UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Report of the Departmental Review of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Department of Archaeology

8 May 2003

Review Panel

Professor Andrew Nash	Vice Principal (Learning and Teaching)/Clerk of Senate
Professor Liz Slater	Chairman of the School of Archaeology, Classics and Oriental Studies, University of Liverpool
Dr Bob Matthew	Director, Teaching and Learning Service
Dr Geoffrey Moores	Senate Assessor on University Court
Mrs Elaine Shearer	Senate Office (Panel Secretary)
Mrs Catherine Omand	Senate Office (observing)

A   Introduction

The Department of Archaeology was last reviewed internally in 1993. It received a 4 rating in both the 2001 and 1996 Research Assessment Exercises.

The Department provided a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and supporting documentation in accordance with the University's requirements for the Review of Departmental Programmes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

The Review Panel met with the Head of Department, Professor Bill Hanson, and subsequently with key academic and support staff. The Panel also met with two academic members of staff who had recently completed their probationary periods and with seven Graduate Teaching Assistants who represented hourly-paid staff. The Panel met with four MPhil students and nine undergraduate students.

The Panel considered the following range of provision offered by the Department:

    a)   A single Honours Degree in Archaeology (MA and BSc)

    b)   A Joint Honours Degree in Archaeology and one of the Honours subjects offered in the Faculty of Arts or the Faculty of Social Sciences (MA and MA(SocSci))

    c)   A Joint Honours Degree in Archaeology and Earth Science or Geography (BSc)

    d)   A non Honours Designated Degree in Archaeological Studies (BSc)

Contributing courses are:

Level 1: Introduction to Archaeological Practice

          The Archaeology of Scotland

          Archaeology in Contemporary Society

Level 2: The Archaeology of the Mediterranean

The Archaeology of Britain and North-West Europe

Archaeological Methods

Archaeological Science

Archaeological Interpretation

Honours: Theory and Interpretation in Archaeology

Interpretation and Analysis of Archaeological Data

Recovery and Analysis of Archaeological Data

plus

34 Honours options (offered on a two-year cycle)

Through its Level 1 and 2 and Level 3 non-Honours provision the Department contributes to designated degrees in the Faculty of Arts (Ancient Studies, European Civilisation, Historical Studies and Scottish Studies)

In addition the Department contributes to Honours provision in the Departments of History and Celtic through a series of jointly taught modules.

 e) MPhil (Taught) in Archaeological Studies

 f) MPhil (Taught) in Medieval Archaeology

 g) MPhil (Taught) in Mediterranean Archaeology

 h) MPhil (Taught) in Aerial Photography with Geophysical Survey in Archaeology

B Summary Report

The Review Panel formed a strong impression from staff and undergraduate students of a cohesive department with a happy atmosphere. Students found staff very approachable and helpful.

The Panel was very impressed with the calibre and commitment of the post-probationary staff but concerned at their perception that they had not had any reduction in their teaching load during their probationary period. There was no documentation on the mentoring system and no formal peer review by the Department of the teaching of probationary staff.

The Panel commended the Department on its appointment of a Departmental Special Needs Co-ordinator who will be taking forward the development of a Departmental Special Needs Policy in conjunction with the University Special Needs Policy.

The Review Panel identified for attention issues relating to the induction and orientation of taught postgraduate students and to the timeousness of feedback on assignments.

The Panel was of the view that feedback to students on the responses to Quality Assurance questionnaires and on other more informal methods of feedback could be improved and provided in a more structured manner.

In response to comments from the students the Panel considered whether additional practical classes could be provided for those who were interested in pursuing archaeology to Honours level but recognised the resource constraints under which the Department operated. The Panel commended the plan to provide a Field School to enable students to acquire the necessary field skills. The Panel commended the emphasis placed on fieldwork and the grounding provided in archaeological

methodology and scientific aspects and viewed this as a strength and a distinctive feature of the Glasgow degree programme.

The Review Panel was pleased to note that the Department was of the view that the introduction of the new Code of Assessment would help to alleviate the problem of the low number of "A" grades at levels 1and 2 and of First Class Awards.

The Panel was sympathetic to the problems of the Department with regard to accommodation and encouraged the Head of Department in his endeavours to secure additional space.

The Panel commended the Department on its successful record with respect to graduate employment, particularly in the field of archaeology.

