaching university dedicated to the advancement of learning and the increase of knowledge. Our mission is to understand, empower and act, to enhance the lives of individuals and the prospects of communities in a rapidly changing world. Our vision is:*

- *To advance understanding through research, scholarly communication and research-led teaching, underpinned by a commitment to excellence, interdisciplinarity and creativity;*
- *To empower our students by providing an exceptional education and a wider experience that is second to none – equipping them with marketable skills and preparing them for global citizenship;*
- *To respond to the grand challenges of the 21st century through the fruits of our research, the talents of our graduates, our engagement with policymakers, businesses and communities, and our undertaking to be sustainable.*

*The Student Charter reflects this vision and is an expression of values, intent and direction of travel. It is not a contractual document between students and the University. It flows, instead, from our concept of the University as a community of learning and our aspiration that its members exhibit good citizenship within UEA and in their dealings with the wider world. The Charter rests on the guiding principle that students are to be active partners in their own education and in the academic development of the University.*

### Rights and Responsibilities

#### ***Students have the right to:***

- participate in the academic, intellectual, cultural and social life of the University and to do so in an environment that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive of its diverse community;
- be represented in the academic areas of the University's business;
- receive appropriate guidance through contact with academic staff, advice from an academic adviser, and access to relevant learning support facilities, including library and computer provision;
- receive fair and transparent assessments with coursework returned in a timely manner which allows constructive feedback;
- be treated fairly by staff and with courtesy and respect;
- use University property, grounds and facilities for all permitted purposes;
- study within a structure which is governed by clearly articulated and easily accessible policies, procedures and regulations.

#### ***Students have the responsibility to:***

- engage fully with the educational opportunities provided by the University, including timetabled teaching sessions;
- respect University property, grounds and facilities so they may be equally available to others;
- respect the rights of other students and staff by refraining from actions that may compromise or disrupt academic activities or other events, or that prevent others from freely expressing their views in accordance with the law;
- ensure that all work submitted for assessment is their own work and not the work of someone else, except where collaboration is expressly permitted and acknowledged;
- respect the rights of all members of the University's diverse community and treat staff and fellow students with courtesy and respect;
- understand as appropriate and follow the policies, procedures and regulations governing their study at the University.

*The Student Charter will be kept under review by Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees, by the Student Experience Committee and by the Learning and Teaching Committee.*

*Students wishing to pursue specific individual concerns should do so through the usual mechanisms within their School – Adviser, Senior Adviser, Staff-Student Liaison Committee, Head of School. Beyond this, the University has a comprehensive set of procedures – for example, the Academic Appeals, Academic Complaints and Non-Academic Complaints Procedures – which enable students to raise specific concerns without prejudice.*

# Appendix F: Code of Practice on Placement Learning

---

## PLACEMENT LEARNING

### A CODE OF PRACTICE

Approved by LTC: October, 2008

#### CONTENTS

	Page No.
Introduction	5
1 Information to Students	6
2 Information to Placement Providers	7
3 Information regarding Placement Opportunities	7
4 Student Feedback	8
5 Complaints and Grievances	9
6 Obligations of UEA Students during a Placement	8
7 Rights of UEA Students during Placements	9
8 Students with Disabilities	9
9 Staff Development	10
10 Establishing/Ending Placement Provision	10
Appendix 1	12

#### Introduction

In its most recent Code of Practice on Work-based and placement learning, the QAA stated that it regards work-based learning as “learning that is integral to a higher education programme and is achieved and demonstrated through engagement with a workplace environment, the assessment of reflective practice and the designation of appropriate learning outcomes.” In relation to placement learning in general, this is defined as “the learning achieved during an agreed and negotiated period of learning that takes place outside the institution at which the full or part time student is enrolled or engaged in learning. As with work-based learning, the learning outcomes are intended as integral parts of the programme of study.”

On the basis of the above definitions, the following are examples of placement learning which support programmes of study at the University:

- year-abroad schemes (e.g. in LLT, PSI, Law etc);
- inter-university exchanges (e.g. Erasmus);
- formal work-based placements with Industry (i.e. Year in Industry placements);
- clinical/professional placements (e.g. in AHP, EDU, etc);
- fieldwork assignments, where these constitute projects managed by individuals or organisations external to the University;
- professional Doctorates.

In most cases, the Faculty/School shall be responsible for arranging placement provision. However, there may be instances where a student may initiate contact or approach an organisation/placement provider, with a view to gaining work/research experience. Where the successful completion of that work/research/fieldwork experience is a formal requirement of their programme (in that it would either count towards the credit requirement of the programme, or the Faculty/School has confirmed that its completion was an integral part of the intended learning outcomes of the programme) then it shall count as a placement for the purpose of consideration by the University. In the event that a student undertakes work experience, an expedition or venture without the prior explicit approval of the School/Faculty, the student's arrangements shall not be recognised as a "placement" by the University.

This Code of Practice aims to ensure that:

- (a) students working away from the University have access to appropriate support and guidance, and;
- (b) that the roles and responsibilities on all sides – the UEA School/Faculty, the student as well as the placement provider – are clearly understood. A clearly documented agreement between those representing the University and the host institution/ placement provider/ employer on the purposes of the placement, and the responsibilities of the parties involved, is an important means of demonstrating that there is a shared understanding both of what is to be provided and what the student can legitimately expect. This also ensures that the University – which is ultimately responsible for the provision – is in a position to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the student's placement.

## **1 Information to Students**

Placements which are long-standing and widely understood by both academic staff and students may appear to need little explanation. However, the educational purpose of the particular placement(s) in a subject (including the intended learning outcomes) should always be a standard and explicit feature of the literature or information that is made available to students.

Prior to the commencement of the placement, the School/Faculty shall be responsible for:

- setting out the intended learning outcomes of the placement opportunity;
- making explicit how the intended learning outcomes of the placement contribute to the overall aims of the programme (this should be included in the relevant Programme Specification);
- providing clear guidance on the academic (and any professional) requirements which the student has to achieve, in order to complete the placement successfully and/or



- meet the requirements for the relevant programme of study (e.g. module choices, attendance requirements, the minimum set of marks that students must attain etc);
- ensuring that students are aware of their responsibilities and obligations as set out in paragraph 7 below;
  - ensuring that any assessment administered by the placement provider is consistent with the standards and expectations of the relevant Board of Examiners, and/or any professional and statutory requirements (in particular if the results of the assessment contribute to the final degree classification);
  - establishing that appropriate information and support arrangements are in place for the duration of the placement (and specifying these in the Programme Specification and Student Handbook(s)). These must include contact details and the process to follow should the student experience difficulties, e.g. discrimination or harassment, during their placement;
  - directing students to sources of information on relevant health and safety issues, insurance, cultural information (where applicable), the host institution's regulations and registration procedures (where applicable), travel, securing accommodation and visa requirements (where applicable) and their own rights in their new environment;
  - ensuring that students are aware of and comply with any specific regulations which relate to the placement experience.

Where students have to meet certain academic/professional criteria in order to become eligible for a placement opportunity, the School/Faculty must set out those criteria and if it becomes clear that the student is no longer eligible, ensure that he or she is made aware as soon as possible. Students should also be informed of the consequences of failure to secure and/or fully attend and successfully complete a placement, and the procedures that the student should follow for claiming extenuating circumstances during the placement.

The School/Faculty should provide students, host institutions/ placement providers/employers with the contact details of staff with responsibility for placements, and ensure that its staff respond promptly to queries from these parties. It is essential that students on placements have clearly identified contacts at the relevant School/Faculty as well as at the placement provider.

## **2 Information to Placement Providers**

The School/Faculty shall:

- assure themselves that placement providers know what their responsibilities are for the duration of the placement learning, and that the position is clear in terms of health and safety, and compliance with relevant equality legislation – appendix 1 sets this out in more detail and Section 8 below provides guidance on placing disabled students;
- ensure that placement providers are aware of the basic requirements of the student on placement. In some cases this will be quite specific (e.g. a need to demonstrate professional competences on a clinical/professional environment) but in others may be much more general in nature (e.g. a requirement to enrol for modules at an appropriate level, to provide a transcript of results by a deadline etc.)

## **3 Information regarding Placement Opportunities**

Where a student is exploring the possibility of a placement opportunity, and the completion of a placement is a formal requirement of the programme of study, the School/Faculty shall be responsible for providing guidance and advice in the first instance. Approval must be

obtained from the relevant School/Faculty before the student commences a placement opportunity.

With regards to the lists of placement opportunities available:

- the International Office has the responsibility to co-ordinate the number of places on formally agreed inter-University exchanges abroad (in Europe, Hong Kong, Latin America, North America and Australasia) and maintain a full list of contracts and agreements. The Office shall liaise with Schools/Faculties so that the latter may offer up-to-date advice to UEA students undertaking placements abroad;
- in relation to clinical/professional placements offered by the Faculty of Health and the Faculty of Social Sciences, the relevant School maintains a full list of contracts as well as the number of places available from an approved list of placement providers/contacts, unless other arrangements apply (i.e. year abroad contracts maintained by the International Office);
- with regards to Year in Industry/fieldwork assignments carried out by students at the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Social Sciences, the relevant Faculty Office maintains a full list of placement opportunities and numbers of places available;
- in relation to research/fieldwork assignments for Postgraduate Research students, the relevant School makes the appropriate arrangements with the student depending on the nature and requirements of the research topic. Further guidance will be available via the University's Postgraduate Programmes Policy Group.

#### **4 Student Feedback**

The Faculty/School should set out clearly defined mechanisms for obtaining feedback from all parties involved in the process, i.e. the student, the placement provider and the School.

Thus the staff in Faculties/Schools who have involvement in student placements should routinely and as a matter of course seek feedback from students and where possible, from placement providers. The Faculty/School must keep formal records of such feedback. Feedback mechanisms should allow comment on all aspects of the placement and comments must be taken seriously, including concerns around health and safety or equality issues and followed up with the student, the International Office (where applicable) and placement provider where appropriate. Any review or enhancement undertaken as a result of student feedback should be formally considered by the School and/or Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees and reported in the Annual Monitoring process.

As with other areas of teaching and learning provision, the Faculty/School will review the operation of placements through the normal quality assurance routes of course review.

#### **5 Complaints and Grievances**

The student should lodge any complaints with regard to the placement with the appropriate host institution/ placement provider/ employer in the first instance, and at the same time inform the relevant School/Faculty at UEA of the concerns (and where appropriate, the International Office.) In the event that the student's concerns are not resolved by the placement provider, the student should inform the School/Faculty. Appendix 1 sets out in particular our duties in relation to equalities legislation.

The School/Faculty should also ensure that placement providers are made aware of the mechanisms for lodging any complaints concerning UEA students on placement with them.

#### **6 Obligations of UEA Students during a Placement**

It is important for students to be made aware of the School/Faculty's expectations of their role in the placement:

- as representatives of the University;
- as representatives of their profession (if relevant);
- towards those whom they meet in the course of the placement;
- for managing their learning and professional relationships;
- for keeping appropriate records of their progress and achievements, and submitting these to the School/Faculty where required;
- for keeping in touch with the School/Faculty during their placement, and for alerting them to any problems which might hinder progress or satisfactory completion of the placement;
- for informing the School/Faculty in the event of a failure to complete a placement.

## **7 Rights of UEA Students during Placements**

Equalities legislation requires that students' work or study placements are in environments that are free from discrimination or harassment on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion or belief and sexual orientation. In setting up placements, Schools and Faculties must ensure that employers or external organisations have appropriate policies in place and positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity. Nevertheless, Schools/Faculties must be alert to the possibility that students may encounter discriminatory situations. Placement organisers have a responsibility to respond to students that raise concerns and actively investigate and challenge any unfair practice. Students should be made aware of and feel confident of the support available to them from the University should they have concerns of this nature.

## **8 Students with Disabilities**

8.1 The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (IV) (revised in 2005) (or SENDA) requires Higher Education Institutions to ensure that students are not discriminated against for reasons relating to their disability, whilst on a placement arranged by the University. Where appropriate, the University shall offer sources of information about placements in relation to disability issues and provide an opportunity for students to discuss their support needs.

8.2 Where the placement is a formal requirement of the programme, the School/Faculty shall consider ways of ensuring that the learning opportunities offered by placements are made available to disabled students by:

- seeking placements in accessible contexts and providing reasonable adjustments where these do not compromise the satisfactory achievement of learning outcomes/professional competencies;
- working with the Dean of Students Office, and the host institutions/ placement providers/ employers to ensure reasonable adjustment and accessibility where possible;
- providing support before, during and after placements that takes account of their needs;
- providing support before, during and after placements that takes account of the placement provider's needs;
- discussing with the student the benefits of disclosure to the placement area and seeking permission to disclose.

Where a placement is an optional but desirable element of the programme, the School/Faculty should consider making similar arrangements to support access for disabled students.

The staff in Schools/Faculties who have involvement in student placements should be aware of personal (for the student) and legal (for the University) issues surrounding disclosure of information about a student's disability to a placement provider. The student may require support in deciding whether or how to disclose a disability, and the University may have a legal obligation to pass on (or not pass on) this information. Advice on this issue may be sought from the relevant professional body, the University's Data Protection Officer, Occupational Health and/or the Dean of Students Office.

## **10 Staff Development**

The School/Faculty shall be responsible for ensuring that staff involved in all aspects of placement learning are appropriately qualified, trained, resourced and appropriately supported to fulfil the above sections of this Code of Practice.

Where possible, the School/Faculty should offer appropriate induction/training for placement providers/ employers so that they are able to fulfil their roles and understand their responsibilities for the placement.

## **11 Establishing/Ending Placement Provision**

Where new placement provision is being arranged with another higher education institution, placement provider or employer, the School/Faculty must:

- establish criteria for the approval of a placement opportunity;
- confirm to the University that learning experiences of an appropriate standard will be provided;
- ask the placement provider for confirmation that it has the appropriate insurance, health and safety protocols and has carried out (or working towards the completion of) a risk assessment of the placement opportunity if required;
- ask the placement provider for confirmation of its adherence to equality legislation and for a copy of its current equality policy(ies);
- ensure that procedures are in place for dealing with issues arising (from the student or from the placement provider) and that all parties are in a position to make use of them if necessary;
- establish that the placement will meet any requirements of relevant statutory and regulatory, professional or funding bodies.

Where an existing placement agreement will be terminated by either the University/School/Faculty or the placement provider, the School/Faculty must:

- inform all parties (students, placement providers, visiting staff) who may be affected by the ending of the placement provision;
- provide guidance on how the student will be able to continue with the programme of study and have the opportunity to demonstrate the required learning outcomes.

The arrangements with partner colleges are managed by signed agreements administered by the Partnerships Office. Arrangements with NHS Trusts are managed by signed agreements between the University and the relevant provider.

