

Teaching Enhancement Action Plan - Guidance

Introduction

The School Teaching Enhancement Action Plan is part of an ongoing, forward-looking planning activity and forms a key element of the University's strategic planning process. The aim of the Action Plan is to promote and support excellence and innovation in learning, teaching and the student experience at Reading and to maintain academic standards as required as part of our enhancement-led quality assurance process. The Action Plan is driven by School level priorities but also provides a means for dialogue with the Pro-Vice Chancellors(s) Education and Student Experience (PVC(s)) and oversight through the Sub-Committee for the Development and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (DELT).

The Action Plan is not bound by the academic year. Instead, it is a 'live' planning process, updated as and when priorities change, new issues emerge, or improvements are achieved, as part of a cyclical quality assurance process.

The Action Plan is co-created by the School Director of Teaching and Learning (SDTL) (and Departmental DTLs, where applicable), in partnership with students and in consultation with other relevant staff; the development of the STEAP should be a collaborative process and should encourage ownership (of Priorities or particular actions) across the School. It is informed by regular programme reflection, which includes input from Student Staff Partnership (SSP) Groups and other forms of student feedback, such as module evaluations. Boards of Study and Student Experience (BoSSE) will monitor progress on a termly basis, which will be reported to the School Management Board (SMB) who have strategic ownership of the Action Plan. As such, the Action Plan facilitates dialogue between programme level discussion and the SMB, and will inform the writing of the School's five-year Plan (School Planning System). Schools will also have the opportunity to discuss their priorities with their Teaching and Learning Deans. The Action Plan forms the basis for discussion between the School's education and student experience leadership and the PVC(s) Education and Student Experience and will be annually reviewed by DELT.

Priorities will respond to local pedagogical concerns and wider strategic concerns, it should also take into consideration priorities for branch campus delivery and any partnership activity. It will draw on student feedback and the insights of specific programme teams while also being informed by University priorities and key performance indicator (KPI) data relating to the Teaching Excellence and Framework (TEF).

Objectives

- To drive forward enhancement of teaching, learning and students' experience by identifying key priorities arising from programme level reflection, student feedback and school and university KPIs;
- To work in partnership with students in the development and implementation of effective action for enhancement.

The Action Plan

The pro-forma template for the Action Plan (See Appendix 2) invites Schools to set clear priorities linked to strategic objectives at both University and School level. Each priority will be assigned a lead person responsible for ensuring implementation of the proposed activities/actions. Clear targets will be set and resource requirements and impacts identified.

The Action Plan should be made available to BoSSE and SSP Groups, as the primary means of sharing and reflecting upon the planning process with students and colleagues, opening dialogue and promoting scrutiny and engagement.

It is anticipated that Schools will normally have between three to six 'live' priorities at any one time, however this may vary depending on an individual School's circumstances. Schools should assign manageable actions and activities to address each Priority, it might be better to have 2-3 focused activities with greater impact than many smaller activities.

Schools should regularly evaluate the impact of their STEAP activities. As and when an action (or group of actions) is complete, an evaluation and impact assessment will be drafted, using the second half of the template, and the outcome disseminated to students and staff. DELT and Schools will keep a record of completed and evaluated activities for quality assurance purposes and to disseminate good practice. By evaluating the impact of actions regularly, Schools will be better able to analyse the progress they are making towards their priorities, particularly where those priorities might be long-term. On-going actions which have been successful may be converted into BAU.

Outline of process

The Action Plan should be shared in a way which enables it to be a dynamic, living document, owned by Schools but which can also have a role in Quality Assurance (QA) oversight in University and Resource Planning.

Boards of Studies and Student Experience and programme reflections

Boards of Studies and Student Experience meet termly to reflect on the delivery of programmes and the student experience. BoSSE will use a variety of sources of evidence to identify and discuss quality assurance and enhancement matters relevant to their programmes and students, for example reflecting on student performance at module and programme level, drawing on module evaluation, comments from the SSP Groups, the observations of external examiners, general staff insights and feedback from branch campus and partnership programmes.

This process will include a review of the Action Plan; at its termly meetings the BoSSE will review the Action Plan and report on actions in the light of programme-level progress and identify any new and emerging priorities. This will be informed by the information and sources of evidence which become available throughout the year (Appendix 1); the BoSSE review this information and share the relevant discussion Minutes with the Priority Leads, with a view to updating the Action Plan in collaboration with the SDTL, Priority Leads, programme teams and in partnership with appointed student representatives.

