

Internal Periodic Review of: School of Engineering

Date of review: 31 March/1 April 2025

Date of 14 week response: 08 October 2025

Date of year on response: 02 July 2026

The review area (School/Deanery/Colege) is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action. If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

Rec No	Category	Recommendation	Allocated to:	14 week response Commenting on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Note timescale for completion	Is action add complete (if completion t
1	Assessment and Feedback	The review team recommends the School completes a mapping exercise across the core courses and core programme combinations to review workload and identify clusters of assessment submission times with a view to gaining a greater understanding of overall delivery of provision and its impact on students. It further recommends the School work proactively to identify and implement measures.	Dave Laurenson including DoDs and DPMs	The school is in the process of gathering data from all course organisers on the assignment release date, the earliest date that students can start working on an assignment, the number of hours of effort anticipated in completing the assignment, as well as the submission date. Data for the majority of Semester 1 assessments has now been collected, and disciplines have been using this information to identify periods where workload is higher than it should be. The remainder of the data will be collected, and also conducted for semester 2.	Semester 1 data - completed Semester 2 data - end of 2025 at the very latest ready for January 2026	
2	Assessment and Feedback	Students identified that those assessments with specific rubrics and guidance on marking criteria were easier to engage with, and led to more specific and beneficial feedback. The review team recommends the School provides specific and detailed rubrics and marking criteria across a greater range of course assessments. The review team recommends the School investigates how the use of verbal feedback or audio recordings as a quick and timely way of sharing feedback to students can be implemented across its courses and recommends consideration is given to how the methods of feedback could be diversified to allow more detail and specificity.	Dave Laurenson including DoDs and DPMs	The school has rolled out the guidance on rubrics issued by the College of Science and Engineering Dean of Quality Enhancement which requires all courses to have rubrics as part of an assessment information pack. Examples of rubrics are included in the guidance. In addition, the school has launched a new Feedback Improvement Toolkit for use by all markers that provides guidance on effective feedback.	CEE - deferred, as now a standard part of coursework moderation Mech - Staff guidance to be provided at Discipline review meeting on 8 October. DPM to check all S1 coursework have rubrics by 31 October 2025	
3	Student Support	The review team acknowledges the implementation and operationalising of the Cohort Lead role is not a School specific issue alone, but does still recommend the School reviews the disciplines' various approaches to the role, identify best practice and implement a strategic and consistent approach across all cohort years and disciplines. It is recommended the School implements a system to monitor the operation of the Cohort Lead role over time with a view of measuring its effectiveness and improve future support provision to students. It is recommended the School determines how Cohort Leads can better support students in making optional course choices and ensure sufficient guidance is available to facilitate their decisions. It is further recommended the School considers how cohort Leads can assist with providing targeted support to students at key transition stages.	Stewart Smith including DOLT, DODs and DPMs	* Meetings were held with DDoS, DPM and DoD for each undergraduate discipline to discuss how they could better support and enable cohort lead activities to be integrated into the curriculum. * Cohort lead briefing was held where the progression requirements for engineering degrees was presented to help them to provide advice and support for students, in particular in advance of the new academic year where students were required to repeat a year or otherwise needed an academic plan. * All cohorts (including PGT programmes this year) have a Learn page which can be used for cohort communication and announcements, as well as a linked Piazza discussion board where students can raise programme level issues at any time. * Cohort lead activity planning has been affected by budgetary issues and uncertainty which has not been good for the motivation and morale of staff. Many of the activities praised by the IPR have proved impossible to fund in the current climate. * Next steps are to embed monitoring of engagement and seeking feedback from students on the progress of cohort lead activities.	End of S1 25/26 - agreed system for CLs to record engagement, and a per-semester report reviewing activities. Implementation of CSE academic guidance framework to follow. Mech: Not sure re DPM input in this column but as an update meeting held with DoS, DoD on this and happy with the current progress on this matter.	Partially addi monitoring s follow.
4	Assessment and Feedback	The review team recommends the School investigates new innovative ways in which to (a) collect feedback from students during classes and across the periods of course delivery and (b) asks course organisers to allocate time within class for completion of end of course feedback. It is also recommended the School find more effective ways to communicate how issues raised by students during course delivery have, or will be, addressed and how the current cohorts will positively benefit from such actions. The School should consider the timing and operation of SSLCs in promoting and evaluating the success of feedback mechanisms.	Dave Laurenson including DoDs and DPMs	In collaboration with the student representatives, the school developed a new suite of feedback mechanisms for last academic year. The plan is to give the new scheme a full academic year to operate over, with more active promotion to students, and then re-evaluate how successful this is. The timing of SSLCs has been changed so that they occur earlier in the semester. With regards changes that have been made in response to feedback, these were highlighted during induction and welcome back events, and will be re-iterated when reminding students of the various mechanisms available to them to provide feedback.	Review to be conducted in February 2026 following a full cycle of student voice input for Semester 1.	