## **Appendix 1**

Duties of Placement Providers under Equalities Legislation Recent equalities legislation has introduced increased duties of care on the part of placement organisers to ensure all placements provided for students are non-discriminatory and positive about equality.

Equality areas currently covered by national legislation are:

- age
- disability
- gender
- ethnicity/race
- religion and belief
- Sexual orientation

Students have the right to work and study in environments that are free of discrimination and harassment.

It is strongly recommended that Schools actively monitor work/study placements and have:

- A process for checking placement providers equality policies when the placement scheme is first established and periodically thereafter;
- A policy of not using providers who either do not meet this initial check or who fail to meet these requirements during a placement;
- Clear and robust support for students leading up to, during and following placements;
- Awareness of suitable arrangements that may be needed to enable students with family or caring responsibilities to participate.

Where students will spend a placement period abroad Schools should ensure suitable arrangements are in place for disabled students (see Section 9).

## Appendix G: Timetable Slotting System

---

### TIMETABLE SLOTTING SYSTEM : BASIC SCHEME

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
B1	C1	A1	E1	D1	0900
B2	C2	D2	E2	A2	1000
B3	C3	D3	E3	A3	1100
E4	D4	B4	A4	C4	1200
CX	DX	EX	AX	BX	1300
C5	D5	E5	A5	B5	1400
C6	D6	E6	A6	B6	1500
C7	D7	E7	A7	B7	1600
A8	B8	C8	D8	E8	1700
A9	B9	C9	D9	E9	1800
EY	AY	BY	CY	DY	1900
EZ					

	AZ	BZ	CZ	DZ	2000
					2100

## TIMETABLE SLOTTING SYSTEM

Timetable slots indicate the **range** of times within which a unit may be scheduled. However, you should note that a unit is unlikely to be taught in every available hour within its designated slot or sub-slot; for example, a unit scheduled in a full 12 hour slot (e.g. AA) is unlikely to entail 12 hours of classes for each student. Slotting is helpful to students in deciding whether it is feasible to study particular combinations of units in the same semester: careful checking is required if you wish to study two units which are in the same slot.

UEA's teaching week is divided into five major slots of 12 hours' duration (identified by the letters A-E): see **Timetable Slotting System : Basic Scheme**. When classes may be held at any time within the full 12 hour slot (including lunchtimes, e.g. **DX**, and the late evening slots, e.g. **DY** and **DZ**) the major slot letter is assigned to that unit (e.g. **DD**). The different hours within each major slot are numbered (e.g. **B1** is Mondays 09.00 - 10.00). Some Schools have identified the precise teaching times for their units using these designations (e.g. **D4\*D6\*D9** indicates that classes will be held on Tuesdays 12.00 - 13.00, Tuesdays 15.00 - 16.00 and Thursdays 18.00 to 19.00).

Where a communal lecture is followed up by one of a number of alternative groups, a comma is placed after the lecture and the alternative groups are divided by an oblique (e.g. **DX,A1/E1** indicates that a lecture for all students takes place on Tuesdays 13.00-14.00 with a follow-up group either on Wednesdays 9.00-10.00 or Thursdays 9.00-10.00). Alternative group times may also be indicated at the end of the unit description.

Most Schools have introduced sub-slot schemes, subdividing each of the five major slots into standardised patterns. The initial letter of each sub-slot specifies the parent 12-hour slot from which it is derived (e.g. the **AJL** sub-slot, containing 6 hours of classes a week, is a derivative of the basic **AA** slot). There is no timetable overlap among slots which begin with different letters. However, extensive timetable overlap is likely among sub-slots beginning with the same letter. **You will need to be very careful to avoid timetable clashes if you plan to take in the same semester two or more units whose sub-slots begin with the same letter.**

The **Timetable Clash Chart** below, giving precise hours of the week for each sub-slot, is intended to help you identify timetable overlaps. The Chart is divided into five panels, one for each of the major slots (**AA**, **BB** etc). **You need to check for incompatibilities among sub-slots within the same panel.** There are no timetable clashes among sub-slots which appear in different panels. NB "L/T" indicates the lunchtime period 13.00 - 14.00 hours.

**Timetable Clash Chart (panels 1-5)**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
<b>PANEL 1: SLOT AA AND ITS DERIVATIVES</b>						
<b>AA</b>	1700-1900	1900-2100	0900-1000	1200-1300, L/T, 1400-1700	1000-1200	11+L/T
<b>AG</b>	1800-1900			1200-1300, L/T, 1600-1700		3+L/T
<b>AJ</b>			0900-1000	1400-1600		3
<b>AL</b>	1700-1800				1000-1200	3



<b>AQQ</b>				1400-1700		3
<b>AP</b>	1700-1900		0900-1000	1200-1300, L/T		4+L/T
<b>AQ</b>				1400-1700	1000-1200	5
<b>AJL</b>	1700-1800		0900-1000	1400-1600	1000-1200	6
<b>AGL</b>	1700-1900			1200-1300, L/T, 1600-1700	1000-1200	6+L/T
<b>AGJ</b>	1800-1900		0900-1000	1200-1300, L/T, 1400-1700		6+L/T
<b>AR</b>	1800-1900			1200-1300, 1400-1500	1000-1200	5
<b>AS</b>	1700-1800		0900-1000	L/T, 1500-1700		4+L/T

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>
<b>PANEL 2: SLOT BB AND ITS DERIVATIVES</b>						
<b>BB</b>	0900-1200	1700-1900	1200-1300, 1900-2100		L/T, 1400-1700	11+L/T
<b>BG</b>		1700-1800			1400-1600	3
<b>BJ</b>	1100-1200		1200-1300		1600-1700	3
<b>BL</b>	0900-1100	1800-1900			L/T	3+L/T
<b>BQQ</b>					1400-1700	3
<b>BP</b>	0900-1000	1700-1900	1200-1300		L/T	4+L/T
<b>BQ</b>	1000-1200				1400-1700	5
<b>BJL</b>	0900-1200	1800-1900	1200-1300		L/T, 1600-1700	6+L/T
<b>BGL</b>	0900-1100	1700-1900			L/T, 1400-1600	6+L/T
<b>BGJ</b>	1100-1200	1700-1800	1200-1300		1400-1700	6
<b>BR</b>	0900-1100	1800-1900	1200-1300		1400-1500	5
<b>BS</b>	1100-1200	1700-1800			L/T, 1500-1700	4+L/T

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
<b>PANEL 3: SLOT CC AND ITS DERIVATIVES</b>						
<b>CC</b>	L/T, 1400-1700	0900-1200	1700-1900	1900-2100	1200-1300	11+L/T
<b>CG</b>	1400-1600		1700-1800			3
<b>CJ</b>	1600-1700	1100-1200			1200-1300	3
<b>CL</b>	L/T	0900-1100	1800-1900			3+L/T
<b>CQQ</b>	1400-1700					3
<b>CP</b>	L/T	0900-1000	1700-1900		1200-1300	4+L/T
<b>CQ</b>	1400-1700	1000-1200				5
<b>CJL</b>	L/T, 1600-1700	0900-1200	1800-1900		1200-1300	6+L/T
<b>CGL</b>	L/T, 1400-1600	0900-1100	1700-1900			6+L/T
<b>CGJ</b>	1400-1700	1100-1200	1700-1800		1200-1300	6
<b>CR</b>	1400-1500	0900-1100	1800-1900		1200-1300	5
<b>CS</b>	L/T, 1500-1700	1100-1200	1700-1800			4+L/T

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
<b>PANEL 4: SLOT DD AND ITS DERIVATIVES</b>						
<b>DD</b>		1200-1300, L/T, 1400-1700	1000-1200	1700-1900	0900-1000, 1900-2100	11+L/T
<b>DG</b>		1200-1300, L/T 1600-1700		1800-1900		3+L/T
<b>DJ</b>		1400-1600			0900-1000	3
<b>DL</b>			1000-1200	1700-1800		3
<b>DQQ</b>		1400-1700				3
<b>DP</b>		1200-1300, L/T		1700-1900	0900-1000	4+L/T
<b>DQ</b>		1400-1700	1000-1200			5
<b>DJL</b>		1400-1600	1000-1200	1700-1800	0900-1000	6
<b>DGL</b>		1200-1300, L/T, 1600-1700	1000-1200	1700-1900		6+L/T
<b>DGJ</b>		1200-1300, L/T 1400-1700		1800-1900	0900-1000	6+L/T
<b>DR</b>		1200-1300, 1400-1500	1000-1200	1800-1900		5
<b>DS</b>		L/T, 1500-1700		1700-1800	0900-1000	4+L/T

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total Hours
<b>PANEL 5: SLOT EE AND ITS DERIVATIVES</b>						
<b>EE</b>	1200-1300, 1900-2100		L/T, 1400-1700	0900-1200	1700-1900	11+L/T
<b>EG</b>			1400-1600		1700-1800	3
<b>EJ</b>	1200-1300		1600-1700	1100-1200		3
<b>EL</b>			L/T	0900-1100	1800-1900	3+L/T
<b>EQQ</b>			1400-1700			3

<b>EP</b>	1200-1300		L/T	0900-1000	1700-1900	4+L/T
<b>EQ</b>			1400-1700	1000-1200		5
<b>EJL</b>	1200-1300		L/T, 1600-1700	0900-1200	1800-1900	6+L/T
<b>EGL</b>			L/T, 1400-1600	0900-1100	1700-1900	6+L/T
<b>EGJ</b>	1200-1300		1400-1700	1100-1200	1700-1800	6
<b>ER</b>	1200-1300		1400-1500	0900-1100	1800-1900	5
<b>ES</b>			L/T, 1500-1700	1100-1200	1700-1800	4+L/T

# Appendix H: Research Degrees Code of Practice

---

## RESEARCH DEGREES

### THE CODE OF PRACTICE - 2008

Approved by Senate August 2008

## INTRODUCTION

### (1) Aim of the Code or Practice

This Code of Practice provides a framework of procedures and practices to support research students and their supervisors, and to assist UEA in achieving its strategic commitments. Application of the key principles of the Code of Practice is mandatory.

### (2) Framework for Quality Assurance of Research Degrees at UEA

The University's Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) is responsible to the Senate for ensuring the quality of the UEA's research degree provision. It does so within a formal framework in which the Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group, a sub-committee of LTC, and the Director of Research Degree Programmes together with the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office deal with policy matters and day-to-day issues, including the appointment of examiners and consideration of concession requests. LTC delegates considerable authority and responsibility for research degrees to Faculties, Schools and Institutes.

Policies and procedures relating to research degrees at UEA are also set out in the Regulations for research degrees and Instructions to Examiners. Additional guidance regarding policy and procedure is available from Faculty PGR Offices and on the UEA website at:

<http://www1.uea.ac.uk/cm/home/services/units/acad/ltqo/pgresearch/copandregs>

### (3) Research Degrees

A research degree is distinguished from a taught degree by the following rules laid down by the Higher Education Funding Council of England. A research degree is one in which:

- there is a substantial dissertation or thesis;
- individual examiners are appointed for the student; and
- the student is supervised by a supervisory team rather than a course director.

Research degrees containing a taught element must follow this pattern and are governed by the QAA Code of Practice: Assuring the Quality of Research Degrees. In addition, the taught components of such programmes are managed and reviewed in accordance with the UEA Code of Practice: Assuring Teaching Quality. This applies to professional doctorates (ClinPsyD, EdD, DSW) and the PhD with Integrated Studies.

The various degrees of 'Masters by Research' (LLM, MA, MMus, MSc by Research) are research degrees. The Master of Research (MRes) is a taught degree offered under the common Regulations for Taught Masters' Level Awards.

## **Key Principles for Research Degree Supervision**

Students should be circulated with (and then familiarise themselves with) the regulations and procedures for the research degree for which they are registered as well as more general student regulations and procedures.

Students should receive information about assessment processes and procedures.

Student feedback on the quality of supervision and learning resources should be collected and used to evaluate research degree provision by the School and this should be monitored and considered by the Faculty.

The admissions process should be handled in a fair and consistent manner, in line with equal opportunities and university policies. Consideration must be given to ensuring that there is sufficient evidence of an applicant's ability to undertake a research degree, including English language proficiency.

Students should receive clear and accurate information about entitlements, requirements and expectations as well as appropriate information about the academic and social environment of the University.

Students should be supervised by a team comprising a minimum of two research active teachers, one of whom is designated the primary supervisor and is a member of academic staff.

Supervision is a professional relationship. It should be guided by principles of intellectual and inter-personal integrity, fairness, respect, clarity about roles and responsibilities, student autonomy and working in the best interests of the student.

Supervisors and students are responsible for addressing potential conflicts of interest or any breakdown in the supervisory relationship in a reasonable and polite manner. Schools should have an identified senior member of staff who is responsible, in the first instance, for helping to resolve conflicts around supervision.

Students have the right, should it need to be invoked, to request a change to their primary supervisor or any other member of their supervisory team.

Students and supervisors should maintain regular contact sufficient to inform and monitor the progress of the research. This would usually include a minimum of three formal meetings per year (two for part-time students) with the supervisory team.

Students should keep a record of supervisory meetings and the advice of their supervisors.

Supervisors should respond to written work in a timely manner.

Student progress should be formally reviewed by students, supervisors and Schools on an annual basis, and this must include a formal report by the supervisory team and the student on an annual basis.

Schools are responsible for ensuring continuity of supervision and for making appropriate arrangements to provide supervisory cover in the event of staff absence.

**Schools should monitor the quality of supervision. Problems that are identified should be dealt with in a timely manner.**

## CODE OF PRACTICE

### (1) Admissions

#### i) Pre-admission and Promotional Materials

Faculties, Schools and Institutes should ensure that adequate mechanisms are in place for monitoring the accuracy of information in pre-admission and promotional materials.

#### ii) Requirements for Admission

The Regulations for research degrees set out the admissions requirements for candidates.

Admission of candidates who are members of staff or candidates who are relatives of members of staff must be approved by the Director of Research Degree Programmes on the recommendation of the Head of the School of Study or Institute (see Section 5/Appendix A).

#### iii) Admission Processes

Each Faculty must have approved admission procedures which:

- ensure that only appropriately qualified and/or prepared students are admitted onto research programmes;

- include, where appropriate, mechanisms for assessing student qualifications and preparedness including professional or other work experience where a prospective student lacks a first degree and/or a taught postgraduate award;

- ensure that applicants with disabilities are not disadvantaged nor debarred by the criteria and procedures used for selecting students, that appropriate support is offered and available at any interview and that, for applicants with disabilities who are offered a place, any support needs are identified in a timely and effective way;

- ensure that the topic identified is appropriate for a research degree, that a sufficient level and volume of expertise is available (both internal and external to the University) to support and assess the student, and that sufficient facilities and resources are available to ensure the project can be completed in a timely fashion;

- beyond the basic screening of applications, involve the judgement of more than one member of research-active academic staff with relevant expertise in making admissions decisions; and

- ensure that references are taken up and utilised in the admissions decision.