The Review Panel concluded that the provision under review was of a very high standard. However, the Panel considered that there were a number of areas for development to further strengthen provision. These are discussed below and recommendations made where appropriate.

Aims and Learning Outcomes

1   Departmental Aims

    1.1   The Review Panel noted that the Departmental aim to "provide the highest quality of teaching and learning at all levels in Archaeology" was qualified by the statement "within the constraints of the available resources". The Head of Department explained that this was a safety net given that, while the Department wished to provide the best, there were constraints on its ability to do so, particularly those related to the limits on space.

2   Programme Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes

    2.1   The Review Panel explored with the Head of Department what was distinctive about the Glasgow programme. The Panel was informed that the aim was to produce good quality graduates and potentially good archaeologists. With this in mind the Glasgow programme was distinctive in the amount of (11 weeks), and integration of, the fieldwork components. There was also an emphasis on methodology and a strong scientific element in the programme. The Panel **recommends** that the fieldwork elements be highlighted as a strength and given greater prominence in the marketing of the programme.

    2.2   The Review Panel explored with the Head of Department and staff the distinction between the MA and the BSc degrees in Archaeology. The Department acknowledged that there was little perceivable difference between the two. Entry requirements were different and there was some variation in requirements with respect to Honours modules. All students were required to take the core methodology modules and the Group B Honours modules had a larger scientific content. Prescription was kept to a minimum, It was noted that, at Honours Level, the MA/BSc split averaged 75%/25%. The Panel **recommends** that consideration should be given to developing specific aims and intended learning outcomes for both degree programmes.

    2.3   It was pointed out that, while joint degrees in Arts comprised two distinct halves, BSc degrees were expected to cognate. The Review Panel sought clarification on whether there were any modules that linked the BSc components. It was noted that in the Science Faculties, Joint Honours

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programmes had to be approved as cognate programmes and that BSc Joint Honours degrees in Archaeology and Earth Sciences and in Archaeology and Geography had been approved as being cognate subjects. The linking module would be the dissertation.

2.4 The Review Panel **recommends** that the documentation be reviewed to ensure that the terms "aims" and "intended learning outcomes" are used as appropriate and not interchangeably with "objectives", as appeared to be the case at present.

3 *Links to Benchmark Statement*

3.1 The Review Panel questioned the Head of Department on how the Benchmark Statement had influenced the programme. The Head of Department, who had been a member of the Subject Benchmarking Panel, informed the Panel that Departmental practice had been reflected in the Benchmark Statement. While detailed mapping within modules had not yet been carried out, the principles outlined were implicit within Departmental practice. It was noted that the core elements did not cover all the Benchmark requirements. The Head of Department pointed out that the core could not match all the requirements eg, the geographical aspects. The ethos of the Department was that the core comprised the methodological elements which could be applied to all areas of specialist interest. It was the intention of the Department to cater for individual interests as far as possible. The Panel **recommends** that the Department carries out a benchmark mapping exercise of the overall programmes to ensure compliance with the Benchmark requirements.

Curricula

4 *Science Provision*

4.1 The Review Panel explored with the Head of Department and staff whether there should be more science content in the course for the BSc students. The Head of Department was happy with the status quo noting that archaeology was a broad church to which a range of disciplines could be applied. There was some feeling among the staff that there should be provision for more science specialisation by BSc students but the Panel were informed that student interest and demand did not justify this. The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews the provision for BSc students.

5 *Levels 1 and 2 provision*

5.1 Some of the student representatives expressed a wish for more practical, hands-on, work with artefacts in Level 1 with more use made of the resources which were at hand e.g. in the Hunterian Museum. The Panel was told that one visit had been made to the Hunterian and one to Kelvingrove Museum. One student suggested that greater use could be made of computers to compensate for lack of "hands-on" access. Staff informed the Review Panel that practical provision had diminished as a consequence of the large numbers of students. Practical classes in the Hunterian Museum had had to be discontinued for this reason. The Panel raised as a possibility the provision of voluntary sessions for interested students. Staff informed the Panel that considerable effort had been put into encouraging students in first year and that Level 2 provision was in the process of reorganisation with a view to enhancing the weaker elements, including "hands-on" provision. The

Panel **recommends** that, in the review of Level 2 provision, consideration be given to how best to provide "hands-on" experience for students interested in continuing with the subject while maintaining a realistic attitude to the relative benefits of genuine "hands on" practicals compared with computer simulation.