5	Curriculum Reform	The review team acknowledges how the framework of the backbone courses offers the School a valuable opportunity to effectively integrate the core skills necessary for accreditation. This structure helps ensure students develop the required competencies successfully. The review team recommends integrating this skills development further with the optional courses for full integration, including adequate contextual content. It is recommended the School ensure course organisers for optional courses are fully informed about the skills being taught and assessed in the backbone courses, as this awareness will help facilitate further learning and avoiding duplication of content.	Ricky Carvel including DOLT	The backbone courses are being deployed for the first time in Year 2 in the current academic year. Year 3 will follow next year, and so on. The majority of our optional classes are not taken until Years 4 and 5, so we are still two years away from the COs of most optional courses needing to know what skills have already been developed in the backbone courses. It is anticipated that the backbone courses might not fully align in the first year of deployment, so these are being monitored to see what each discipline implements in the first year or two. Once we have seen what the backbone courses have developed, this will be disseminated across the school, so that future courses (both core and optional) know what has already been done, as well as what still remains to be developed.	Y2 - AY25/26 Y3 - AY26/27	
6	Student Support	It is recommended cohort activities be built into the timetable, perhaps through the backbone courses, to both raise the importance of this support but also to enhance student engagement.	Stewart Smith including Cohort Leads, HTSS and SSM	This was discussed in the meetings with the disciplines as detailed for point 3 above and generally agreed though it was not possible for the Semester 1 Engineering Year 1 course at this time. We will monitor how it affects the engagement and contact time for cohort leads.	Some disciplines in Y2 have managed this, further implementation required as curriculum changes progress to honours years. Engagement with Y1	Partially addi Further chan to embed ac
7	Staff Support and Development	The review team recommends the School implement a review process for monitoring the effectiveness of individual tutors and demonstrators to support the provision of feedback on their performance and skills.	Nacho Tudela-Montes	The School is currently working on a standardised Annual Review process for Tutors & Demonstrators (T&Ds) that will shed more light on the effectiveness of T&Ds and enable the provision of feedback to their work. Different options have already been discussed at both Grad School and the School's Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC), and a more definite paper on the T&D Annual Review process is currently under preparation to be presented to the SLTC this month. The Annual Review, in line with the University's T&D Policy Guidance and the Low Hours Employees' guidance (0.2 FTE) will be a self-review exercise that each T&D will complete on their own and then discuss during their PhD Annual Review with their supervisory team as an independent item. It will have some input from Course Organisers, who will conduct a Teaching Team meeting with T&Ds at the beginning of the Semester to discuss teaching plans and activities and set a series of objectives for the T&Ds involved in the course. After the Semester, the Course Organiser will discuss with the T&Ds about how the teaching went, providing team feedback for the next year that the T&Ds will use as part of their individual self-review exercise. This means that the students will do a self-review for each course they have been involved in during each Semester, and they will be able to discuss all these self-reviews in a generic way during their PhD Annual Review. The objective is to maximise the feedback they get as T&Ds while balancing the workload on staff.	Paper on updated Annual Review process for T&Ds to be discussed at the next SLTC in November, potential implementation of T&D Annual Review process during academic year 2026-2027, once new T&D management system is in place.	
8	Assessment and Feedback	Students from the UG cohort expressed a desire for the School to explore different assessment models to replace peer assessment, particularly where it could help address issues with perceived unfair contributions and underperformance during group work assessments. The review team recommends the School acts on this feedback to ensure fair and robust peer assessment and considers giving weighted credit to peer review activities to improve participation. The review team further recommends the School implements a variety of methods in choosing how students are grouped and assessed, and reviews the mechanisms for addressing underperformance or non contribution to group assignment activities.	Dave Laurenson including DoDs and DPMs	CEE - awaiting direction Peer assessment is an important component of Engineering education as collaboration is a core aspect of professional practice. The school is piloting the use of Peerceptive to provide an improved transparency, and encourage better engagement in peer assessed work.	The Peerceptive pilot is running for the academic year 25/26, and will be reviewed by the College Learning and Teaching advisory group. Mech--awaiting further guidance on this matter.	
9	Curriculum Reform	Repeat of point 5				