#### iv) English Language Requirements and Equivalency of Qualifications

Schools and Institutes are responsible for ensuring that candidates are admitted with an appropriate level of English Language competency in line with the University English Language Requirements set out in the University prospectus and the Calendar. The English Language Requirements (as described in the Undergraduate Admission Requirements section of the Calendar) were adopted by Senate in June 2000 as a minimum for postgraduate study. Those in Schools and Institutes with responsibility for research degree admissions must satisfy themselves that the English language attainment of candidates is such that they

can be expected to cope with all aspects of their programme, including examination.

Schools and Institutes considering qualifications equivalent to UK degrees may find it useful to consult the International Office.

v) Offers of Admission

Schools and Institutes must ensure that the information provided in the offer letter to students is accurate. Offers of admission should set out, in writing, the following terms for admission:

- the programme of study, the normal duration of study, and total fees, including any other charges to be levied;

- a summary of the resources, including initial facilities and training, that it is anticipated will be provided for the student;

- supervisory arrangements and the name of the primary supervisor;

- requirements and conditions of any sponsor;

- an overview of the student's responsibilities regarding academic performance, attendance, formal course-based training, progress, contact, registration, and any other matters; and

- clarification of where and when further information will be provided concerning University regulations and procedures, health and safety and induction.

The applicant's agreement should be sought to the terms set out in the offer of admission prior to registration. The student and Faculty, School or Institute each have a responsibility to adhere to the original intent of the agreed offer of admission.

(2) **Approval of Research Projects**

i) Prior to Admission

A sufficiently clear outline of the proposal should usually be agreed with the student prior to admission to ensure that the School or Institute can satisfy itself that:

- there is appropriate expertise available to the School or Institute to supervise and assess the student;

- there are appropriate facilities and sufficient resources available to enable the student to carry out their work;

- there will be sufficient related research activity in the School or Institute to provide a demonstrably research-active environment for the student; and

- the proposal is a suitable basis for embarking on a research degree project.

ii) Following Registration

As part of the induction process, there will be a meeting between the student and the primary supervisor within three weeks of registration at which initial training needs associated with the research should be identified.

It is the joint responsibility of the student and the supervisory team to agree the research topic and a provisional working title that is appropriate to the degree.



Within three months of registration (six months for part-time students) the supervisory team and student should normally agree a provisional working title, the working objectives of the project and a timetable of activity over the period of study.

### **(3) Student Information and Induction**

Each School or Institute is responsible for arranging induction and orientation for new postgraduate research students.

Induction programmes will reflect the local research environment of the subject area, but Schools and Institutes should ensure that students are informed about:

- the nature of the postgraduate research degree, issues that research students typically face during the course of their studies, and sources of guidance in the event of difficulties;

- UEA's registration, enrolment, appeals and complaints procedures, assessment requirements, plagiarism and research misconduct procedures, and research degree regulations;

- detailed information on the level of facilities which are available to the student, e.g. photocopying, access to IT, library resources, funding to attend conferences and how to access it, individual or shared workspace and consumables;

- relevant health and safety and other legislative information;

- University information on student welfare and UEA's learning support infrastructure;

- supervision arrangements, including evaluation, monitoring and review procedures;

- relevant skills training programmes (both those available at UEA and the NRP Institutes and those that may be required);

- opportunities that exist for meeting other research students and staff and to broaden knowledge through seminars, conferences, forums, etc., both within and outside the students' immediate study area;

- School or Institute working accommodation, the Dean of Students' Office and the facilities of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) and Union of UEA Students;

- opportunities to discuss progress outside the supervisory team;

- if the School has adopted the transfer process, normal arrangements for transfer panels within the School; and

- opportunities for student representation (an ongoing activity).

### **(4) Health and Safety Information**

Where advanced study and research involves the student in potentially hazardous environments within the University and/or the Institutes, such as a laboratory, the School or Institute must ensure that the student receives formal instruction about health and safety implications, rules and requirements before the student starts work in that environment.

The School or Institute must record that health and safety training has been provided in the annual report on the student's progress. In subject areas where

fieldwork is undertaken, a risk assessment must be carried out and the School or Institute must arrange for appropriate training and advice to be provided on the potential problems and dangers of such work.

The responsibility for giving training and advice to the student may be delegated by the School or Institute to the supervisory team.

#### (5) **Staff Candidates for Research Degrees**

The admission, registration, annual review and examination of candidates who are members of the University's academic staff or a staff member of an Institute are governed by special regulations. (see Appendix A.)

#### (6) **Registration of Research Students**

##### i) **Periods of Study and Periods of Registration**

The Regulations for research degrees divide the total period of registration for the degree into two parts. The first (the 'Period of Study') is the period of advanced study and research and thesis preparation and submission under the supervision of a team of academic staff. The second (the 'Registration-Only period') is the time which remains between the end of the Period of Study (by which time research must have been **completed**) and the final deadline by which the thesis must be submitted, during which period supervision related to thesis preparation and submission will be provided. The **Period of Study** together with the **Registration-Only Period** is called the **Period of Registration**.

*For full-time candidates these periods are as follows:*

	Period of Study	Registration Only period	Total Period of Registration
Doctor of Philosophy	3 years	1 year	4 years
Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated studies)	4 years	1 year	5 years
Doctor of Philosophy (with rotational year)	4 years	-	4 years
Doctor of Social Work	3 years	1 year	4 years
Doctor of Clinical Psychology	3 years	-	3 years
Master of Philosophy	2 years	1 year	3 years
Masters degrees by research (MA, MSc, LLM, MMus)	1 year	1 year	2 years

*For part-time candidates these periods are as follows:*

	Period of study	Registration only period	Total period of registration
Doctor of Philosophy	6 years	1 year	7 years

Doctor of Philosophy by Publication	6 – 12 months	-	6 – 12 months
Doctor of Social Work	6 years	1 year	7 years
Doctor of Clinical Psychology	5 years	-	5 years
Doctor of Education	4 years	-	4 years
Doctor of Medicine	2 years	-	2 years
Master of Philosophy	4 years	1 year	5 years
Masters degree by research	2 years	1 year	3 years

### **Period of Study**

The Period of Study is the time in which the research work for the degree is undertaken and in which it is desirable that the thesis be submitted. The degree and the mode of study determine the length of the period of study. Tuition fees are payable for each year of the Period of Study.

### **Registration-Only Period**

Research should have been completed by the end of the Period of Study. If the thesis has not been submitted by the end of the Period of Study the regulations for **some** research degrees permit one more year within which to complete and submit, as set out in the table above. Continuation fees are payable for this 'Registration-Only' year, and any subsequent years of Registration Only, in accordance with the policy set out in the 'Continuation Fees' section of the Research Degrees Policy Documents (see page 4, point 2). During the Registration-Only period, supervision related to thesis preparation and submission will be provided and should be agreed by the student and supervisor.

### **Changes in Registration**

Any proposed change or interruption to registration requires prior approval by the Board of the School or the Institute's Graduate Studies Committee, or by the Director of Research Degree Programmes, acting on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

#### **ii) Transfers from MPhil to PhD**

Where students register for an MPhil but wish to transfer to a PhD, approval will be given only after the candidate has provided evidence of being able to perform at the higher level and of being able to complete the PhD within the required period. The transfer procedure involves withdrawal from registration from the original degree and re-admission as a PhD student.

The transfer involves the preparation of a written progress report from the student (including an up-to-date completion schedule, together with whatever additional documentation the Faculty may require) and a meeting to assess PhD potential. A specially constituted transfer panel, appointed by the School Board or Institute GSC, will then assess the recommendation for re-admission as a PhD candidate on the basis of the written report from the student and an interview with, or presentation from, the student. The panel will consider any relevant issues regarding facilities or resources. It should be noted that a panel decision

to re-admit as a PhD candidate cannot be interpreted as an indication of the likelihood of success at the final examination stage.

The transfer panel will have a membership of at least two teachers in the University (see Section 7, below). No more than one member of the students' supervisory team may be a member of that student's transfer-panel. The transfer panel will make a recommendation to the School Board or Institute GSC regarding the transfer of the student to the PhD registration. If a panel cannot agree a recommendation, or for any other reason the School Board or Institute GSC requires a further opinion, the School Board may approve the appointment of additional members to the panel.

If the recommendation is not to transfer the candidate, the School Board or Institute GSC, on the advice of the supervisory team, may permit a second attempt to transfer. In exceptional cases, more than two attempts to transfer, or an attempt to transfer a student during their registration-only period, may be permitted with the prior approval of the Director of Research Degree Programmes. Ordinarily, it is the University's expectation that the first attempt at transfer will be made, irrespective of standing, at least six months prior to the end of the MPhil Period of Study.

Decisions or judgements of Schools or Institutes regarding transfer from MPhil to PhD are subject to appeal under the Academic Appeals Procedure.

iii) Extensions, Intercalations and Interruptions

The Regulations for research degrees may permit Boards to approve adjustments to the Period of Study for individual candidates, for example through intercalations, extensions or reductions.

Exceptionally, the Director of Research Degree Programmes acting on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate may approve other amendments.

The procedure and criteria for such concessions are explained in the 'Extensions to Registration-only Periods for Research Degrees' section of the Research Degrees Policy Documents, available from Faculty PGR Offices and on the LTQO website.

iv) Monitoring a Student's Timetable for Completion

Supervisors and students are responsible for ensuring that there is a regular review of progress and plans for completion. A formal report on progress must be made to School Directors of Learning and Teaching as part of the annual monitoring report.

Supervisors should inform School Directors at the earliest opportunity should concerns about a student's timetable for completion arise.

v) Progression and Completion Rates

Boards of Schools and Graduate Studies Committees of Institutes should consider progress and completion rates, on an annual basis as a minimum, and as part of the monitoring of the annual review of students' progress.

(7) *Supervision*

i) The Student-Supervisor Relationship

The relationship between a student and their supervisory team, and in particular their primary supervisor, is important to the successful and satisfactory progress of a research student. It is important that the relationship allows supervisors and students to be able to criticise each other's work constructively.

A summary of advice of good practice for postgraduate research students and their supervisors is contained in section 7 of the Research Degrees Policy Documents.

At any time in his or her research degree registration, a student may request a change of a member of the supervisory team, including the primary supervisor. Such a request will normally be met (insofar as it is practicable and any contracted terms and conditions allow), though the decision to make such a change should not be taken lightly. Informal means of resolving problems (see Section 12) must have been exhausted and possible effects on study should be considered. If a change is to be requested, the student should inform the School Director of Learning and Teaching of the School in which he or she is registered, which will start the process.

While a student will be asked to indicate why they wish to make such a change, they will not be required to do so on the record (the reason can be supplied confidentially to the Director of Research Degree Programmes) and no formal record will be made of the reasons why such a change is requested. Procedures for lodging a formal complaint regarding supervisory arrangements are contained in the Research Degrees Policy Documents that accompany this Code.

ii) Appointment of Supervisory Teams

The Head of the School or the Graduate Studies Committee of the Institute is responsible for the appointment of supervisors. Each student must have a nominated supervisory team of at least two research-active teachers in the University.<sup>61</sup> The membership of supervisory teams of those who are not defined as a teacher in the University will only be with the approval of the Director of Research Degree Programmes.

If a School or Institute seeks to appoint as a supervisor a holder of an Honorary appointment who has not acted previously in this capacity at the University and supervision of UEA students is not covered by an existing agreement at institutional level between UEA and the proposed supervisor's home institution, a form (covering issues such as supervisory experience and the training in supervisory matters that the proposed supervisor has had) must be submitted to the Director of Research Degree Programmes. If the proposal is accepted, a memorandum of understanding must then be signed by the appointee on taking up the position.

The role of the supervisory team is, collectively, to provide candidates for research degrees with academic and pastoral guidance as they pursue advanced study and research. The potential for conflict of interest, either between members of the supervisory team or between the team and the student, should be considered before appointments are made.

The primary supervisor will normally have a contracted period of service at least as long as the expected Period of Registration of the student. The primary supervisor will be the line of communication with the University.

The primary supervisor's name must be notified in writing to the student no later than when the student is formally approved as a candidate for the degree in question.

Fixed-term contract research staff and University or Institute research officers may be members of supervisory teams but they may not be primary supervisors without the prior permission of the Director of Research Degree Programmes.

Where Schools wish to appoint a further external supervisor or supervisors, a formal contractual arrangement must be reached with each additional external supervisor, detailing the level and nature of supervision which they are expected to contribute (and any associated payment). Wherever such arrangements constitute part of the formal supervision of the student, they should be contractually enforceable.

iii) Mentoring and Support for Supervisors

Junior members of staff in their probationary period of appointment will not normally be appointed as a primary supervisor. The Board of a School or Graduate Studies Committee of an Institute may permit staff with at least one year's experience of supervision prior to appointment to supervise in their first year of appointment.

The prior permission of the Director of Research Degree Programmes is required to allow someone to be primary supervisor for more than six students at the same time. In asking for such permission, Schools and Institutes should show how the teacher is not overburdened by other duties.

The Board of the School or Director of the Institute is responsible for ensuring that new members of staff who are members of supervisory teams are identified for support and through the annual review of students' progress, that existing members of staff who are in need of support are identified (see Section 8).

Members of academic staff who have not previously supervised a research student at UEA must attend the appropriate briefing session organised by the Centre for Staff Education and Development.

Contract research staff and University or Institute research officers serving as members of a supervisory team must attend the appropriate briefing session organised by the Centre for Staff Education and Development.

iv) Absence and Departure of Supervisors

Any absence of the primary supervisor longer than eight weeks, or any case of a shorter absence where the ready availability of supervision could be in doubt, must be dealt with by the School or Institute in a timely manner.

The School or Institute must establish whether or not the supervisor will be able to communicate effectively and appropriately with the student during the period of any absence. If this cannot be guaranteed, a temporary or new primary supervisor will be appointed, such appointment to be formally approved and recorded via the School's and Institute's usual mechanisms, and the student should be notified in writing of the name of the person appointed. In the case of a primary supervisor being on study leave and unavailable to continue supervision, a temporary or new primary supervisor should always be appointed. The student will be informed and notified in writing by their School or Institute prior to the absence of the primary supervisor.

If a primary supervisor leaves the University, a new primary supervisor will normally be appointed. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. where a student is near the end of their Period of Study or there is not a suitably qualified primary supervisor available) when the Board of the School or Graduate Studies Committee of the Institute decides that it is in the best interests of all involved for the departing primary supervisor to remain on the supervisory team, the composition of the supervisory team should be reviewed in accordance with the policies set out above for the composition of supervisory teams, and for appointment and contracting of external supervisors.