6   Fieldwork/Fieldtrips

6.1   The Panel noted that students were required to undertake fieldwork prior to entry to Honours. Some of the students met by the Panel felt that more help could be provided with respect to finding placements. The Panel was informed that Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) only accepted Honours students on its projects. The students welcomed the proposal to create a compulsory field school at the Crichton campus for all intending Honours students. The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews the support provided to students with respect to finding placements.

6.2   The Panel noted that the large numbers in Level 1 and 2 were problematic for field trips. Students had to be divided into groups and a considerable staff presence was required.

7   MPhil

7.1   The Panel noted that MPhil students were encouraged to sit in on undergraduate classes but this was inadequately structured by the Department other than for those taking the MPhil in Archaeological Studies. Some of the MPhil students met by the Panel expressed the view that, had they not done this, they would have been significantly under occupied. The Panel noted that the MPhil in Archaeological Studies utilised Honours lecture programmes but employed different seminar/tutorial teaching and different modes of assessment. All taught postgraduate students were required to attend the Departmental seminar series. The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews its MPhil provision to ensure that it complies with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

Assessment

8   Low numbers "A" Grades and First Class Awards

8.1   The Review Panel was concerned to note the comments of the External Examiners in relation to the low number of first class awards at Honours and the low numbers of "A" grades in Levels 1 and 2. The Head of Department informed the Panel that attempts had been made to address the issue in a number of ways, viz. The marking scheme; reducing the number of modules; adjusting the balance between Junior and Senior Honours; but without success. He explained that the range of the subject matter was much wider than that of other Arts subjects and, to get a first, students had to perform at a high level consistently over this different range of material. The number of students taking the BSc route was not considered statistically significant enough to affect the outcome. At Levels 1and 2, the quality and range of types of coursework assessment was seen as a factor together with the lack of incentive for students to perform well. The Department's proposal to re-introduce an exemption scheme to overcome this had been rejected by Faculty. It was the general feeling in the Department that the introduction of the new Code of Assessment would prove a positive factor and would result

in a higher number of 'A's and first class degrees. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Department monitors the use of the Code of Assessment with respect to its impact on grades/Honours classifications awarded and reports progress to the Working Group on the Code of Assessment.

9   *Marking*

    9.1   The Panel asked the Head of Department how new staff learned to mark. In addition to attendance at the courses for probationary staff, a mentoring system was operated in the Department. Double blind marking was carried out and any discrepancies would be discussed. The former probationary staff informed the Panel that the Department had good descriptors and marking schemes set down and that, in their first year, another member of staff had checked their marking.

10   *Code of Assessment*

    10.1   The former probationary staff were enthusiastic about the new Code of Assessment expressing the view that it was more focused and encouraged the use of top grades.

11   *Special Needs*

    11.1   The Panel noted that the Departmental Special Needs Co-ordinator was attempting to develop Departmental policy in this area and to standardise practice. She intended to introduce a "mitigation" meeting for students with "pink forms". The Department Special Needs Co-ordinator expressed the view that there were a number of issues which required central University direction and guidelines. She expressed concern that students might not come forward as they did not wish to be regarded as different and noted that a more pro-active approach might be required. The Panel **recommends** that the Departmental Special Needs Co-ordinator ensures that the Departmental Policy on Special Needs is integrated with University policy in this area.

Teaching and Learning

12   *Modular Structure*

    12.1   The Review Panel noted that the modular structure made the Department's provision attractive to students who wished a "taster" course or to take Archaeology as their third option. This resulted in first year numbers in excess of 200 and second year numbers of 80 in session 2002/03.

13   *Specialist Software/VLEs*

    13.1   The Panel was informed that there had been a move away from specialist software and that greater use was being made of resources available on the web. The Archaeology Data Service "Patois" tutorials were, however, used. A Virtual Learning Environment using a web board system made available by Computing Services had been used on a trial basis for teaching practical IT skills and their application to archaeological case studies and the feedback had been positive.

14   *Teaching Methods*

    14.1   The Panel explored with the students present whether the way teaching was delivered was appropriate to the Learning Outcomes. The students felt that, in general, it was although some issues in Level 1 were identified, viz.

Inconsistency in the standard of GTAs; the Computing Laboratory sessions which some students found to be very basic and which could not be downloaded; and some lectures were perceived as too rushed. Staff responded that every GTA attended the Teaching and Learning Service course and informed the Panel that each class convener would discuss with the GTAs the hand-outs, materials etc for the class.

