

Periodic Review Report Template

School	School of Design
Discipline Name	Design Programmes
Date of Review	2 / 3 May 2012
Review Panel (approved by University Review Sub Committee)	<p>Internal Members: Ian Shell (Chair): Head of Academic Quality; Quality Support, Academic Registry Mic Porter: Senior Lecturer in Ergonomics; School of Design Nick Hayward: Principal Lecturer in Politics & Director - Undergraduate Programmes; School of Arts & Social Sciences</p> <p>Students' Union Member: Andrew Cheung: Students' Union Vice President, Activities and Development</p> <p>External Member: Professor Stephanie Atkinson MBE: Professor of Design & Technology and Co-ordinator of Design & Technology Education; University of Sunderland</p> <p>Facilitator: Sally Iles, Academic Co-ordinator (Review), Quality Support, Academic Services</p>
Method of Review	This review was conducted using the periodic review procedure defined in Northumbria's Review Handbook (2012 version), available from http://northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/ar/qualitysupport/review/intrev/

Section 1

Discipline Aims and Context

The periodic review of the Design School covered the whole provision of the School, comprising ten undergraduate programmes and six postgraduate programmes. The School has over 1,600 students from over 65 countries and 120 staff. Approximately 90 are academic, with a breadth of experience, expertise and connections, located within Newcastle City Campus East (CCE2) and the School's satellite campus in the heart of London. A team of forty two knowledgeable and well qualified support staff contribute to the UG student experience including the provision of technical demonstrator teams as well as programme administrative support. Six non-academic staff deliver recruitment and CPD marketing intelligence and provide events management within the School.

The number of research active staff has grown from around 15 to 66 in the past three years with a further 10 rapidly developing. The number of PG students has grown from 62 to over 150 and the number of PhD candidates approaches 40, representing a 300% increase. Since 2009, six new Professors and seven additional Readers have been appointed or promoted.

The main aim of the School, as articulated in the SED is "to develop and promote our position on the role of Design, now and in the future, as a driver of innovation in both the commercial and social contexts; to envisage the future through new know-how and design ideas and equip ourselves and others with the skills to deliver them." This was further articulated in the SED as "a transformation of the things we make, and the services and systems that deliver them." In the meeting with the School Senior team, the Dean of the School, Professor Steven Kyffin expressed the wish for the School to be transformational, growing people, industry and society and the discipline itself.

The City Campus East site in CCE2 has well equipped specialist workshops and studios, although large lecture hall requirements have to be sought outside of the School. The School has adopted particular 'studio' based delivery methods which, under current methodologies, result in the School appearing to under-utilise its resources, despite the School's perception that this is not the case. The SED refers to a number of internal and external changes and where appropriate these have been taken into account of in the various sections of the report.

The Panel identified the following strengths:

- The School has a clear aim, which is appropriately aspirational and which clearly fits with the

University Corporate Strategy.

The Panel made the following observations:

- The new research structure is commended as it aligns to programme clusters, but the School needs to be aware of impact of the revised structure on the existing research community including the support for current PGR students, who have been re-located to separate floors of the building dependent on their research area.
- The Panel recognises the tensions between the distinctive approaches and aspirations of the School of Design and the University's requirements for growth.

Section 2

Curricula and Standards

The Panel identified the following strengths:

- Research/Teaching Interface and new Research/Learning and Teaching Integration Model which should be enhanced by the new research structure.
- The Panel commend the School's proactive engagement with businesses and organisations which enhance the student experience through use of opportunities provided by live projects and placements.

The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:

- Whilst recognising that the School is already revising Learning Outcomes, the Panel recommend that within this review:
 - programme learning outcomes reflect the uniqueness and distinctiveness of each programme; and
 - module learning outcomes are clearly mapped to programme learning outcomes and assessment(s).
- The School should actively seek and use both employer and placement provider feedback to remain attentive to:
 - the needs of the design community;
 - the employability of all students; and
 - the ethos of design practice.
- Evaluate how the performance of direct entry (level 6) students can be improved including consideration of what advice students are given via pre entry information, admissions/induction processes including introduction to academic study skills as well as socialisation into the School, and the achievement of good awards mapped against entry criteria characteristics.

Section 3

Management Information Trends

The Panel identified the following strengths:

- Recognition that the School is working with Marketing to examine ways to attract non traditional and widening participation students.

The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:

- Whilst applauding the outstanding performance of some programmes, the Panel recommends the Discipline explores the performance variations within and between programmes.

Section 4

Student Experience

The Panel identified the following strengths:

- Ethos of Design School community which permeates throughout the School (academic and administrative staff, technicians and students).
- Flexibility of staff and curriculum to respond to opportunities to incorporate live projects into the student experience.
- Students welcomed the range of support systems both informal and formal (Programme Leaders, Guidance Tutors, Year Tutors).

The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:

- The School should seek to provide privacy for certain aspects of student support. *Chair's note:*

Following the report, the panel has been advised that the School has a private tutorial room on the ground floor of the building.

- To continue to work with the student body to clarify assessment tasks and process of marking and moderation robustness, transparency and equity recognising the ambiguity inherent in design, i.e. students can expect to receive different views of their work from the Design School tutors. This mirrors the experience they will encounter in employment, but students need to know how to respond to such differences in relation to their assignment brief and criteria for assessment.
- Review effectiveness of the publicising of the full range of student services within the School of Design.