In instances where there is to be a change in primary supervisor, whatever the time period involved, proper handover arrangements should be in place.

v) Extent of Supervision

The frequency, purpose and method of arranging formal meetings and other communications should be agreed by the supervisory team and student, and these arrangements should be kept under review.

Notes of actions agreed between the supervisory team and student must be kept to inform the annual review of students' progress (see also sub-section (vii)).

vi) Frequency of Supervision

Formal supervisory meetings for full-time students will take place at a minimum frequency of once every four months and for part-time students once every six months during the entire Period of Registration, including both the Period of Study and the Registration-Only Period. (This applies to the period of the research project for professional doctorates.)

The intent is that most of these meetings will be held 'in person', though, with the agreement of all parties, use may be made of other effective forms of communication. A record will be kept of the occurrence of all formal meetings.

The annual review of progress (see Section 8), which may occur at any time of the year, will take the place of one of these formal meetings. At least one of the other two meetings will be used, in part, to monitor progress against the research project.

vii) Guidance and Feedback

The primary supervisor should arrange a meeting with the student to establish the working relationship within three weeks of registration. This should include agreeing responsibilities and expectations as well as clarifying critical activities and dates. The student is the person responsible for conducting the research and writing the thesis. The primary supervisor and other members of the supervisory team are expected to offer advice and guidance regularly.

Formal feedback from students on the supervisory process and other aspects of the degree programme is incorporated within the Annual Review of Students' Progress. Comments from students on feedback will be monitored by the School as part of the annual review of monitoring reports.

viii) Registration-Only Period

Within one month of entering the registration-only period, the student and supervisory team will meet to discuss resource requirements, a meeting

schedule and other relevant arrangements. This discussion should be guided by the need to complete the study programme in a timely fashion. This meeting will update the schedule for the production of the constituent chapters of the thesis and review by the supervisory team. A UEA form will be provided by the Faculty Office, to be filled out at this meeting, where student and supervisors indicate actions agreed and have the opportunity to clarify for the Faculty any additional resources or facilities that may be required. This form will be placed on the student's file and acted upon as appropriate by Faculty staff.

(8) *Annual Review of Postgraduate Research Students' Progress*

i) Procedure for Reviewing Student Progress

Each supervisory team is required by University regulations to report student progress to the Board of the School or Graduate Studies Committee of the Institute not less than once each year including during any student's registration-only period (for some professional doctorates this requirement commences with the research project).

Each School or Institute may have its own procedure for the management of progress of a student, which will include core elements as follows:

the process will involve a dialogue between the supervisory team and student and the report should be discussed between them before submission. The notes of action agreed between the supervisory team and student should be available to the student and team to inform the annual review;

the dialogue between the student and supervisory team will focus upon specific as well as general questions to be answered in relation to the year's activity in an effort to pinpoint weaknesses and deal with potential problems before they become intractable;

the process will include the student preparing a written submission. This *student submission* will take the form of a self-evaluation of work undertaken, training undertaken, the development of intellectual skills, progress towards meeting research goals and the success of the supervisory arrangements during the previous year;

the supervisory team will, having considered the student submission, address the same matters in its own written submission;

the progress report is to include, in addition to the two written *submissions*, a schedule for completion of the thesis agreed by the student and supervisory team, and if appropriate the timing of the transfer panel meeting.

students should be informed of their right to discuss their progress with the School or Institute designated responsible academic (such as a School Director of Learning and Teaching) in a private meeting.

ii) Process for Monitoring Student Progress

The review of students' progress will be monitored annually on a timetable published by the Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group. The process for monitoring is as follows:

reports will be considered by the appropriate School Director of Learning and Teaching, Institute Graduate Studies Officer or, in the case of staff candidates, Faculty LTQC, action determined, and a timetable for completion of action confirmed;



The School Director of Learning and Teaching acting on behalf of the Board, or Institute's Graduate Studies Committee will provide a summary report of the outcome of the Annual Review process to the Faculty LTQC for consideration;

the summary report should include confirmation that the process has been completed for all students, including any action agreed where progress is not being maintained, a summary of issues arising from the Annual Review process (this may be appropriate minutes of committees and commentary on themes or specific issues), and a non-confidential statistical section indicating progress;

Faculty LTQCs (on behalf of LTC) will monitor and refer back to the School any issues of concern arising from the Annual Review process and any subsequent reports that the Review requires;

Faculty LTQCs will confirm completion of the process to the Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group (on behalf of LTC) and report on any issues or trends that might need to be considered by the University arising from the Annual Review process.

## **(9) Preparation and Submission of a Thesis**

### **i) Before Submitting the Thesis**

Candidates for research degrees should always consult their supervisory team before submitting a thesis for examination. However, within the limits to the timing of submissions set out in the regulations for their degree, the decision about precisely when to submit rests with the student.

The thesis title should normally be approved and the examiners appointed at least three months before the thesis is submitted. The thesis title is approved by the School Director of Learning and Teaching or by the Institute's Graduate Studies Officer, and examiners are appointed by the Director of Research Degree Programmes. Appointment of examiners (Section 10) can be a lengthy process and delay in requesting the appointment of examiners may lead to delay in examination of the thesis.

### **ii) Rules for the Form and Submission of Work**

There is no single definition that can adequately define the structure and content of a good thesis and general approval of the thesis by a supervisory team or primary supervisor should not be taken as a guarantee of its acceptability to the examiners. There are, however, rules about the form and submission of the thesis. These are set out in Section 3 of the Research Degrees Policy Documents : 'Regulations for Theses'.

There are also Regulations detailing the requirements for assessment attaching to particular postgraduate research awards. Students are strongly advised to consult the appropriate Regulations prior to preparation of their thesis.

Specified word-limits exist for theses. These are published in the Regulations for each degree and candidates should consult these to ensure that their thesis is not too long.

Specific Regulations, published in the Calendar, apply to the submission of theses for some research degrees submitted by candidates in the School of Literature and Creative Writing (Creative and Critical Writing; Translation Studies) and the School of Music (Musical Composition). Candidates should refer

any queries regarding these specific Regulations to their School in the first instance.

Candidates may initially submit a thesis in a secure soft binding sufficiently durable for the assessment process. No Pass List will be issued after successful assessment until a previously soft-bound thesis has been resubmitted in the hard-bound form.

iii) Submission of the Thesis

The thesis should be submitted not later than the end of the Period of Registration as set out previously. If it appears likely that a deadline will not be met the primary supervisor should be consulted immediately.

Submission of the thesis means submission of the finished thesis to the University and not a final draft to a supervisor for approval. Theses should be submitted to the relevant Faculty Office.

iv) Confidentiality Restrictions

A thesis may be subject to a period of confidentiality restrictions because of industrial support for the research project, because of proprietary materials supplied under a Material Transfer Agreement, possible patents which may arise from the students' work, or for other reasons. The UEA policy on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is given in the Research Degrees Policy Documents.

Students must notify the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office of any confidentiality restrictions on the Research Degree Entry Form when submitting their thesis.

v) Plagiarism and the Certificate of Originality

It is the responsibility of the School or Institute to make the student aware of the legal and ethical principles of originality and copyright. To avoid charges of plagiarism or copyright infringement, the student must acknowledge clearly the use of a secondary source at the point it is used and obtain and acknowledge permission to reproduce published work.

Reference also needs to be made to contributions from other sources if the research has involved working with others in any way. When the thesis is submitted for examination, the student is required to complete a Certificate of Originality to cover these areas.

Plagiarism, intentional or not, may give rise to a charge of Misconduct in Research.

**(10) Appointment of Examiners**

The procedures for the nomination and appointment of examiners are contained in the 'Code of Practice for the External Examiner System for Research Awards at UEA' section of the Research Degrees Policy Documents :

internal and external examiners are appointed by the Director of Research Degree Programmes, on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee, on the recommendation of the Board of the School (or Institute's Graduate Studies Committee). There shall be at least one external examiner. Members of a student's supervisory team will not be appointed as an examiner;

for Category A (staff) candidates (see Section 5 and Appendix A), the examiners will be exclusively external and an internal adviser will be appointed;

While a candidate cannot influence the choice of examiners, it is good practice to share freely with a student information concerning the recommendation of examiners and to inform him or her on ratification of their appointment.

Once the thesis is submitted, the timing of the oral examination will depend on the availability of the examiners but should take place within three months. Exceptions and extension to this require approval by the Director of Research Degree Programmes, on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

Members of the supervisory team are not permitted to be present at the oral examination.

## **(11) Assessment of a Thesis**

### **i) Regulations relating to Assessment and Examination**

Regulations relating to the assessment and examination of research degrees are set out in the degree Regulations. The Regulations detail the requirements for assessment attaching to particular postgraduate research awards. Students are strongly advised to consult the appropriate regulations prior to their oral examination.

Some regulations are common to all Schools and Institutes, for example, PhD, MPhil.

Some regulations are applicable to one School or a group of Schools, for example, MEd, MMus by Research, LLM by Research; EdD, DSW, ClinPsyD and EdD.

Additional guidance for examiners for individual research degrees is approved by LTC and provided in Instructions to Examiners.

### **ii) Communication of Assessment Outcomes**

Each Examiner for a research degree is required to submit a written report and recommendation to the Board of the School concerned. The Board of the School having considered the reports and recommendations shall make recommendations in line with the Regulations for the degree and lay these before the Registrar and Secretary, or the officer to whom action is delegated, who takes action on behalf of the Senate.

After the oral examination and private discussion of the examiners, if the examiners agree on their recommendation, they may communicate this to the student, although making it clear that it is subject to confirmation by the University.

If the examiners' recommendation is either that the candidate be asked to submit a revised thesis or be given the option of submitting a revised thesis, the examiners are requested to submit a jointly agreed report indicating how the thesis might be revised to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office.

Examiners should note that their reports will be seen by the candidate and supervisory team.

The Learning, Teaching and Quality Office will write to each candidate to notify them formally of the outcome of the examination.

iii) Review of External Examiners' Reports

Examiners' reports for research degrees are reviewed annually by the Director of Research Degree Programmes and a summary report on issues arising is recommended to LTC and Senate. The Director of Research Degree Programmes will request action by the School or Institute on issues requiring urgent attention as they arise.

(12) *Resolving Problems*

The School or Institute should ensure that problems or grievances are dealt with promptly, either through **informal** mechanisms involving, as appropriate, the primary supervisor/supervisory team or designated School officer or other responsible person, or through **formal** procedures (appeals and complaints – see below) involving the School or the Director of the Institute.

Students may, at any time, raise concerns regarding their supervision or other matters in strict confidence with the Head of School or Director of the Institute or with a nominated representative of the School or Institute (such as a School Graduate Studies Officer, or equivalent, or the School Director of Teaching and Learning).

At Faculty level, students may seek advice on administrative matters from the Faculty Office responsible for postgraduate research students or on academic matters from the appropriate Associate Dean and/or delegate.

Sources of information and advice outside the Faculty and School of Study include the Dean of Students' Office, the Student Union Advice Centre and the Graduate Students Association.

In seeking to achieve the University's commitment to maintain the high quality of its academic programmes, Senate has approved an *Academic Appeals Procedure*, to ensure that academic decisions about students are taken fairly. This procedure - applicable to undergraduates and postgraduates - describes certain student responsibilities and rights, setting out the criteria and action relating to appeals.

An *Academic Complaints Procedure* for students is published, along with the *Academic Appeals Procedure*, in the University Calendar and on the intranet. These procedures give the student the right to complain about other matters which are the responsibility of the University.

The Faculty Office or the Dean of Students' Office can provide assistance in respect of making an Academic Appeal or Academic Complaint. Any student considering making an Academic Appeal or Academic Complaint is strongly advised to seek independent advice from the Student Union Advice Centre. Refer to Appendix B for contact details.

Those determining appeals or complaints are asked to ensure that issues of general practice or policy arising from individual cases are addressed (or referred to appropriate bodies in the School, Institute or Faculty or LTC) as soon as possible. An annual audit and analysis of appeals and complaints, and of any resulting quality assurance or enhancement matters, will be conducted by LTC.

i) Admission and Registration of Category A (staff) Students

The Director of Research Degree Programmes is responsible for the following, on recommendation from the Head of the School or Director of the Institute:

approval of the candidate and admittance to the degree;

formal appointment of the supervisory team and approval of the candidate's field of study and research;

approval of changes to registration delegated in the Regulations of the Board of the School (including transfer from MPhil to PhD, reduction and extensions to the periods of study and registration).

Admission as a Category A student requires completion of the appropriate application form with endorsement by the Director of Research Degree Programmes.

ii) Annual Review of Category A Students

The responsibility for conducting the review of the annual report of student's progress for Category A candidates rests with the Faculty's LTQC, not the School's review body. The FLTQC will conduct the review along the same guidelines and will refer any issues arising back both to the supervisor and student. The FLTQC will confirm to the Head of the School or Director of the Institute where the candidate is registered that the process has been completed. Where any significant areas of concern about progress are identified, this will be communicated to those responsible at School level for the student's studies.

iii) Examination of Category A Students

The examination of any Category A student shall be conducted exclusively by external examiners appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Learning and Teaching Committee (or the Director of Research Degree Programmes acting on its behalf).

An internal adviser who is not a member of the student's supervisory team will be appointed to provide support to the external examiners and explanation of the University's procedures. The role of the internal adviser is set out in the Instructions to Examiners.

iv) Admission, Registration, Annual Review and Examination of Category B (non-staff) Students

The admission, registration, annual review and examination of Category B students follows the normal policies and procedures for research students, as set out in this Code, the Regulations for the degree, the Instructions to Examiners and other documentation.