14.2   The Panel questioned the staff about the "student led" module. It was explained that the students decide what the topic will be. Concerns were reported on the part of students that they might be marked down as a result of the work of others and the module had accordingly been suspended pending a review.

15   *Relationship with GUARD*

15.1   The Review panel questioned the Head of Department on the relationship of the Department with GUARD. The Head of Department explained that the contracts of GUARD staff no longer included teaching duties and that while GUARD staff still carried out teaching, this was paid for by the Department. It was noted that GUARD staff ran one of the core courses. In the case of conflict of priorities, GUARD staff were able to rearrange the teaching commitments amongst themselves and this did not appear to be a problem. The Panel noted that some of the students present had experienced delays in the return of assessed work from GUARD staff this session.

Student Progression and Support

16   *Student Support*

16.1   The undergraduate students met by the Panel were very enthusiastic about the Department and staff. Staff were very approachable and communication was good.

17   *Induction of Students*

17.1   The Review Panel noted that the Department had identified that students were having difficulty dealing with the step-change between Level 2 and Honours. The Department had therefore introduced an induction course for Honours students. The Level 3 students met by the Panel agreed that they had found it a big step in terms of perceived Departmental expectation to put in work of greater depth and quality.

17.2   The students informed the Panel that an Effective Learning Adviser had met with them in Level 1. They indicated that they had found the first few weeks at the University overwhelming but that the documentation provided had been useful. A lecture in "Freshers" Week had provided information about the services available but the students informed the Panel that this tended to be forgotten in the mass of information provided. The Panel **recommends** that the Department introduces a structured programme of 'academic induction' for Level 1 students throughout the first semester.

18   *Choice of Honours Options*

18.1   The Panel was pleased to be informed that the Department was planning an event for prospective Honours students in early June to provide them with information on the content of the Honours options.

19   *Student Workload*

19.1   The Review Panel questioned the students present on how they found the workload. Opinions varied with some finding it quite heavy, particularly in years 3 and 4. Others found years 1 and 2 to be "easy" or "reasonable". The students informed the Panel that the turnaround time for assignments was normally about two weeks although there had been a problem with a course run by GUARD. Feedback was described as good and the students found staff very approachable.

20   *Students at risk*

20.1   The Panel explored with the Head of Department how the Department identified students in difficulty. The Head of Department informed the Panel that a Progress Committee met in the second and third terms to deal with students who were falling behind with their work. Students were identified by individual staff if, for example, they had not attended or produced coursework. Where appropriate the students were referred to their Adviser of Studies. Arising from this two issues were highlighted, viz. Money and illness and the Head of Department made reference to students who lacked financial support becoming caught up in a downward spiral.

21   *Learning Contracts*

21.1   The Panel was interested to hear about the use of "Learning Contracts" with students. The Head of Department explained that this was an area being examined by a member of GUARD staff as part of her PhD research and involved a written agreement between the supervisor and the student detailing the responsibilities and obligations of each in relation to the dissertation. It was the expectation that this would assist the student to focus on the requirements and timescales of this assignment. The Head of Department reported that he had not detected any major difference as a result of the use of a Learning Contract.

22   *Transferable Skills*

22.1   The Panel noted that transferable skills were not articulated in the Handbooks. The Head of Department informed members that transferable skills would be included in the Benchmark mapping exercise. The Panel asked the Head of Department whether any follow-up was undertaken with alumni with a view to identifying any gaps in the skills provided. No such follow-up was undertaken. The Panel **recommends** that the Department discusses with the Head of the Careers Service and the Development Director, Development and Alumni Office the possibility of carrying out a 'follow up' exercise with alumni with a view to identifying any gaps in the skills provided.

23   *MPhils*

23.1   The MPhil students met by the Review Panel, the majority of whom were from the USA, highlighted the differences in the American and Scottish higher educational systems and informed the Panel that they had experienced culture shock in being expected to stand up in class and talk. They had felt lost initially and had found the first term very difficult with little feedback. The situation had improved in Term 2. The students had found the feedback slow and this had been problematic when they were unfamiliar with the levels of expectation. The Scottish students, who were not present, were thought to have adjusted better. The students present had felt a little intimidated and were uncertain about approaching staff and it was suggested

by the students that a set time to meet with the Course Convener would have been useful. However, a separate Postgraduate Staff/Student Consultative Committee had now been formed.