Section 5

Enhancement Strategies

The Panel identified the following strengths:

- The residency internship model – virtuous circle.
- Further develop vehicles for working with other Schools.

The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:

- Continue to develop usability of Blackboard particularly in light of the new version being rolled out in August 2012.
- The School should give consideration to ensuring that workload allowances for extra curricula activity to support business and collaborative activity, which can in turn provide enhanced student learning opportunities, are sufficient to sustain this important activity.

Section 6

Discipline Response to Report

Curricula and Standards

Whilst recognising that the School is already revising Learning Outcomes, the Panel recommend that within this review: programme learning outcomes reflect the uniqueness and distinctiveness of each programme; and module learning outcomes are clearly mapped to programme learning outcomes and assessment(s). Programme Learning Outcomes have been re-written and approved, to be used from September 2013.

The School should actively seek and use both employer and placement provider feedback to remain attentive to: the needs of the design community; the employability of all students; and the ethos of design practice.

Developments and activities include:

- 3D Design programme: funding has been allocated to enable industry practitioners to deliver talks and workshops, they will take place earlier in the academic year to progress employability skills;
- Fashion and Industrial Design Subject Group: alumni and industry professional talks and 'Preparation for Industry' sessions on employability skills in Level 5 are planned;
- Fashion/Fashion Marketing/Design for Industry programmes: with increased student numbers placement opportunities are being expanded to ensure students meet the minimum requirement of 3 months practice in industry;
- Design for Industry/Transportation Design programmes: recent alumni have been asked for feedback in relation to employment and employability experiences since graduating;
- Design for Industry programme: graduates are invited to join an alumni page on a social network site to facilitate peer/staff communication and which also acts as a forum to post jobs in industry.

Evaluate how the performance of direct entry (level 6) students can be improved including consideration of what advice students are given via pre entry information, admissions/induction processes including introduction to academic study skills as well as socialisation into the School, and the achievement of good awards mapped against entry criteria characteristics.

Developments and activities include:

- The international recruitment team now includes a member of staff from each Academic Community of Practice to ensure that agents, institutions and prospective students are aware of entry standards and study requirements. An Internationalisation project will facilitate, review and promote the impact of these activities;
- On course support is being increased to provide group activities to support study skills development for direct entry international students at Levels 5 & 6. Progress will be reported to the School

- Student Learning and Experience Committee & University Internationalisation Sub-Group;
- Additional hours have been introduced to Guidance Tutors and revisions have been made to programme design where year long modules prevent direct entry in semester 2 of Level 5.

Student Experience

The School should seek to provide privacy for certain aspects of student support. Chair's note: Following the report, the panel has been advised that the School has a private tutorial room on the ground floor of the building.

The School has allocated a private tutorial room on the ground floor of the building which could be more widely used by staff.

To continue to work with the student body to clarify assessment tasks and process of marking and moderation robustness, transparency and equity recognising the ambiguity inherent in design, i.e. students can expect to receive different views of their work from the Design School tutors. This mirrors the experience they will encounter in employment, but students need to know how to respond to such differences in relation to their assignment brief and criteria for assessment.

There has been a significant improvement however issues of fairness, timeliness and clarity remain. This is being addressed via action planning with developments being piloted and implemented for September 2013. The newly appointed Director of Student Experience & Enhancement and Learning & Teaching Leads is working with subject teams take this action forward.

Review effectiveness of the publicising of the full range of student services within the School of Design.

The Faculty Registrar is developing a strategy for communication of services. Currently the School publishes information sent out by Central Services via a range of methods (plasma screens, leaflets, drop-ins etc).

Enhancement Strategies

Continue to develop usability of Blackboard particularly in light of the new version being rolled out in August 2012.

Training for all academic staff is being provided and the School continues to develop engagement. Revised minimum standards include: module descriptor; module guide; module brief/s; and learning materials.

The School should give consideration to ensuring that workload allowances for extra curricula activity to support business and collaborative activity, which can in turn provide enhanced student learning opportunities, are sufficient to sustain this important activity.

The key Business & Engagement considerations concern the nature of collaborations we develop and the capacity issues in terms of staffing. Here is a current picture of progress for these two elements:

Nature of Collaborations:

- Royal Academy of Engineers support for two visiting Professorship roles. A research symposium has been proposed for 2014 to define longer-term priorities for what is expected to become a sustainable relationship with the Department;
- Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with Solar Capture Technologies Ltd to begin in November 2014 and already initiated a Level 7 collaborative project with approximately 30 Masters students in Design and Design Management aligned with this collaboration. Five further KTP leads are being developed;
- Funded collaborative competition with Orange and 6 other international Design Schools;
- Continued growth of the volume of collaborative project work within key strategic relationships, such as Unilever.

Capacity Issues:

- Development Capacity: Region Engagement and Partnerships Lead, working with the Head of Department and Associate Dean for Business and Engagement, has joined the Departmental Executive group with a specific remit to champion this agenda within Design;
- Management Capacity: Three Readers recruited to grow collaborative contracts and bid-writing capacity, one in Fashion and two in Industrial Design;
- Delivery Capacity: With a high staff turnover in the Department through the last six-months some delivery capacity has been lost and continues to be a challenge as the Department establishes its new shape. Building KTP activity will be a key means to provide teams with opportunities for integrated Research and Business & Engagement outputs. Student collaborative projects which fit with current teaching structures will continue to be a major part of the Department's Business & Engagement portfolio.