## APPENDIX B

### Further Information

This Code of Practice can be found electronically on the UEA Intranet – on the Learning Teaching and Quality Office pages:

[https://www1.uea.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.19565!cop\\_pgr\\_final%202007%20version.doc](https://www1.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.19565!cop_pgr_final%202007%20version.doc)

The Research Degree Policy Documents referred to in this Code of Practice can also be found on the LTQO pages:

<http://www1.uea.ac.uk/cm/home/services/units/acad/ltqo/pgresearch/copandregs>

and hard copies of the entire set can be obtained from Faculty PGR Offices

## Contacts

The following offices can be contacted with regard to research degree programmes:

### Faculty PGR Offices

HUM e: [pgr.hum@uea.ac.uk](mailto:pgr.hum@uea.ac.uk) t: 01603 593820

SCI e: [scipgr@uea.ac.uk](mailto:scipgr@uea.ac.uk) t: 01603 591705

SSF e: [l.jacotine@uea.ac.uk](mailto:l.jacotine@uea.ac.uk) or [sue.page@uea.ac.uk](mailto:sue.page@uea.ac.uk) t: 01603 591709 or 592625

FoH e: [foh.pgr@uea.ac.uk](mailto:foh.pgr@uea.ac.uk) t: 01603 591258

JIC/IFR e: [graduates.nrp@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:graduates.nrp@bbsrc.ac.uk) t: 01603 450768/9

### Graduate Student Association

e: [Gsa@uea.ac.uk](mailto:Gsa@uea.ac.uk)

### Student Union Advice Centre

e: [advicecentre@uea.ac.uk](mailto:advicecentre@uea.ac.uk) t: 01603 593463

### Dean of Students

e: [dos@uea.ac.uk](mailto:dos@uea.ac.uk) t: 01603 592761

### LTQO (Graduate Office and Director of Research Degree Programmes)

e: [grad.office@uea.ac.uk](mailto:grad.office@uea.ac.uk) t: 01603 593771

# Appendix I: Student Representation and Staff Student Liaison A Code Of Practice

---

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATION AND STAFF STUDENT LIAISON A CODE OF PRACTICE**

Approved by the Senate: 28 June 2000

Revised: December, 2007

Approved by LTC: April, 2008

### **Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	5
<b>1. Information to Students</b>	5
<b>2. Recruitment of School Board Representatives</b>	6
<b>3. School Teaching Committees</b>	7
<b>4. School Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality</b>	8
<b>5. Staff/Student Liaison Groups</b>	9
5.1 Purpose	9
5.2 Format and membership	9
5.3 Alternative forms of liaison	11
<b>6. Promoting the system within Schools</b>	11
<b>7. Student involvement at Faculty Level</b>	11
<b>8. Student involvement in Module Evaluation and Regular Course Reviews and other forms of evaluation</b>	12
<b>9. Open Consultation</b>	12
<b>10. Monitoring representation</b>	13
<b>11. Suggestions for Good Practice in Staff/Student Liaison</b>	13
<b>12. Summary of requirements</b>	14

### **Introduction**

Student representation is a key component of quality assurance in higher education in the twenty-first century. Students have a significant role too in helping to enhance the quality of their University experience. It is therefore important that student representation works in a manner which meets both institutional and student needs.

This document outlines the position of the University, Union of UEA students and the Graduate Students' Association in respect of formal arrangements for:

student representation on School Boards  
student representation on Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees  
staff/student liaison

It sets out the minimum requirements Schools and Faculties must meet to satisfy the University's Learning and Teaching Committee and suggests good practice which Schools and Faculties may wish to adopt in order to improve the effectiveness of communication with their student body. The University acknowledges that part of UEA's strength lies in the diversity of its Schools and their inter-relationships with their Faculty and each other. Thus the minimum requirements are described in a manner that allows them to be interpreted and implemented flexibly, whilst also maintaining consistency.

While the importance of student representation should not be under-estimated, the existence of a formal system does not, in itself, ensure effective communication between students and Schools. Effective staff/student liaison is more about communication and a shared commitment to quality than about the creation of formal mechanisms for student representation. In order for students to feel confident about communicating their ideas and concerns to their Schools, there must first be a culture of student involvement and of mutual respect between staff and students. There is no recipe for creating such a culture; however the creation of channels for informal and unbounded communication can significantly enhance staffs' and students' relations. This Code suggests ways by which such mutually beneficial informal communication can be facilitated, focusing on the creation of staff/student liaison groups and encourages Schools and Faculties to build on their achievements to date.

This updated Code of Practice reflects the restructuring of the University's academic provision into Schools and Faculties (Arts and Humanities, Health, Science and Social Sciences) from 2004-05.

## **1. Information to Students**

- 1.1 Information to students about staff/student liaison should come primarily from the School itself since it concerns the relationship between a School and its students. Students should be given information about the opportunities available to them to act as a student representative in pre-arrival mail-outs and/or during induction and/or in Week One lectures.
- 1.2 Students should also be informed of the mechanisms by which they may communicate their interests and their concerns, the means by which the School will respond and where/how to access relevant information, including relevant procedures such as academic appeals and academic and non-academic complaints. Further information may be given at induction.

Student Representative Nomination Forms and Information Packs should be distributed by the School at this time.

- 1.2 Induction sessions for new students should include their key and on-going role in quality assurance and enhancement and encourage them to contribute to the School's and the Faculty's development for example, through regular course reviews. These messages should be reinforced through Faculty and/or School specific briefing sessions where these can practicably be arranged. Wherever possible, Schools should include representatives from the Union of UEA Students and Graduate Students' Association (GSA) in such sessions, in order to explain the role elected Officers play in relation to representation across the board.

## **2. Recruitment of School Board Representatives**



- 2.1 Each School has a School Board on which at least one student representative is drawn from each major level of study at which the School delivers programmes (i.e. undergraduate, postgraduate taught and/or postgraduate research). The student representatives are nominated by the Staff/Student Liaison Groups of the School from within its number. By this means, the interest of students from special groups are protected and as many places as possible are filled. If there are no or insufficient nominations forthcoming, places should be open to any student, regardless of status and elections may be held.
- 2.2 Schools are asked to make arrangements, where feasible, to recruit/elect representatives at the end of the previous academic year from amongst those students who are due to return to UEA to continue their studies. This approach may be particularly appropriate for Schools whose students are on placement during the following session. It is recognised that this timescale may not be feasible for all Schools.
- 2.3 Schools should otherwise recruit/hold elections as close to the commencement of the session as possible with a view to having representatives in place by the time that the Union of UEA Students (with the GSA) delivers training for Student Representatives and/or the first Board meeting. To this end, Schools are encouraged to arrange (a) meeting(s) of the Staff/Student Liaison Group(s) in Week 2 of Semester 1 wherever possible in order to have School Board nominees confirmed in Week 3 in readiness for the first meeting of the session of the School Board.

***Where elections are held:***

- 2.4 Schools should notify the Union of UEA Students/GSA preferably by email of (a) the timetable for elections and (b) the names of the students duly elected, their position(s) and their University email addresses.
- 2.5 The Union of UEA Students/GSA will produce some standard publicity materials for elections which will be distributed to each School at least two weeks prior to the elections. If possible, during the week prior to the election, members of staff should make announcements about the timing of the election and the voting arrangements to students on taught courses. Particular care should be taken to ensure that information reaches research/non-standard students (using e-mail where appropriate).
- 2.6 Elections should be by secret ballot. The Union/GSA has a limited number of ballot boxes, which can be booked in advance by contacting the Academic Officer of the Union. Where possible, ballot boxes should be open for several hours. Schools are asked to consider whether they could hold ballots over more than one day. With at least two weeks' notice in writing to the Academic Officer of the Union, the Union of UEA Students/GSA will be able to assist in finding students to mind ballot boxes and to conduct the count.

Alternative forms of vote-casting which comply with the need for anonymity but which minimise potential for multiple voting (e.g. by post) could be considered.

- 2.7 The Union of UEA Students/GSA will provide training and information for representatives. The School should ensure that it makes clear to student representatives the mechanism for suggesting agenda items, that papers and agendas are circulated in timely fashion and that opportunities for consultation with School Board representatives are available preferably a week before each meeting is due to take place. Depending on the School's preferred approach, this could take the form of a Staff/Student liaison meeting or an informal meeting between representatives, the Head of School and the Secretary of the Board.

- 2.8 The School Board should include an item on its agenda regarding nomination of Union Council representatives from amongst student members of the Board. Liaison with School Staff/Student Liaison Group(s) which will also consider this item will be necessary (see also 5.2 below).

### **3. School Teaching Committees**

- 3.1 Following a review of the governance of Learning and Teaching conducted in 2006-07, the Senate agreed that Schools could decide whether they wished to retain/re-establish School Teaching Committees to support the role of School Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality and more generally to support collective ownership of quality assurance and enhancement in the School.
- 3.2 Schools that do retain/re-establish School Teaching Committees should include student representatives amongst their membership, appropriate to and reflecting School provision. The number of and arrangements for appropriate student representatives are determined by each School. For example, student representatives may be nominated by the Staff/Student Liaison Group(s) of the School from within its number.
- 3.3 Where a School does not retain/re-establish a Teaching Committee, it is the responsibility of the School Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality to liaise with students within the School (this may be via students' representatives for example, Staff-Student Liaison members or School Board representatives) on a regular basis. The School Director is responsible for bringing forward to any relevant staff meetings concerned with operational planning (for example, learning, teaching and quality /enhancement including new course proposals, outputs from module and course update/review, student feedback on modules and external examiners' reports) and any proposals, concerns and issues identified by the student representatives.
- 3.4 The procedure set out in 3.3. above apply to Schools that do not have a Teaching Committee. A Teaching Committee also fulfils these requirements albeit a different schedule may apply as the Committees typically meet on several occasions during a session.

### **4. School Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality**

- 4.1 The role of School Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality was created following the review of governance that accompanied the restructuring into Faculties from 2004-05.
- 4.2 The subsequent review by the Learning and Teaching Committee of the governance of learning and teaching in 2006-07 confirmed the continuation of the role with no significant changes except that the responsibilities of the role may now be fulfilled:

directly by the School Director;  
by two academics sharing stewardship of the role, and dividing responsibility, normally between taught programmes and postgraduate research matters;  
with the assistance of one or more than one academic carrying delegated responsibilities and reporting to the School Director.

Additionally (as noted in 3.1 above), the Senate agreed that Schools could decide to retain/re-establish School Teaching Committee to support the role of School Director and more generally to support collective ownership of quality enhancement in the School.

- 4.3 School Directors – particularly where there is no School Teaching Committee - are required regularly to liaise with students (this may be via students' representatives) in

order to develop a partnership that will facilitate the raising and resolution of concerns regarding the academic experience outside or beyond the Module Organiser or Course Director and also the consideration of student generated proposals and to report on these to the Head of School.

- 4.4 Where a School does not have a Teaching Committee, the School Directors should fulfil the responsibilities laid down in 3.3 above.
- 4.5 The School Director may also have a key role in an 'Open Consultation' which may be held co-terminously with a meeting of a Staff/Student Liaison Committee provided the Staff/Student Liaison Group so consents) or held as a separate event. The 'Open Consultation' (see 9 below) is intended as an opportunity for the School's students, at least once a year, to raise questions and issues and to present topics for discussion. It is the normal expectation that the Head of School will attend alongside the School Director (Learning, Teaching and Quality). This is an opportunity for any student to raise matters of interest and/or concern and is considered good practice. The 'Open Consultation' may take place virtually if this is appropriate having regard to the nature of the student cohort (e.g. part-time students).
- 4.6 The School Director will work alongside the School's Senior Adviser in relation to the Staff/Student Liaison Committee.

## **5. Staff/Student Liaison Groups**

### **5.1 Purpose**

In addition to operating a system of formal representation, each School should have one or more Staff/Student Liaison Groups to provide a forum for the informal discussion of matters both academic and non-academic. Such Groups are useful in offering an arena in which complex matters can be discussed and explained before students are asked to express an opinion and in which issues can be raised which do not fall within the remit of the School Board. As such, they are important components of quality assurance and quality enhancement for the University and the School, demonstrating that the School is actively seeking and responding to students' views on their experience and their concerns and suggestions for improvement. For example, the outcomes of the annual National Student Survey would be an appropriate topic for the Groups to consider, discuss and feed-back to the School Board/Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee and then to the University. External reviews such as those conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency - and the University's own annual updates and regular reviews of units/courses - will take note of their operational outcomes. Another topic which should be considered at least once per session where appropriate is joint course provision (see also 5.2 below).

### **5.2 Format and Membership**

To be effective, Staff/Student Liaison Group(s) should be constituted in a format and on a basis determined (and reviewed annually) by the School Board, so that they appropriately match each School's student constituency and needs. Schools should ensure that different groups of students are given a voice, for example, part-time student, students on placement, postgraduate research students.

It is recommended that each School appoint a staff member (e.g. the Senior Adviser) responsible for the co-ordination of the staff/student liaison system in their School. This person may liaise with members and with the School Director, (Learning, Teaching and Quality), with School Board representatives and respond to matters raised by individual students, referring them where appropriate to the School bodies or to individual student advisers/supervisors.

Membership of Staff/Student Liaison Groups should be agreed in readiness for the start of each academic year where feasible for returning students (with elections where appropriate). Schools should issue reminders to continuing students in Semester 2 of the previous session about members for the following session. The Chair should also be elected in Semester 2 in readiness for the following session.

Schools may wish to take into account the following recommendations when determining the membership of these groups:

- a majority of the members should be students;

- the Chair of meetings should be determined by the group at its first meeting and may be an identified student or identified staff member (for example, the Senior Adviser in the School group), or may alternate between them;

- first-year students should have at least one representative on the group;

- students from each of the major degree programmes operated by the School should be represented (including joint degrees, taught postgraduate degrees and research degree programmes);

- provision should be made, where relevant, for representation by student(s) of other Schools registered on joint courses within the School or, as a minimum, consultation of such students when joint course provision is discussed;

- provision should be made for the representation of small degree programmes;

- staff representatives should be appointed by the School Board;

- opportunities should be given for students from other Schools taking modules in the School to express views and, when appropriate, to attend open meetings;

5.3 Schools should decide on the frequency of meetings and the level of formality with which these groups operate, within the following guidelines:

- a notice of the meeting should be prominently displayed/widely published (for example, by email);

- they should consider having formal agendas, finalised by the Chair with input from both staff and students;

- if formal agendas are produced, these should be circulated and displayed (by the School) at least three working days before the meeting;

- nomination of Union Council representatives from amongst student members of the Staff/Student Liaison Groups should be placed on the SSLC agenda; liaison with School Boards – which will also consider this item, will be necessary. (See also 2.8 above);

- joint course provision and the outcomes of the National Student Survey should be placed on the agenda at least once per session;

- there must be written notes of their meetings which identify action to be taken and associated deadlines, to be circulated by the School to all members, normally within two weeks of the meeting and displayed on a

notice board and/or circulated to University email addresses. (Provision of appropriate administrative support for meetings, including agenda preparation and minutes, is a matter for each School to determine in conjunction with the Student/Staff Liaison Committee;

the Group(s) may report to the School Board directly or via a Committee of the Board on their business as a standard agenda item and consider any items referred by the Board/Committee(s). (Where reporting is direct to the Board, this does not mean that the issues cannot first be brought to other committees of the Board);

the Group(s) should meet at least once per semester but offer the scope for emergency meeting(s) to be called at the request of either staff or students. At least two meetings should fit within the annual planning cycle to enable reports to be considered as a standing item at the meetings of the School Board. One meeting may be constituted as an Open Consultation (subject to the consent of the Staff/Student Liaison Group) in accordance with Section 4.5 above.