Review by the School Management Board

The SDTL will lead a standing item on the Action Plan at termly meetings of the SMB where the relationship between programme led initiatives and strategic priorities will be discussed. Actions and items for discussion will be shared with the relevant BoSSE. Progress against the key priorities will be monitored and completed activities/actions identified for impact evaluation.

Student Partnership

The Action Plan is co-created in partnership with students via a number of feedback mechanisms and student representation. Where possible, students will work closely with the SDTL and other key priority leads to develop, implement and monitor actions. Students, through representation on the BoSSE and SSP Groups, will play an important role in the termly reflection process, including the opportunity for Student Reps to comment on the Action Plan.

Input from Other Schools and Support Services

Schools should seek feedback and advice from Support Services and Functions when considering their priorities, Support Services may be able to help interpret data sets and provide context for potential priorities within a School (for example in relation to careers and employability outcomes). This could be captured during BoSSE meeting discussions or through other discussions with colleagues in these specialist fields.

Where programmes are delivered across more than one School, it might be appropriate to discuss your Priorities and plans with other contributing Schools.

It is also important for Schools to ensure they discuss their Action Plans with any Support Services and Functions, or other Schools, where they may rely on them to undertake and support the proposed activities. It should be noted that the approval of the Action Plans (by the PVCs and by DELT) does not mean that all of the resource requested will be provided. Support Services and Functions are expected to exercise judgement and consider School priorities alongside University priorities and their day-to-day responsibilities, when deciding on their own priorities and capacity.

Teaching and Learning Deans

Schools should consult with their Teaching and Learning Dean (TLD) at an early stage when formulating their Priorities. Teaching and Learning Deans will advise and support the School to consider their key areas for improvement and can share good practice from other Schools. Schools should meet with their TLD at least once each summer to review and develop their Action Plan.

External Expertise

The Action Plan and priority setting should be informed by external expertise and guidance, collected through External Examiner Reports, industry guidance and other formal and informal verifier reports such as Periodic Review or accreditation visits. Due consideration should be given to external advice and this will normally be discussed at the BoSSE and inform priorities discussed at the Programme Refection points. Actions taken to address any external advice and guidance should be communicated back to the external.

Annual Launch of the Action Plans (May to June)

Each year the PVC(s) Education and Student Experience will launch the School Teaching Enhancement Action Plans with the SDTL community. They will outline current University priorities and inform thinking for School priorities for the next academic year.

Annual Discussion with PVCs (October to November)

Once a year the Action Plan will be shared and discussed with the PVC(s) Education and Student Experience. They will meet with the SDTL, Head of School and TLD and the discussion (and Action Plan) will inform the drafting of the SPS Five Year Plan.

Review by DELT (November or December meeting)

Once a year the Action Plan will be presented to DELT for review. If any issues or further actions are identified, DELT will communicate via the relevant SDTLs. They will provide support to schools, where necessary, to expedite actions and provide advice and guidance as appropriate. Completed and evaluated activities will also be submitted to DELT and a record of these kept by DELT.

Mid-year Review by TLDs and PVCs (February – March)

Each year, during the spring term, the TLDs will meet with their Schools to discuss their progress against the Action Plans and further steps that might be taken to address their current priorities. They will also discuss any emerging priorities which may need to be considered.

The TLDs will report to the PVC(s) Education and Student Experience on the progress being made within each School, any areas of concern and any resource issues that require further consideration.

Timeline

| May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------|--|-----------------------------|
| PVC STEAP Launch | | | | | | | | | | |
| | BoSSE programme reflections | | | | | BoSSE programme reflections | | | | BoSSE programme reflections |
| | | TLD meets with HoS/SDTL to discuss key priorities* | | | | | | | | |
| | | Schools complete Action Plan templates | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | PVC meetings | | | | | |
| | | | | | | Action Plan approved by SMB | | | | |
| | | | | | | DELT receives School Action Plans | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Action Plan feeds into SPS | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | STEAP mid-year review by TLDs and PVCs | |

*Key Priorities will be reviewed and identified over the summer, this will be informed by the BoSSE programme reflections and emerging data, such as NSS and PTES results, student performance and external examiner reports.