23.2 The students present reported that the social orientation had been good and a social gathering had been held. One of the students indicated a willingness to assist in the induction process next session and noted that the students were inundated with information some of which she felt was superfluous.

23.3 It was noted that the Adviser for the postgraduate students was located in the Department of English Literature. The students would have appreciated having an Adviser who was located in the Department of Archaeology. The Head of Department informed the Panel that the Postgraduate Convener fulfilled this role.

23.4 The Panel **recommends** that the Department introduces a more phased Induction process for taught postgraduate students, separate from that for postgraduate research students, and ensures regular communication with them, particularly during the first term.

23.5 The Panel was concerned at the apparent lack of detailed course information for the MPhils.[1] From discussion with the students present the Panel had concerns at the apparent lack of "taught" elements in the programmes. The Panel noted that the Department was in the process of producing a comprehensive Course Handbook covering the MPhil provision, to include information on plagiarism; departmental facilities; list of staff with responsibilities, research interests etc; and clear reference to the departmental website.

24 *Employability*

24.1 The Panel noted that the Department tried to maintain informal contact with alumni but that no survey of students' employment had been undertaken. The Panel questioned the Head of Department on the extent to which students were prepared for employment in the field of Archaeology. He responded that, while the Department's students were better prepared than most archaeology graduates, it was not a vocational course and the focus could not be entirely on those who wished to be professional archaeologists. The Department tried to find a balance. The Head of Department indicated that a higher degree was becoming a prerequisite to employment in the field. A number of the Department's graduates did, however, succeed in securing short-term contracts with GUARD. The Panel was pleased to note the Department's successful record with respect to graduate employment, particularly in the field of archaeology.

25 *Special Needs*

25.1 The Panel heard that the Department had c10-15 students with dyslexia, mostly in Levels 1 and 2. The Department's Special Needs Co-ordinator informed the Panel that, unlike in the Honours years, it was difficult to maintain an overview of such students at Levels 1 and 2. The Panel noted that the Class Convener would discuss with the Special Needs Co-ordinator how best to deal with a particular situation and that all problems seemed to have been satisfactorily resolved. The Special Needs Co-ordinator expressed the view that there were a number of issues which required central University direction and guidelines. She expressed concern that students might not

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[1] Additional information sheets were subsequently provided to Panel members which varied in content, eg some with assessment criteria, some without.

come forward as they did not wish to be regarded as different and noted that a more pro-active approach might be required.

Learning Resources

Human Resources

26   Staff Workload

26.1   The Panel was advised that all staff had, this session, completed the workload model issued by the Faculty. The workloads were perceived to be reasonably equitable as were those of the technicians, who, while they all had their specialist areas, were able to cover for one another. The Panel was informed that the support staff had taken on increasing responsibilities from the academic staff with a view to relieving the pressure on them. The Panel was informed that this level of support could only be sustained if the staffing levels did not decrease. The Panel noted that support staff were not involved in collating responses from student questionnaires and wondered whether a standardised form might facilitate this. The Departmental Quality Assurance Officer was not convinced that a standardised form would be advantageous.

27   Former Probationary Staff

27.1   The Panel met with two members of staff who had recently completed their probationary periods. They informed the Panel that, while they had felt the experience to be a positive one, it had also been quite an onerous one which left little time for reflection. They were not aware of their teaching loads having been reduced and were of the view that, at an average of 50 contact hours, they were on a par with other members of staff. The Panel **recommends** that any future probationary staff are allocated a reduced teaching load in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Teaching and Learning Service (an approximate guide is 50% workload in first year, 75% workload in second year and full workload in final year of probation with no substantial administrative task allocated).

27.2   The Panel questioned the former probationary staff on how they knew at what level to mark. The Panel was informed that good descriptors and marking criteria were provided. Other members of staff had checked their marking on an informal basis.

27.3   The Panel was informed that a mentor was assigned to them when they started and was available for advice. This was done on an informal basis and there was no written departmental documentation on this. The Panel **recommends** that the Department prepares a written statement of policy and procedures with respect to mentoring.

27.4   The Panel asked if there was a system of peer review with another member of staff sitting in on lectures. It was noted that this happened informally as an integral aspect of team teaching where staff sat in on each other's classes. The Panel **recommends** that the Department gives consideration to the introduction of formal peer review of teaching for probationary staff, to include tutorial and practical teaching where appropriate.