**Schools must lodge copies of all agendas and minutes with the Academic Officer and the Student Support Services Manager of the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association, the Dean of Students' Office and the Library and notify them of the dates of meetings.**

**Routes for the consideration of issues raised at Student/Staff Liaison Committees include the School Teaching Committee and/or School Board (academic matters) or the Student Affairs Group and/or Student Experience Committee (other non-academic matters). Matters arising from School Boards/Teaching Committees may be remitted to the relevant Faculty committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee (where there are issues of principle). Matters arising from the Student Experience Committee are reported to the Learning and Teaching Committee.**

#### 5.4 Alternative forms of liaison

Schools which do not consider that such a group or groups could operate effectively within their structure will be expected to make equivalent arrangements so that students have the opportunity to raise concerns and to be consulted on developments as set out in 3.3 and in 9 below regarding an annual 'Open Consultation' (which may take place virtually if this is appropriate for the Group). Regular liaison is a requirement where a School has determined not to retain/re-establish a Teaching Committee.

Whatever their preferred approach, Schools should ensure that they meet the minimum requirements of regular, structured, properly notified and recorded liaison. As in 5.2 above, agendas/minutes arising from these alternative forms of liaison should be reported to the School Board or appropriate Committee, which may also refer items for consideration. Schools should notify the dates of the relevant meetings to the Academic Officer and the Student Support Services Manager of the Union of UEA Students and the Graduate Students' Association, and must lodge copies of the relevant agenda/minutes with these Officers also. Arrangements may be subjected to audit at any time by the University's Director of Quality Assurance. The Learning and Teaching Committee will monitor regularly how practices are developing within and across UEA (see paragraph 7 below).

#### 6. **Promoting the system within Schools**

- 6.1 Where this is feasible, each School should provide notice-board space as a means of communication with students, in a prominent position, for the display of information regarding student representation and staff/student liaison. The maintenance of this board will be the responsibility of the student representatives themselves. Information about the appointment of representatives and once appointed, information about training, lists of the names and e-mail addresses of representatives and minutes of meetings should all be displayed on this board.
- 6.2 In addition, in order that information about student representatives are made as widely known as possible to the student body, Schools are strongly encouraged to consider dedicating a page on the School's intranet site (where such a page does not already exist) listing the School's student representatives, their contact details and their roles and the agendas/minutes of meetings.

## **7. Student involvement at Faculty level**

Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees, chaired by the Faculty Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Quality) are responsible for some important quality assurance processes:

new course proposals;

consideration of external examiners' reports;

any other issues referred to it by the Faculty Executive and/or Learning and Teaching Committee;

one undergraduate representative appointed by the Union Council following campus-wide election. The undergraduate representative shall therefore normally be the elected Faculty convenor;

one postgraduate representative as appointed by the Union Council.

Each Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee should have amongst its membership:

## **8. Student involvement in Module Evaluation and Regular Course Reviews and other forms of evaluation**

Under the University's Code of Practice for Assuring and Enhancing Teaching Quality, students' views and feedback on the academic experience are formally sought as key parts of the on-going quality assurance and quality enhancement processes. Students have an important role to play in:

evaluating a module each time it is run. These evaluations feed into the annual monitoring and update of modules which in turn inform the annual update of courses;

scrutinising, as members of School Teaching Committees (where these exist) or via regular liaison (where there is no School Teaching Committee) and the Open Consultation the outputs of the annual monitoring and update of modules and courses and/or as members of the relevant Faculty Learning Teaching and Quality Committee;

the regular (five-yearly) review of courses or groups of related courses via membership of the Review Panel or by being consulted as Student Representative(s) of the course(s) under review by the Review Panel.

For further details, the relevant section of the Code of Practice is available at:  
<http://www1.uea.ac.uk/cm/home/services/units/acad/ltqo/1.31432> .

In addition to module evaluation, Schools may invite students to evaluate courses. The University conducts surveys of other aspects of the student University experience (e.g. IT service/provision, accommodation).

All final year students are invited to participate in the annual National Student Survey (NSS), the outcomes of which are considered by the University's Executive Team, the Learning and Teaching Committee, Faculties, Schools. Section 5.1 above suggests that Staff/Student Liaison Groups should consider the outcomes of the NSS.

## **9. Open Consultation**

All Schools must hold an annual event, open to all the School's students, to provide an opportunity for the student members to raise any matters of interest and/or concerns regarding their courses (be these taught or research) and to present topics for discussion with School Director (LTQ), Senior Adviser and/or other academic staff. The Open Consultation should be facilitated by the School Director (LTQ). The Open Consultation may be held co-terminously with a meeting of a Staff/Student Liaison Group if the Group so consents and may take place virtually if this is appropriate having regard to the student body.

## **10. Monitoring representation**

10.1 The Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), the Union of UEA Students and the Graduate Students' Association are committed to assuring effective student representation and are convinced of the mutual benefits resulting from strong links between staff and students.

10.2 LTC will monitor student representation activity on an on-going basis. Schools will be asked to submit an annual report at the end of a session to their Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (which will, on an annual basis, confirm to the Learning and Teaching Committee that monitoring has been carried out and identify any matters of principle and/or major issues which should be brought to the attention of the LTC and/or notify examples of good practice. The LTC may decide to take action as appropriate. LTC will periodically review arrangements, highlighting good practice, recommending changes where the systems may be improved and addressing issues which require attention.

10.3 Section 5.3 above describes how issues considered by Staff/Student Liaison Committees should be taken forward within the University.

## **11. Suggestions for Good Practice in Staff/Student Liaison**

Many of the items on the following list of examples of good practice have been developed and proven effective in Schools at UEA. Schools that operate good practices that go beyond those described below should bring these to the attention of their Faculty Associate Dean (LTQ) and Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee in the first instance. The Faculty Associate Dean (LTQ) as ex-officio member of the Learning and Teaching Committee will ensure that their good practice is acknowledged and disseminated. Schools may also wish to report on their experience of implementing the measures listed below so that other Schools may learn from them:

student involvement in the consideration of course feedback;

special consultation exercises facilitated by the School/Faculty in respect of any major change(s) proposed by either the School/Faculty or the University;

student membership of School Teaching Committees and Course Review Panels;

regular liaison with the Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality ( a requirement where there is no School Teaching Committee)

participation in the (optional) Open Consultation;

student consideration of the outcomes of the National Student Survey.

Schools may wish to consider whether and how students might appropriately be involved in course planning, School planning days/exercises whilst recognising the confidential nature of some of the issues.

## 12. **Summary of requirements:**

### ***Information to Students:***

Schools to issue pre-arrival information regarding student representation and/or during induction;

Faculties/Schools to promote student representation and liaison opportunities at induction sessions.

### ***Representation on School Boards/School Teaching Committees***

Schools to seek nominations and where appropriate, to conduct elections preferably prior to the end of the previous academic year in respect of continuing students;

Schools to arrange (a) meeting(s) of Staff/Student Liaison Group(s) in Week 2 of Semester 1 wherever possible in order to have School Board nominees confirmed in Week 3 in readiness for the first meeting of the session of the School Board;

Schools to inform the Academic Officer, the Student Support Services Manager of the Union of UEA Students and the Graduate Students' Association of the names of student representatives before the first Board/Teaching Committee meeting where possible;

Schools to provide School Board Representatives with the opportunity to consult with the Head of School or nominee(s) prior to each Board meeting, either by an informal meeting or by other means e.g. Staff/Student Liaison Group(s).

### ***Other forms of Representation***

each School to determine constitution format of Staff/Student Liaison Group or alternative forms of liaison;

dates of meetings of Staff/Student Liaison Groups to be notified to the Academic Officer, the Student Support Services Manager of the Union of UEA Students and the Graduate Students' Association;



agenda and minutes of Staff/Student Liaison Group meetings or alternative forms of liaison to be produced by the School and to be lodged with the Academic Officer and the Student Support Services Manager of the Union of UEA Students and the Graduate Students' Association;

issues raised at Staff/Student Liaison Group(s) or alternative forms of liaison to be reported to School Board and/or other appropriate committees;

a report on student representation to be submitted to Learning and Teaching Committee on an annual basis;

Schools to operate more than one Staff/Student Liaison Group or provide other opportunities for specialist feedback where the needs of certain groups within its membership are significantly different;

where no Teaching Committee exists, the School Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality to have regular liaison with students (for example, via their representatives), taking an overview of quality assurance outputs and possibilities/proposals for enhancement and reporting to the Head of School;

each School to hold an annual "Open Consultation" which may be co-terminus with a Staff/Student Liaison Committee meeting;

### ***Communication***

Schools to provide notice-board space where this is feasible taking account of the nature of the student group;

Schools to promote other methods of communication such as via the School's web-site (intranet).

### ***Summary of recommendations for good practice***

Schools to identify an interested staff member to act as Staff/Student Liaison co-ordinator;

Teaching Committees (or School Director (LTQ) and Faculty Committees to refer matters to School Boards for consultation with students;

Schools to facilitate special consultation exercises in respect of any major change(s) proposed by either the School/Faculty or the University;

Schools to consider how students might be appropriately involved in course planning, School planning days/exercises whilst recognising the confidential nature of some of the issues.

### ***Student Evaluation of Modules and Courses***

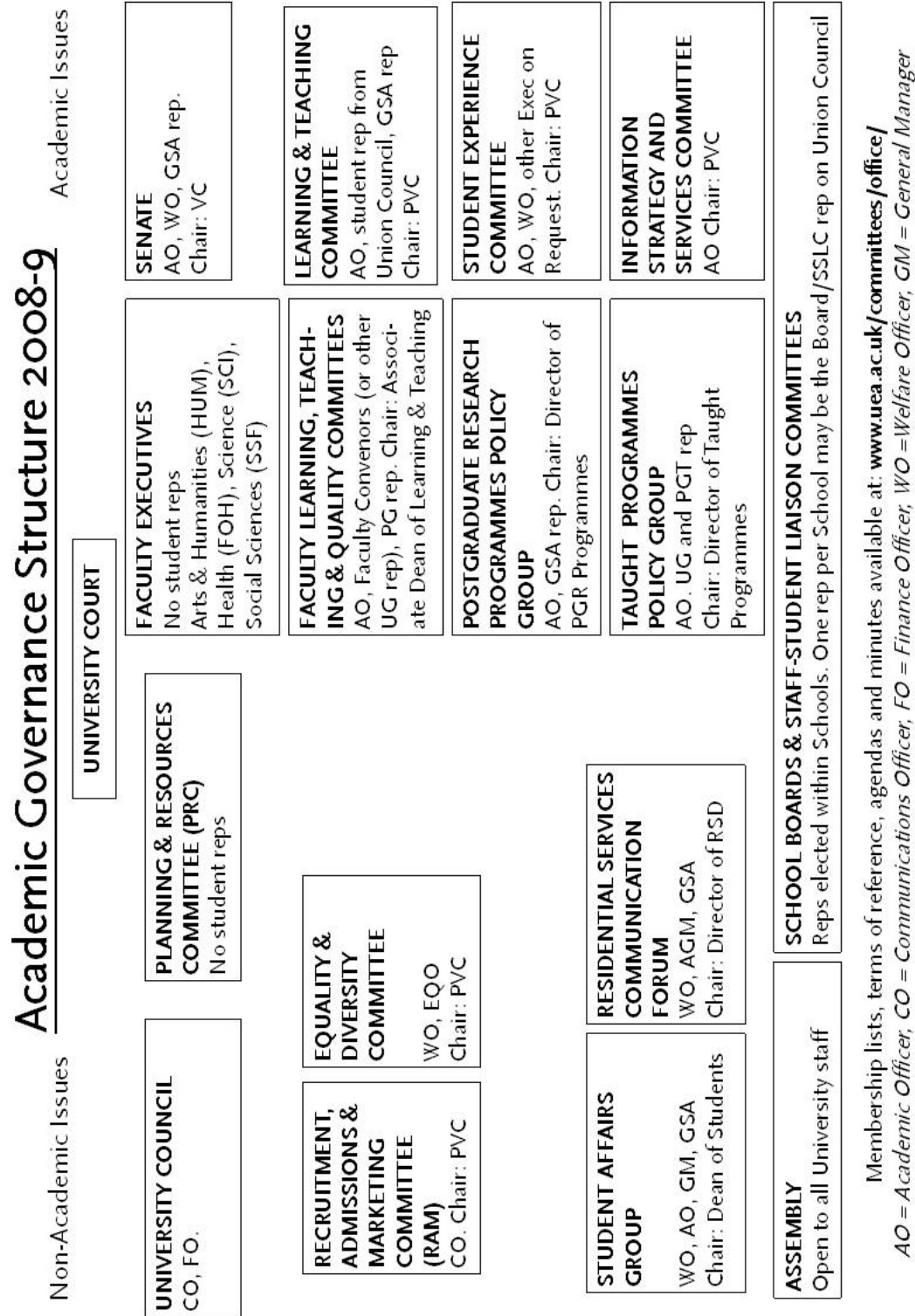
students to evaluate modules each time a module is run;

student representative(s) of course(s) to meet with Course Review Panels;

student membership of Course Review Panels;

other evaluation activities as the School/Faculty determines.