Appendix 1: Sources of data/evidence and helpful links

| Autumn | | Spring | | Summer | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Source | Availability | Source | Availability | Source | Availability |
| NSS outcomes | July | 15 day turnaround time compliance | February | 15 day turnaround time compliance | May |
| UKES outcomes | August | | | EE Meetings | June |
| PTES outcomes | August | | | Outcomes from UG PEMS | June |
| EE Reports | July/August | | | Module marks (UG and PGT) | June/July (first attempt), November (final attempt) |
| Subject level TEF indicators and benchmarks | September | | | Graduate Outcomes survey outcomes | June/July |
| 15 day turnaround time compliance | September/October | | | | |
| UG Part to Part Progression | October | | | | |
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| Degree attainment (UG and PG) | November | | | | |
| Student Evaluation – discussion of any specific issues/themes arising from SSP Groups, Module and Programme Evaluation, feedback from the Rep Online Student Impact Evaluation (ROSIE) tool | | | | | |
| Reports/Outcomes from Professional Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and any other external examiner comments | | | | | |
| Any emerging priorities from Periodic Review, Peer Review, or reports from UBTLS and its sub-committees | | | | | |
| Reports/information from key stakeholders (as appropriate): | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Director for Teaching and Learning Departmental Director for Teaching and Learning School Director for Academic Tutoring School Director of Admissions Heads of Function (Careers, DTS, Study Advice, Library, CQSD) | | | | | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programme Leads at branch campuses and for partnership programmes• Teaching and Learning Deans |
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Below are some key sources of data which should be used during the programme reflections and may inform Action Plan priorities:

Schools should pay particular attention to split data for the above metrics to consider targets for Access and Participation, attainment gaps and under-represented groups.

The following links may be useful for completing the Action Plan and the Evaluation and Impact statement:

Forming Objectives guidance document:

<https://sites.reading.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/42/2020/02/EI-Forming-Objectives-Guide.pdf>

Levels of Impact:

<https://sites.reading.ac.uk/evaluation-and-impact/resources/>

Closing the feedback loop:

<https://sites.reading.ac.uk/curriculum-framework/closing-the-feedback-loop/>

University of Reading Teaching and Learning Strategy:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/about/teaching-and-learning/t-and-l-strategy.aspx>

Appendix 2: Teaching Enhancement Action Plan template (worked example)

| Key Priority - EXAMPLE | | Lead(s)/Student Partner | BoSSE | Context |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <i>State your key priority below</i> | | <i>Identify the key individual responsible for this priority and a student partner where appropriate</i> | <i>State which BoSSE(s) should have consideration for this Priority</i> | <i>How does this priority link to strategic objectives and broader frameworks (e.g. Uni strategies, Curriculum Framework, NSS, TEF, KPIs etc).</i> |
| Integrating a more robust approach to student evaluation and feedback in partnership with students, with a focus on closing the feedback loop. | | School Student Voice and Partnership (SVP) Lead RUSU Senior Rep | ALL School BoSSEs (UG and PGT) | NSS Student voice section (a TEF metric) Curriculum Framework: Student Engagement Student Voice and Partnership Project Student Success and Engagement |
| IMPLEMENTATION | | | | |
| Activity(ies) proposed <i>Identify the activity(ies) you will undertake to address the priority and the objectives of those activities.</i> | Activity | Objective | | Target Date |
| | - Improve uptake of RUSU course reps through increased promotion activities in Welcome week and the first week of term, including strengthening engagement with the RUSU Academic Rep Coordinator. | - To ensure full engagement across a wide range of programmes; embeds the principles of partnership. | | October 2020 (TO REVISIT FOR SEPT 2020) |
| | - Increase course rep visibility in the School – via dedicated UG and PGT Study Space noticeboards. | - To improve communication between students and course reps; helps to ensure wide range of voices heard. | | November 2020 (COMPLETED) |
| | - Split the undergraduate SSLC meeting into two separate cohort meetings more in line with departmental structure and rationalize agenda | - To improve relevance, engagement and satisfaction with the process. Promotes a sense of belonging and community. | | September 2020 (COMPLETED) |
| | - Increase colleagues' awareness and engagement with SSLC feedback by following up specific issues with individual colleagues/teaching forums in a timely fashion. e.g. through round up emails, lunch time showcase meetings, one-to-one meetings | - Promotes engagement across the School and raises awareness of SVP. | | October - June 2020 (ONGOING) |
| | - SVP Lead and Senior Rep to use School T&L Showcase to showcase quick and easy ways that staff can engage with mid-module feedback and closing the feedback loop. | - Raises awareness of our need to act on feedback and shares good practice. | | October 2020 (COMPLETED) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engage with course reps on best mechanisms for feeding back to students i.e. newsletter/round-up email.- Organize student rep drop-in clinics and setting up dedicated Blackboard organisations for student feedback and communication in general.- Produce business card style source of information and contact – ‘this is what we do and this is how, and to whom you can feedback your views’. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Improves closure of feedback loop to students; encourages a sense of community and partnership.- To encourage greater engagement between student reps and student cohorts to provide a wider representation of views and feedback. | October 2020 (TO REVISIT FOR SEPT 2020) November 2020 (COMPLETED) | |
| Expected Impact <i>What are your success indicators? What does success look like?</i> | Success indicators | | Baseline (year) | Target (year) |
| | 1. Improve mean average module evaluation satisfaction score by 15 percentage points. | | 60% (2020/1) | 75% (2022/3) |
| | 2. Achieve a 5 percentage point improvement in the NSS Student voice section satisfaction score. | | 60% (2019) | 65% (2023) |
| | 3. Achieve a 10 percentage point improvement in the attendance rates of course representatives at SSLCs and School committees. | | 75% (2020/1) | 85% (2023/4) |
| | 4. Ensure all convenors engage with mid-module evaluation. | | 75% (2019/0) | 100% (2023/4) |
| Milestones <i>Identify significant milestones and checkpoints.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- SVP Lead appointed July 2019- Separation of SSLCs in line with departmental structure- Production of business-style Student Voice/We are listening card by start of 2019/20 academic year- Publication of NSS results | | | |
| Resource requirements <i>Identify any resources required to undertake activity, both within the School and from other University Services (including staff time) and any infrastructure requirements.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Funding to support student/staff activities (mainly provision of lunch/refreshments)- Cost of producing business-style information card- Dedicated SVP Lead (estimated time allowance 0.1FTE equivalency) | | Where necessary, have you discussed resourcing with other Head of School (HoS) or Functions? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Funding/resource allocation approved by HoS | |