10	Accessibility and Learning	The School are aspiring to meet the 20% WP entry target set by the Scottish Government, but a coordinated approach in achieving this goal was not well articulated and it was unclear if this target was realistic or achievable. The review team recommends developing a coherent, School-specific widening participation (WP) strategy to help the School work towards its specific WP targets and support the University's WP Strategy 2030 ambitions.	Phil Hands including Louise McCreath and Francesca Coates and Katie Grant	•Bollated data at School and discipline level regarding gender and WP for the School •We have seen a steady increase in new female students year-on-year for the past 5 years and we track above the UK average which sit around 19%. We note that our Civil and Chemical Engineering disciplines both have very balanced total cohorts with 40% or more female students each. By contrast Electronics & Electrical and Mechanical Engineering are both below 20%. •Our widening participation new entrants have increased on average over the past 5 years, hitting a high of 22% in 2023/24. At a discipline level Chemical, Civil and Mechanical Engineering all have a student population of approx. 19% WP students, whereas Electronics & Electrical has only 10%. •For SIMD20, over the past 5 years our new entrants have remained stable around 5-7% of the total number of Scottish entrants to Scottish Universities. •Over the summer the recruitment team held meetings with each discipline to inform them of the findings and to agree priorities. •The strategy for the next three years is to focus on gender balance and equal access for WP students. We will strive to increase our SIMD20 students overall, but don't believe a 20% target is realistic at either a School or discipline level. We will monitor numbers year-on-year and seek sustained incremental growth. •To support this strategy we will expand our current activities with the following new initiatives: •Reporting annually on gender and WP student numbers to track and respond to year-on-year trends •Continue running the Civil Engineering summer school (for S5/6) but with a focus this year on achieving attendee gender balance •Introducing a new Electronics & Electrical Engineering summer school (for S5/6) in summer 2026 with a focus on WP schools and attendee gender balance •Introducing a new female only outreach event - in discussions with UKESF about an opportunity •Exploring articulation agreements with local colleges to support alternative routes into Engineering. We are in discussions with one college for 2027 entry and aim to roll out wider if successful •Enabling wider access to Civil Engineering through tabling a paper to support the recognition of the National Progression Award (NPA) Global Infrastructure and the Built Environment, SCQF level 6 course for entry •We won a Royal Academy of Engineering Ingenious Grant to broaden perceptions of engineering and aimed at young people from underrepresented groups mapped to WP targets and address Gatsby Benchmark Four (relevant to those with more limited access to work experience opportunities). Our main audiences will be young women, those from a low socio-economic postcode areas, rural/remote areas, schools with low progression into higher education rates, schools with high proportion of free school meal eligibility, care experienced and estranged pupils. The project will plug a demonstrable gap in high school provision by offering new remote lab equipment (ripple tank) to high schools with activity embedded in the national Physics curricula. The initiative will be developed until end of 2025 and rolled out for use in 2026.	Throughout academic year 2025/26	In progress v events due t in the summ
11	Curriculum Reform	The review team recommends the School map the level of industry involvement in courses to create a holistic view for each degree program, and that targets are established for the % of teaching staff who have industry experience and the % of courses which have industry involvement (either in development of material or in delivery). It also recommends the School seeks support and advice from the Industrial Liaison Boards to explore ways to increase UK industry placement opportunities for overseas students, particularly where placements are a core component of the programme.	Katherine Cameron including DoLT and AoLT	1.Mid-semester 1, survey all academic staff on their industry engagement levels using a previous chemical engineering survey as a template. 2.A separate survey will be run alongside it to establish the industrial input into individual courses, initially focussing on compulsory courses with optional courses being considered later. 3.With the return of students in September, placement applications have restarted. The placement team is building a picture of which students are engaged in looking for a placement and if they aren't, what are the reasons. When we have this data, it will be presented to the ILBs for consideration and advice sought. 4.The new MSc students in Advanced Power Engineering were met in week 2 of semester 1 to discuss the placement option and asked to provide the course organiser and placement team with an indication of if they would like to do a placement and in what are of power engineering so that we can target help.	1 and 2: Initial data collection to be completed by end of semester 1. Data analysis and target setting will take place during semester 2. 3: Data collection has currently started and trends will be identified by the end of semester 1. ILBs will be consulted during semester 2.	4: Completer No students interested in
12	Curriculum Reform	The review team recommends that before embarking further on a journey to implement co-creation within the School, some key questions must first be considered (the specific questions are noted in section 2.2.5 and pasted below). a) What does co-creation mean to the School (e.g. does it apply to both content and assessment and feedback?) b) Why does the School want to implement co-creation (e.g. is there evidence that it is beneficial to the learning process?) c) What benefits does the School believe co-creation will deliver? (e.g. have any benefits been measured from the current application of co-creation within the School).	Ricky Carvel including DoLT	Co-creation of assessment and feedback practices is one of the mandatory "Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities" as laid out by the University in their 2022 document of the same name. It is therefore something that we must do in some form. Co-creation of content is not mandated in the same way. Historically, and largely due to the industry-accredited nature of our programmes, I think the school has been reluctant to involve students in the development or co-creation of our teaching and assessment practices. Currently, the School is addressing co-creation in terms of assessment and feedback practices, not in terms of content. The value of co-creation of assessment and feedback practices is that we should be able to give students the kind of feedback that they need, acknowledging that the needs of students do change over time. It is hoped that co-creation of assessment and feedback practices will enable more effective feedback to be delivered on a timescale that is actually useful for students.	Throughout academic year 2025/26, and continuing to review as part of an ongoing activity	