# Appendix J: Academic Governance Structure



## Appendix K: Induction Week Survey

What school are you in?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
AHP	5.0%	48
AMS	5.1%	49
ART	1.0%	10
BIO	6.5%	62
CAP	3.0%	29
CMP	5.1%	49
DEV	3.4%	33
ECO	3.5%	34
EDU	0.0%	0
ENV	8.8%	85
FTV	2.7%	26
HIS	9.6%	92
LAW	7.9%	76
LIT	7.8%	75
LLT	3.1%	30
MED	4.0%	38
MGT	2.4%	23
MTH	3.9%	37
MUS	1.9%	18
NAM	0.6%	6
PHI	3.2%	31
PSI	7.2%	69
SWK	4.2%	40
I don't know.	0.1%	1
<i>answered question</i>		961
<i>skipped question</i>		6

Which of the following events did you attend during your first week?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Library induction session	20.0%	187
SocMart	84.7%	791
SportsMart	65.3%	610
Freshers Fair	63.7%	595
Tour of Norwich	6.5%	61
Poster sale	69.8%	652
Plant sale	26.0%	243
<i>answered question</i>		934
<i>skipped question</i>		33

Have you had any problems finding your way around campus?
---

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
No.	36.9%	356
I have been a little bit lost at times.	51.8%	500
I have missed or been late for lessons or I have had trouble finding services or rooms.	11.4%	110
<i>answered question</i>		966
<i>skipped question</i>		1

How well do you feel you have got to know Norwich?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
I haven't really explored much.	12.7%	123
I know a few areas.	29.4%	284
I know where the important areas and services are.	34.0%	329
I know it really well.	3.9%	38
I already knew Norwich.	20.0%	193
<i>answered question</i>		967
<i>skipped question</i>		0

When did you first meet your academic advisor?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
In my first week.	39.7%	383
In my second, third or fourth week.	23.9%	230
I haven't met them yet.	33.2%	320
I don't know what an academic advisor is.	3.2%	31
<i>answered question</i>		964
<i>skipped question</i>		3

On What day was your first formal lesson?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Monday of Week 1.	16.9%	163
Tuesday of Week 1.	12.8%	124
Wednesday of Week 1.	37.2%	360
Thursday of Week 1.	12.3%	119
Friday of Week 1.	2.1%	20
I didn't have any lessons until Week 2.	14.3%	138
I don't remember.	4.4%	43
<i>answered question</i>		967
<i>skipped question</i>		0

How did you find the social events during your first week?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
I really enjoyed them.	46.5%	447
I missed most of them because I didn't know about	25.8%	248

them in time.		
I would have liked some more low key events.	13.3%	128
Other (please specify)	14.4%	139
<i>answered question</i>		<b>962</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>5</b>

How well do you feel you have settled in to your social environment?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
I have made some great friends and am very happy here.	52.4%	503
I am settling in well but think things could be a bit better.	36.4%	349
I feel I haven't settled in as well as I would have liked to.	10.2%	98
I am really unhappy here.	1.0%	10
<i>answered question</i>		<b>960</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>7</b>

Would you have been interested in any of the following events/changes? Tick as many as apply.		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Skills workshops (e.g. advice on writing essays, presentations, good lab practice.)	36.2%	336
Tours of campus showing you the areas you might have missed.	39.7%	368
More low key social events.	47.4%	440
More time available for joining clubs and societies.	65.6%	609
Time to find out about getting involved in representing your fellow students.	19.2%	178
More social events within your school.	58.6%	544
More time to prepare for lectures/acquire reading texts etc.	64.0%	594
Information and advice on health care at university.	15.8%	147
A chance to meet with the people running the University such as the Vice Chancellor.	15.7%	146
Guidance on your finances and how to manage them.	42.3%	393
Information and guidance on whats available in Norwich and how to get around.	52.0%	483
Tips on how to make the most of living in halls.	46.6%	432
Advice on how to avoid plagiarism.	20.2%	187
Anything else?	7.3%	68
<i>answered question</i>		<b>928</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>39</b>

Do you feel you would have benefitted from an induction week that was more geared towards orientating you with UEA and Norwich and did not have any formal course lectures?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count

Yes.	81.9%	787
No.	11.0%	106
I didn't have any course lectures in my first week anyway.	7.1%	68
<i>answered question</i>		961
<i>skipped question</i>		6

Do you have any other thoughts or opinions about your first few weeks at university?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	251
<i>answered question</i>	251
<i>skipped question</i>	716

## Appendix L: Library Opening Hours Survey

Are you...?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
An undergraduate	77.7%	600
A postgraduate	20.6%	159
Other - student	0.5%	4
Other - staff	1.2%	9
<i>answered question</i>		772
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Are you...?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Full-time	95.7%	738
Part-time	4.3%	33
<i>answered question</i>		771
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Where do you live?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
On campus	29.3%	226
In Norwich	59.1%	456
Outside Norwich	11.5%	89
<i>answered question</i>		771
<i>skipped question</i>		1

How often do you use the Library?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Daily	12.6%	97
Several times a week	41.1%	317
Weekly	27.6%	213
Monthly	14.0%	108
Less	4.7%	36
<i>answered question</i>		771
<i>skipped question</i>		1

What do you use the Library for? (tick as many as apply)		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Books and other resources	93.8%	722

IT and email	60.0%	462
Study space	70.1%	540
Other (please specify)	7.0%	54
<i>answered question</i>		<b>770</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>2</b>

What time of day do you generally use the Library?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Morning	18.6%	143
Lunchtime	9.5%	73
Afternoon	51.2%	393
Evening	20.7%	159
<i>answered question</i>		<b>768</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>4</b>

Why do you use the Library at this time?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
It's when I'm on campus	46.8%	356
My only time for studying	21.3%	162
Constrained by existing opening hours	15.0%	114
Other (please specify)	17.0%	129
<i>answered question</i>		<b>761</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>11</b>

Would you use the Library later in the evening if it was open?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	76.4%	586
No	23.6%	181
<i>answered question</i>		<b>767</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>5</b>

If you answered "no", why?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	177
<i>answered question</i>	<b>177</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>595</b>

How late would you like the Library to be open?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Stay the same (9pm on weekdays)	17.1%	130
Between 9pm and midnight	46.6%	354
After midnight	4.0%	30



24 hours	32.3%	245
<i>answered question</i>		<b>759</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>13</b>

Do you know about the self-service facilities available? (tick all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Self-issue of books	97.6%	740
Self-return with receipt (coming soon)	28.4%	215
Self-payment of fines	67.0%	508
Online renewals	80.2%	608
Online holds	72.6%	550
IT vending machine	69.4%	526
<i>answered question</i>		<b>758</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>14</b>

Do you access staffed services? (tick all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Library helpdesk	84.5%	555
Circulation (issues, renewals, fines, etc)	41.1%	270
Collection of reservations/holds etc	42.2%	277
Booking of AV material and viewing facilities	10.7%	70
Booking of study carrels	21.8%	143
Shelving staff	12.2%	80
IT Helpdesk	58.9%	387
<i>answered question</i>		<b>657</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>115</b>

If Library opening hours were extended, would you be happy with reduced staffing at the extended times?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	80.9%	623
No	2.6%	20
Indifferent	16.5%	127
<i>answered question</i>		<b>770</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>2</b>
Would you value the opportunity to learn about the self-service options available?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	58.2%	442
No	41.8%	318
<i>answered question</i>		<b>760</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>12</b>

Any other comments about the Library's opening hours?

Answer Options	Response Count
	203
<i>answered question</i>	203
<i>skipped question</i>	569

Would you sign a petition to increase the Library's opening hours?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	74.6%	570
No	17.4%	133
Already have	8.0%	61
<i>answered question</i>		764
<i>skipped question</i>		8

# Appendix M: Advising Survey carried out by the Dean of Students' Office

---

## **Key findings from the survey of undergraduate students' experiences of the UEA advisory system**

*Learning and Teaching Committee 10/06/08*

### **Introduction**

1. This document provides a brief summary of the results of a survey of students' experiences of, and views on, the UEA advisory system. The full report will be available shortly and will be circulated to LTC Committee members, Deans of Faculty, Heads of School and Senior Advisers.
2. The survey was web-mounted and administered in Spring 2008. There were 1018 responses from students from a range of taught degree programmes. The majority of the respondents (846) were undergraduates and it is their responses that are analysed here.

### **Profile of respondents**

3. The overall UG response rate was 10 percent. The profile of the respondents broadly matches that of the UEA undergraduate population, although there was a higher response rate from women than from men. Sample size limited the separate analysis of the experiences of different student groups: the only meaningful analyses possible were by gender and age group, although the only statistically significant differences that emerged related to students age.
4. Responses were received from students from all UEA Faculties and Schools, but response rates varied significantly. The highest response rate was from SCI (15%) and in particular from ENV (29%); the lowest response rate was from HUM students (6%). Other Schools with an above average response rate are BIO, CMP, MTH, DEV, LAW and SWK.

### **Help seeking behaviour**

5. The most frequently cited UEA source of advice on academic matters was lecturers (75%) followed by Advisers (60%). Only 41 percent of HUM students consulted their Adviser, while 72 percent of FOH students did so (65% for SCI and 59% for SSF). Students also consulted their School or Faculty Office (21% and 22% respectively) and 10 percent said that they consulted DOS for academic advice.
6. For personal concerns, the adviser was the most frequently cited UEA source of support (33%), but again there are clear differences by Faculty (23% for HUM, 33% for both SCI and SSF and 44% for FOH). Only 8 percent said that they consulted their lecturers for personal support, but 13 percent consulted DOS and 15 percent Counselling.
7. Overall, the most frequently cited source of advice and support for academic and personal concerns was friends (71% and 80% respectively) and family (80% and 74% respectively). No significant differences were evident in the sources of advice used by male and female students and those of different age groups.

### **Undergraduates' experiences of the advisory system**

8. All but 3 percent of undergraduates said that they knew who their adviser was, but the frequency and type of contact varies across UEA. Only 46 percent of HUM respondents said they had been invited to a meeting by their adviser, compared to 78 percent of SCI and SSF students and 87 percent of FOH students.
9. Only 41 percent of students said that their adviser had regular tutorial hours (27% for FOH, 37% for SCI, 44% for HUM and 56% for SSF). However, 54 percent said that their adviser was available for consultation at other times (33% for HUM, 54% for SSF, 60% for SCI, and 67% for FOH).

10. The information provided at students' first advisory meeting seems to vary, but overall 69 percent of students said that it was helpful. Older students (26 or over) were more likely to have found this meeting unhelpful than younger students (18 -21 years).

11. Other matters discussed at advisory meetings were module choices (48%), course work feedback (46%), progress review (49%) and career advice (29%).

12. Sixty eight percent of respondents said that they had independently sought help from their adviser. The most frequently cited reason for doing so was for generic course or study concerns. Eighteen percent had sought advice for career progression concerns and 15 percent for personal problems.

13. The most common reasons given by students for not independently seeking help, were that they preferred to seek help from others (72%) and that no support was required (69%). However, 41 percent said that they did not feel able to ask for help, and 32 percent that they lacked confidence in the support provided. Faculty differences were again apparent.

14. Students were asked to indicate the frequency of their contact with their academic adviser during the current academic year. This ranged from never (22%), once (20%), twice (21%) and three times (13%) to more than three times (24%). Contact was least frequent in HUM and most frequent in SCI and FOH.

### **Student satisfaction with the personal and academic support provided**

15. Ninety five percent of students said that academic support and 74 percent that personal support was important to them. Personal support was particularly highly rated by FOH students (88%). Academic support was particularly important to older students (26 years and over).

16. Three quarters of student were satisfied with both their academic and personal support. Satisfaction rates for support were highest for SCI (80%) and lowest for HUM (66%); for personal support they were again highest for SCI (78%) and lowest for HUM (66%).

17. Three quarters of all respondents agreed that academic staff had cared about their wellbeing (80% in FOH, 79% in SCI, 75% in HUM and 65% in SSF). Just over 90 percent agreed that they were proud to be a student at UEA (94% in SCI, 93 % in SSF, 91% in FOH and 86% in HUM).

### **Students' comments and suggestions**

18. Nearly a quarter of the respondents (190 students) provided additional comments on their views of the advisory system. These describe both positive and negative experiences and include suggestions for improvement. Some students were glowing in their praise for their advisers, while other comments verged on the vitriolic.

19. Some of the key themes that emerge from students comments are: the unreliability of some advisers' availability and responsiveness to emails; the importance for students of having an adviser who would be able get to know them and provide references; the need for advice to be available by email when students were studying away from campus; the importance of advisers understanding their particular circumstances (for example, the impact of a disability or being a single parent or mature student); and the importance of the availability of good information on the advisory system.

20. A number of students felt that meetings with advisers should be compulsory, and some suggested that first year students in particular should not be allocated to advisers who were likely to be absent during the year. Many commented that advisers often gave the impression that they were too busy to see their advisees.

### **Conclusions and further steps**

21. The most important finding of this survey is perhaps the unambiguous evidence of the inconsistency in the implementation and effectiveness of UEA's current advisory system. Both academic and personal support is clearly valued highly by our students, but both very positive and very negative experiences are reported from most, if not all UEA Schools.

22. The results of the survey have provided a very useful steer in respect of ways of improving the system; they have highlighted both strengths and weaknesses, and will

inform the ways that the group responsible for the review of UEA's system will develop resources and guidance for both students and staff.

23. The detailed results of this survey will be disseminated shortly, together with the findings from a recent survey of students who withdrew during the last academic year. The responses from this latter survey also highlight the importance of good and readily available advice and information for students.

## Appendix N: National Student Survey 2008

---

The National Student Survey comprises 22 questions that take the form of statements to which students are required to respond with a number from 1 to 5 showing how much they agree. For 2008, the questions for the National Student Survey were:

### **The teaching on my course.**

1. Staff are good at explaining things.
2. Staff have made the subject interesting.
3. Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching.
4. The course is intellectually stimulating.

### **Assessment and feedback**

5. The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance.
6. Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair.
7. Feedback on my work has been prompt.
8. I have received detailed comments on my work.
9. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand.

### **Academic support**

10. I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies.
11. I have been able to contact staff when I needed to.
12. Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices.

### **Organisation and management**

13. The timetable works efficiently as far as my activities are concerned.
14. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively.
15. The course is well organised and is running smoothly.

### **Learning resources**

16. The library resources and services are good enough for my needs.
17. I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to.
18. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to.

### **Personal development**

19. The course has helped me to present myself with confidence.
20. My communication skills have improved.
21. As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems.

### **Overall satisfaction**

22. **Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course.**

*At UEA placement students in AHP and NAM were also asked to respond to the following statements:*

- N3.1 I received sufficient preparatory information prior to my placement(s)

- N3.2 I was allocated placement(s) suitable for my course  
 N3.3 I received appropriate supervision on placement(s)  
 N3.4 I was given opportunities to meet my required practice learning outcomes/competences  
 N3.5 My contribution during placement(s) as part of the clinical team was valued  
 N3.6 My practice supervisor(s) understood how my placement(s) related to the broader requirements of my course.

Table N.1 shows the response rate for each of the Schools at UEA to NSS2008.

<i>Table N.1 NSS2008 Response rate by School</i>			
<i>MUS 80</i>	<i>LAW 72</i>	<i>UEA 2008 70</i>	<i>ART 82</i>
<i>ENV 82</i>	<i>LCW 68</i>	<i>PSI 74</i>	<i>AHP 57</i>
<i>FTV 75</i>	<i>LLT 88</i>	<i>DEV 73</i>	<i>NAM 34</i>
<i>NBS 72</i>	<i>CMP 76</i>	<i>MTH 79</i>	<i>HIS 80</i>
<i>PHI 63</i>	<i>DRA 80</i>	<i>ECO 65</i>	<i>MED 94</i>
<i>AMS 75</i>	<i>BIO 69</i>	<i>SWK 79</i>	<i>PHA 76</i>

## Appendix O: Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2008

### Appendix O Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2008

The data for UEA is included below, sorted by Faculty.