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| Progress Update <i>Please summarise progress following Boards of Studies and Student Experience (BoSSE).</i> | Autumn Action Plan for SVP project received and approved by the Board. The Board noted the usefulness of the School T&L Showcase on the Student Voice project in particular, tips on undertaking mid-module feedback. The presentation by the Senior Rep had also been well-received. It was noted that some programmes still did not have a course rep. SVP Lead to work with PDs to fill gaps. | Spring SVP Lead reported that splitting the two SSLCs had been successful but noted that work was still required to close the feedback loop. Some staff were defensive when presented with feedback and not all staff were undertaking mid-module feedback. SVP Lead noted that more consideration needed to be given as to how we integrate SV feedback (e.g. SSLCs) and module evaluation feedback, and combine feedback loop closure, as these often cover similar issues. | | Summer NSS demonstrates success in key objective areas. SVP Lead to review action plan to direct focus onto Student voice section. It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on'. Despite being slightly above the UoR average, it is an area where it is clear that more work needs to be done. SVP Lead to work particularly closely with relevant PDs. SDTL to follow up impact points 1 and 4 with staff during one-to-one meetings over the summer period. | |
| | Success indicators | Baseline (year) | Interim milestone 1 (year) | Interim milestone 2 (year) | Target (year) |
| | 1. Improve mean average module evaluation satisfaction score by 15 percentage points. | 60% (2020/1) | 62% (2021/2) | - | 75% (2022/3) |
| | 2. Achieve a 5 percentage point improvement in the NSS Student voice section satisfaction score. | 60% (2019) | 61.5% (2020) | 61.5% (2021) | 65% (2023) |
| | 3. Achieve a 10 percentage point improvement in the attendance rates of course representatives at SSLCs and School committees. | 75% (2020/1) | 80% (2021/2) | - | 85% (2023/4) |
| | 4. Ensure all convenors engage with mid-module evaluation. | 75% (2019/0) | 81% (2020/1) | - | 100% (2023/4) |

When this Action is Complete, or the Priority has changed, please complete the table below. The outcomes and evaluations of completed activities should be disseminated to staff and students via the BoSSE and SSP Groups. Completed activities should be recorded by the School and reported annually to DELT.

