

Postgraduate and Mature Students' Officer report to Council, 1st November 2009

Over the last few weeks I have worked on the following:

Student consultation on feedback

I have attended several consultations on feedback looking at both undergraduate and postgraduate taught feedback, where I have contributed on the principle that students want feedback which is detailed (the comments must be specific enough to help them improve), individual (the comments must be specific to the individual doing the work) and timely (the comments must be received in time for the student to change any other work in time for the next deadline).

Credit framework review group

I attend this group with the Academic Affairs Officer (please refer to her report).

General Assembly

I was on a panel with the Academic Affairs Officer, the President and the Vice-President (Teaching and Learning) talking to members of the General Assembly about the review of undergraduate education and the National Student Survey, highlighting the seriousness and importance of the University's work in this area, the support for improving the quality of education from the Students' Union, and the ongoing pressure we are putting on staff across the University to improve.

Strategic plan and SUEI

With the Academic Affairs Officer and the General Secretary, I have been working on leading the Union's development of the strategic plan and response to the Students' Union evaluation initiative. Progress has stalled at times but both are now back on track and I anticipate significant progress, involving far more students including Council members, over the following months.

Meeting with the President & Vice-Chancellor and postgraduate surveys

I met, along with the rest of the Executive, with the President and Vice-Chancellor, where I raised the issue of surveying postgraduate students to get a better quantitative and qualitative understanding of the issues affecting them. Since then, the University has responded that a review of surveys of all students is being launched, and I have been invited to sit on the group.

Postgraduate research supervision

I ran a workshop with around 15 postgraduate research students looking at their experience of supervision. In addition, approximately 60 other PGR students responded to a brief online survey. This has given me a great deal of valuable information that I will work on and take to the University to discuss. I will report on more detail on the responses when I have some time to look in detail at the information.