Faculty	FOH	HUM	JIC/IFR	SCI	SSF	UEA Total	National excluding UEA
Number of students	21	55	19	86	36	224*	16302
<b>Section 1: Supervision</b>							
1.a. My supervisor/s have the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support my research	9.5%	10.9%	5.3%	7.1%	8.3%	8.6%	7.3%
1.b. My supervisor/s make a real effort to understand any difficulties I face	14.3%	9.1%	10.5%	18.8%	11.1%	13.6%	11.1%
1.c. I have been given good guidance in topic selection and refinement by my supervisor/s	14.3%	9.1%	5.3%	12.9%	11.1%	11.4%	12.4%
1.d. I have received good guidance in my literature search from my supervisor/s	20.0%	14.5%	10.5%	12.9%	13.9%	14.2%	15.3%
1.e. My supervisor/s provide helpful feedback on my progress	4.8%	10.9%	21.1%	17.6%	11.1%	13.6%	11.7%
1.f. My supervisor/s are available when I need them	9.5%	10.9%	15.8%	11.8%	13.9%	12.3%	12.0%
<b>Section 2: Skills development</b>							
2.a. As a result of my experience so far I feel confident about	9.5%	5.5%	10.5%	5.9%	11.4%	7.8%	9.6%



managing a research project							
2.b. My experience so far has improved my analytical skills	9.5%	5.5%	5.3%	4.7%	5.7%	5.9%	6.9%
2.c. My experience so far has helped me to develop a range of communication skills	0.0%	5.5%	5.3%	4.8%	11.4%	5.5%	9.6%
2.d. As a result of my experience so far I have improved my ability to learn independently	0.0%	3.6%	5.3%	2.4%	11.4%	4.1%	6.1%
<b>Section 3: Infrastructure</b>							
3.a. I have adequate access to the equipment necessary for my research	19.0%	14.8%	10.5%	16.5%	22.2%	16.9%	12.8%
3.b. I have a suitable working space	28.6%	25.5%	10.5%	21.2%	25.0%	22.7%	18.3%
3.c. There is appropriate financial support for research activities	28.6%	50.9%	10.5%	21.2%	22.9%	28.8%	26.9%
3.d. There is adequate provision of computing resources and facilities	19.0%	13.0%	5.3%	16.5%	22.2%	16.0%	15.5%
3.e. There is adequate provision of library facilities	9.5%	21.8%	5.3%	14.1%	8.3%	14.1%	13.6%
3.f. I have the technical support I need	23.8%	18.2%	5.3%	15.5%	20.0%	17.0%	14.2%
<b>Section 4: Intellectual climate</b>							
4.a. My department provides opportunities for social contact with other research	14.3%	27.3%	26.3%	24.7%	8.3%	21.8%	19.7%

students							
4.b. My department provides opportunities for me to become involved in the broader research culture	14.3%	29.6%	15.8%	22.4%	13.9%	21.5%	19.9%
4.c. The research ambience in my department or faculty stimulates my work	28.6%	32.7%	15.8%	30.6%	19.4%	27.7%	23.6%
4.d. I feel integrated into my department's community	38.1%	34.5%	21.1%	34.1%	38.9%	34.5%	27.7%
4.e. My department provides a good seminar programme for research students	23.8%	27.3%	10.5%	20.0%	16.7%	20.9%	18.4%
<b>Section 5: Goals and standards</b>							
5.a. I understand the required standard for the thesis	9.5%	9.3%	26.3%	9.4%	16.7%	12.3%	11.3%
5.b. I understand the standard of work expected	4.8%	9.3%	15.8%	4.7%	11.1%	7.8%	9.8%
5.c. I understand the requirements of thesis examination	4.8%	11.1%	31.6%	15.3%	16.7%	14.6%	14.6%
<b>Section 6: Thesis examination</b>							
6. Have you sat your final viva examination?	1 student	1 student	No students	6 students	No students		
6.a.i. The thesis examination process was fair	0.0%	0.0%		16.7%		12.5%	10.5%

6.a.ii. The examination of my thesis was completed in a reasonable time scale	0.0%	100.0%		16.7%		25.0%	14.6%
6.a.iii. I was given adequate support and guidance in preparation for my viva voce	0.0%	100.0%		16.7%		25.0%	20.0%
6.a.iv. I was given adequate support and guidance to make any changes to my thesis following my viva voce	0.0%	100.0%		25.0%		33.3%	14.6%
<b>Section 7: QAA Code of Practice</b>							
7.a. I am encouraged to think about the range of career opportunities that are available to me.	19.0%	27.3%	26.3%	29.4%	36.1%	28.6%	30.8%
7.b. I am encouraged to reflect on my professional development needs	14.3%	21.8%	15.8%	15.3%	20.0%	17.8%	25.2%
7.c. I am encouraged to reflect on my career development needs	19.0%	24.1%	21.1%	21.2%	25.7%	22.5%	27.5%
7.d. I know who to approach, or where to find this out, if I am dissatisfied with any element of my research degree programme	19.0%	16.4%	21.1%	31.8%	20.0%	23.7%	21.0%
7.e. My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students	19.0%	25.9%	21.1%	18.8%	22.9%	22.0%	19.7%

7.f. I understand the requirements and deadlines for formal monitoring of my progress	9.5%	10.9%	10.5%	7.1%	8.3%	8.6%	10.5%
7.g. I understand my responsibilities as a research degree student	4.8%	5.5%	15.8%	7.1%	8.3%	7.7%	7.3%
7.h. I am aware of my institution's responsibilities towards me as a research degree student	14.3%	14.5%	26.3%	21.4%	14.3%	18.8%	16.9%
7.i. There are adequate opportunities available for me to further develop my research skills	14.3%	16.4%	11.1%	16.5%	13.9%	15.5%	14.2%
7.j. There are adequate opportunities available for me to further develop my transferable skills	9.5%	14.8%	10.5%	5.9%	13.9%	10.0%	14.5%
<b>Section 8: Teaching Opportunities</b>							
8. I have had adequate opportunity to gain experience of teaching [e.g., lectures, seminars or workshops] whilst doing my research degree programme	23.8%	37.0%	36.8%	17.9%	48.6%	30.4%	31.6%
9. I have been given adequate support and guidance for my teaching	23.5%	31.4%	46.2%	20.6%	61.5%	31.7%	31.5%
10. I think the experience that I have gained through teaching has been a worthwhile aspect of my research degree	18.8%	21.2%	36.4%	9.1%	48.0%	20.9%	21.3%

programme.							
11. Please provide further information regarding your teaching experience - comments							
<b>Section 9: Personal factors</b>							
12.a. My friends and family are supportive of my research degree programme	0.0%	3.8%	10.5%	1.2%	5.9%	3.2%	4.8%
12.b. My employer is supportive of my research degree programme	0.0%	23.1%	20.0%	4.5%	9.5%	12.2%	11.9%
12.c. The financing of my research degree programme places a strain on my personal finances.	37.5%	10.4%	76.5%	41.9%	33.3%	34.6%	33.7%
<b>Section 10: Overall</b>							
13.a. Supervisory support and guidance -- Importance	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	1.4%	2.1%
13.a.i. Supervisory support and guidance -- Satisfaction	15.0%	10.9%	10.5%	14.1%	8.6%	12.4%	13.8%
13.a.ii. Comments							
13.b. Opportunities to develop a range of research skills - Importance	10.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	2.5%
13.b.i. Opportunities to develop a range of research skills -	15.8%	16.4%	15.8%	14.1%	14.3%	15.2%	10.9%

- Satisfaction							
13.b.ii. Comments							
13.c. Opportunities to develop a range of transferable skills -- Importance	20.0%	20.0%	10.5%	12.9%	8.6%	14.7%	7.3%
13.c.i. Opportunities to develop a range of transferable skills -- Satisfaction	15.8%	15.7%	21.1%	9.4%	22.9%	15.0%	13.2%
13.c.ii. Comments							
13.d. Access to appropriate facilities -- Importance	10.0%	3.6%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	2.3%	2.9%
13.d.i. Access to appropriate facilities -- Satisfaction	10.5%	22.2%	15.8%	16.5%	25.7%	18.5%	14.7%
13.d.ii. Comments							
13.e. The research environment -- Importance	20.0%	5.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	3.1%
13.e.i. The research environment -- Satisfaction	15.8%	16.7%	10.5%	17.6%	22.9%	17.6%	17.7%
13.e.ii. Comments							
13.f. Provision of guidance on institutional standards and expectations for your research degree programme -- Importance	15.0%	7.3%	5.3%	8.4%	0.0%	6.9%	4.5%
13.f.i. Provision of guidance on institutional standards and expectations for your research degree programme -- Satisfaction	21.1%	14.8%	21.1%	22.6%	20.6%	20.1%	16.1%
13.f.ii.							

Comments 15. I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme more or less within the planned timescale	9.5%	7.4%	11.1%	18.1%	16.7%	13.9%	13.7%
<b>The following did not meet expectations:</b>							
14.a. Supervisory support and guidance	23.8%	18.2%	26.3%	26.5%	25.0%	23.9%	21.0%
14.b. Opportunities to develop a range of research skills	28.6%	14.5%	15.8%	23.8%	22.2%	21.0%	17.1%
14.c. Opportunities to develop a range of transferable skills	14.3%	16.7%	15.8%	14.3%	25.0%	16.6%	17.7%
14.d. Access to appropriate facilities	28.6%	29.1%	15.8%	32.1%	33.3%	30.1%	21.8%
14.e. The research environment	28.6%	31.5%	10.5%	33.7%	36.1%	30.9%	24.6%
14.f. Provision of guidance on institutional standards and expectations for your research degree programme	14.3%	14.8%	26.3%	32.1%	31.4%	25.9%	24.1%
14.g. Overall experience of my research programme	23.8%	16.7%	10.5%	23.8%	38.9%	23.4%	17.4%

\* total includes 3 blank entries and 4 students who did not indicate a Faculty.

## Appendix P: Postgraduate Taught WaveGoodbye Survey

What school are you registered in?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Allied Health Professions	0.0%	0
American Studies	0.7%	1
Biological Sciences	9.1%	13
Chemical Sciences and Pharmacy	0.7%	1
Computing Sciences	0.7%	1
Development Studies	6.3%	9
Economics	2.1%	3
Education and Lifelong Learning	7.7%	11
Environmental Sciences	11.2%	16
Film and TV Studies	2.1%	3
History	5.6%	8
Language, Linguistics and Translation	4.9%	7
Law	9.1%	13
Literature, Creative Writing and Drama	9.1%	13
Mathematics	0.0%	0
Medicine, Health Policy and Practice	0.0%	0
Music	0.0%	0
Norwich Business School	16.8%	24
Nursing and Midwifery	0.0%	0
Philosophy	1.4%	2
Politics, Social and International Studies	6.3%	9
Social Work and Psychosocial Studies	2.1%	3
World Art Studies and Museology	4.2%	6
<i>answered question</i>		<b>143</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>

We want to know specifically what you thought, both good and bad, about your course as a complete program (for example how well you felt the individual modules on your course worked together). We welcome any and all comments you may have about your entire degree course - these may relate to any part of your academic experience at UEA.	
Answer Options	Response Count
	131
<i>answered question</i>	<b>131</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>12</b>

Any additional comments you may have about your time at UEA may be included here:	
Answer Options	Response Count
	63
<i>answered question</i>	<b>63</b>





## Appendix Q: Union Advice Centre Statistics

Table Q1 Academic Cases by Year

Academic Year	No. students	New academic cases	% of UEA students
2003 / 2004	13310	141	1.06
2004 / 2005	13692	249	1.81
2005 / 2006	14047	251	1.79
2006 / 2007	14981	371	2.48
2007 / 2008	14854	342	2.30

Table Q2 Academic Case by Subject by Year

Academic Cases	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Academic Complaint	20	16	26	30	13
Course Change	6	16	15	23	28
Concessions	0	0	0	17	9
Academic Disciplinary	3	15	9	8	11
Extensions	0	0	0	3	2
Harassment	0	0	0	6	1
Intercalation	13	17	13	25	22
Leaving University	0	0	0	16	18
Refer to OIA	0	0	0	3	5
Academic Other	36	69	70	71	70
Plagiarism/ Collusion	0	0	2	11	24
Professional Misconduct/ Unsuitability	0	0	0	2	3
Academic Total	141	249	251	366	342

## Appendix R: Anonymous Marking Survey 2006

What year of study are you in?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
1st Year	30.8%	451
2nd Year	25.4%	372
3rd Year	23.3%	342
4th Year	4.3%	63
Postgraduate	15.1%	221
Other	1.4%	21
<i>answered question</i>		1465
<i>skipped question</i>		0

What is your mode of study?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Full Time	96.9%	1420
Part Time	3.1%	45
<i>answered question</i>		1465
<i>skipped question</i>		0

What age were you when you started your course?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Under 21	69.1%	1011
Over 21	30.9%	453
<i>answered question</i>		1464
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Which of the following best describes you?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Home student	87.4%	1279
EU Student	6.2%	91
International Student (Non EU)	6.5%	95
<i>answered question</i>		1463
<i>skipped question</i>		2

What is your ethnic background?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
White - British	81.4%	1178
White - Irish	1.2%	18
Asian British	1.3%	19

Indian	0.8%	12
Pakistan	0.1%	1
Bangladeshi	0.1%	1
Other Asian Background	1.0%	14
Black British	0.3%	5
African	0.8%	11
Caribbean	0.2%	3
Other Black Background	0.0%	0
White and Black Caribbean	0.1%	2
White and Black African	0.3%	5
White and Asian	1.2%	17
Other mixed background	1.9%	28
Chinese	1.9%	28
Any other ethnic background	7.3%	106
<i>answered question</i>		1448
<i>skipped question</i>		17

Is any of your coursework currently marked under a system of anonymous marking?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	17.1%	249
No	83.1%	1213
<i>answered question</i>		1460
<i>skipped question</i>		5

Have you ever felt that your marks have been influenced by the fact that your tutor knew you? If 'No' or 'Don't know' please proceed to question 9		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	16.4%	239
No	41.8%	608
Don't know	42.6%	620
<i>answered question</i>		1454
<i>skipped question</i>		11

If so, how do you believe it was influenced? Positively or negatively? Please provide examples where possible.	
Answer Options	Response Count
	209
<i>answered question</i>	209
<i>skipped question</i>	1256

Do you think that your marks would change if a system of anonymous marking was introduced?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	29.4%	428
No	31.8%	463
Don't know	39.7%	579
<i>answered question</i>		1458

If so, do you think your marks would go up or down?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Up	11.8%	116
Down	4.0%	39
Both	28.5%	281
Not sure	56.7%	560
<i>answered question</i>		987
<i>skipped question</i>		478

Do you think that your tutors would recognise you as the author of your coursework even if your name was not on the paper?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	22.1%	323
No	46.6%	681
Not Sure	32.2%	470
<i>answered question</i>		1461
<i>skipped question</i>		4

Do you think that introducing a system of anonymous marking would result in a greater faith in the systems of assesment at UEA?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	73.4%	1074
No	15.4%	225
Not sure	11.6%	169
<i>answered question</i>		1463
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Do you think that a system of anonymous marking should be introduced at UEA?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	71.7%	1048
No	15.5%	226
Not sure	13.3%	195
<i>answered question</i>		1461
<i>skipped question</i>		4

Please include any other comments or experiences about anonymous marking that you may have in the box below

Answer Options	Response Count
	325
<i>answered question</i>	325
<i>skipped question</i>	1140



## Union of UEA Students

Union House  
UEA  
Norwich  
NR4 7TJ

01603 593272  
[www.ueastudent.com](http://www.ueastudent.com)