| EVALUATION AND IMPACT - EXAMPLE | |
|---|---|
| Outputs/Outcomes <i>Were your objectives met?</i> <i>What has changed as a result of your action(s)?</i> <i>What was created as a result of undertaking the activity?</i> <i>Who has benefitted (specific student or staff groups)?</i> <i>Were there any unexpected impacts?</i> | <p>Two separate UG SSLCs were created which better reflected the School departmental structure. This increased engagement and fostered a sense of belonging. Material was produced to strengthen the visibility of course reps and the mechanisms for raising issues and ‘closing the feedback loop’, including the development of a Blackboard organisation dedicated to UG and PG student feedback and discussion. The Blackboard organisation proved not to be effective, despite efforts to start discussion. It was interesting to note that student reps also found it difficult to get feedback from students, so email communication does not work well for either party. More work in partnership needs to be done to open more effective channels of communication and to overcome the perception that we are not listening to students, despite actively trying to. Overall, the actions taken improved the student rep/staff relationship and ensured a more proactive channel for student/staff discussion. Student reps reported that more staff than usual completed mid-module evaluations and ensured that any resulting actions were fed-back to students.</p> |
| Evidence of Impact <i>This should be a simple high-level statement of what has happened as a result of the activity taken. It should also be in line with the success indicators outlined above. It is often articulated in the form of quantitative changes</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a pleasing and marked improvement in NSS 2020 scores of 1.5 percentage points against success indicator 2 that was sustained in 2021. • By the end of the 2020/1 academic year, all programmes had at least one course rep and attendance at SSLC meetings was up 5 percentage points to 80%, meaning we are halfway to achieving our target of 85%. |
| Evaluation Methods: <i>What measures did you use to evaluate your activity and identify impact?</i> <i>In terms of your evaluation, what worked well?</i> <i>Was anything missing? Which methods might you use next time?</i> Align these to your success indicators. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve mean average module evaluation satisfaction score by 15 percentage points. Data from module evaluations highlighted modules where challenges remain. More work needs to be done on how to manage student expectations – not all feedback could or should be acted upon and staff should find appropriate ways of relaying that information to students. To further evaluate this we will work with relevant module convenors and students as partners to identify curricular based interventions and enhancements to address genuine concerns. 2. Achieve a 5 percentage point improvement in the NSS Student voice section satisfaction score. We reviewed our NSS results and were pleased with the increase in the Student voice section. Our focus for 2023 will be to continue to work on closing the feedback loop. Future evaluation should focus on looking at NSS data for underrepresented groups and ensure alignment with work in the School looking at diversity and inclusion issues. 3. Achieve a 10 percentage point improvement in the attendance rates of course representatives at SSLCs and School committees. Attendance monitoring was straight forward. It was hard to evaluate engagement and we plan to run some focus groups to evaluate student engagement. Continuing to work in partnership with RUSU will be important. 4. Ensure all convenors engage with mid-module evaluation. We did an audit of all Blackboard courses to check for evidence of closing the feedback loop for mid-module evaluation. Whilst this was not routinely captured, we do know that many module convenors verbally closed the feedback loop and some recorded this on Blackboard. It is not a requirement for mid-module feedback to be published, but further |

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| | consideration needs to be given to how we can capture this in future and share best practice. Student focus groups as outlined in 3 above, would also provide evidence against this success indicator. We will discuss with CQSD a supplementary question for module evaluation to capture the degree to which convenors are engaging with this process. |
| Overall reflection and follow-up <i>In terms of your activities, what worked well and what did not? Are there any additional actions to be taken?</i> <i>What additional support do you need?</i> | <p>Having a dedicated academic lead was critical to our success. It helped to ensure that actions were followed through and that students had a point of contact, which encouraged discussion and partnership in improving student experience.</p> <p>In line with the School experience, student reps found it difficult to connect with students apart from those who were usually 'vocal'. It would be useful to ascertain engagement with 'harder to reach students' and if our other forms of communication such as the business-style cards and noticeboards were effective. A questionnaire or focus groups would help with collecting evidence of this. We will also consider more informal ways of engaging with students outside of the formal committee routes. It was difficult to measure improvements against student feedback via mid-module evaluations and it would be useful to investigate via CQSD, a supplementary question on the module evaluation questionnaire such as 'my views on the module have been listened to' or 'I engaged with the mid-module feedback' or 'I had an opportunity to provide mid-module feedback'. In addition, an audit of our Blackboard courses revealed poor use of the module evaluation tab in general, and this needs further investigation.</p> |
| Closing the Feedback Loop <i>How will you close the feedback loop to students and staff?</i> <i>How will you disseminate the findings of your evaluation to students/colleagues/other interested stakeholders?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using School T&L Showcases to engage staff with Student Voice activities and student feedback in general - Student led newsletter - SVP Lead disseminates more widely at University and sector level including via the Student Engagement CoP, to share experiences with interested stakeholders |
| Links <i>Include any links to published items originating from the project (e.g. website, news item, blog, article, resource etc)</i> | Link to T&L Exchange |

VERSION CONTROL

| Version | Date approved | Approved by | Effective From | Next Review | Keeper (Responsible for Policy Maintenance and review) |
|---------|---------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | 03/11/2020 | UBTLSE | Date of approval | By Nov 2021 | CQSD |

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|---|------------|--------|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 2 | 08/06/2021 | UBTLSE | Date of approval | Summer 2022 | |
| 3 | 07/06/22 | N/A | N/A | Summer 2021 | Minor updates by PVCs |