27.5   The former probationary staff informed the Panel that student feedback was sought by means of questionnaires and informally, e.g. on fieldtrips by social contact, and acted upon. There was no departmental requirement for questionnaires to be formally submitted and assessed. The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews its procedures for analysing students' feedback with a view to ensuring that all feedback is considered in

appropriate fora and any resulting actions are communicated back to the students.

27.6   The former probationary staff identified as negative aspects the lack of space, with no staff room, and core teaching over the lunch period which inhibited social interaction with other members of the Department. They would also have liked more interaction with GUARD and were appreciative of the fact that it was located in the same building. They saw this as a strength of the Department.

27.7   The former probationary staff described the Department as very friendly, flexible, open, progressive and supportive with a "lets discuss and give it a go" attitude to innovation and change. They described the staff as open to new approaches and felt they were able to promote good practice.

27.8   The former probationary staff were research active. The panel were informed that the Department operated a fixed timetable for study leave. In addition, if AHRB funding could be secured, staff could "buy" additional leave.

28   *Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)*

28.1   The Panel noted that GTA positions were advertised in the Department and postgraduate students were eligible to apply after completing 1 year's study.

28.2   The GTAs met by the Panel were enthusiastic about the training course provided by TLS on basic class techniques and essay marking. Some of the GTAs present indicated that they were not entirely comfortable in providing feedback to students. There appeared to be differing practices within the Department with respect to moderation of GTAs' marking: some gave a sample to a lecturer; others did not although the Course Convener was available if required. The Panel **recommends** that the Department develops and documents procedures for Departmental induction, monitoring and mentoring of GTAs.

28.3   The Panel noted variation in practice across the Department with respect to briefing GTAs on what the students should know. Some met with the Course Convener on a weekly basis; some less frequently. The format of the tutorial was normally the subject of discussion with the Course Convener. GTAs normally attended any course-based meetings of staff and reported that their suggestions were usually adopted. The Panel **recommends** that there should be greater consistency in practice with respect to the preparation of GTAs for tutorials and that prior information about tutorial topics be supplied to students.

28.4   Feedback was usually provided by the Course Convener on the responses in the Student Questionnaires. The Panel noted that the GTAs welcomed feedback on their own contributions. The Panel **recommends** that student feedback on GTAs be sought in a uniform way.

28.5   The GTAs complained of lack of accommodation for tutorials which normally comprised 15 - 20 students.

28.6   The GTAs found the experience a positive one both in relation to teaching experience gained and with respect to the improvement in their communications skills in general.

Physical Resources

29   *Accommodation*

29.1   Members of the Review Panel toured the Department conducted by the Head of Department. The Panel noted that there was little small-group teaching

space and that those rooms that were available were barely adequate for timetabling demands and were not particularly suitable in terms of environment and facilities/equipment provided. The laboratory had to be used on occasion for lectures. The undergraduate students described the space available as "dreadful"; the GTAs complained of lack of accommodation in which to hold tutorials and the former probationary staff complained of lack of space and of a staff room. The Panel was informed that a British Academy Research Fellow had been appointed and that there was no accommodation for him. The Panel was sympathetic to the problems of the Department with regard to accommodation and encourages the Head of Department in his endeavours to secure additional space. It was **agreed** to draw the Panel's concerns to the attention of the Vice-Principal (Estates).

30   Overheads

30.1   Members of the Department raised with the Panel the fact that overheads could not be rolled over into the subsequent year and pointed out that the year-end fell in the middle of the fieldwork period. The Panel **recommends** that the Head of Department discusses the issue of overheads with the Dean and the Territorial Vice-Principal.

Maintenance and Enhancement of Quality and Standards

31.   Annual Teaching Review

31.1   The Panel explored with the Head of Department and staff the Departmental 'Annual Teaching Review'. The Head of Department informed members that this meeting took place at the end of the session and provided an opportunity to reflect on any problems which had arisen during the year; to consider the comments of the External Examiners and to consider any changes which might be required. Student questionnaires were looked at but there was no student presence at the meeting. Discussion at this meeting might lead into the Annual Course Monitoring Reports which were prepared later in the year. Staff found the meeting useful and informed the Panel that the review of Level 2 provision had arisen from discussion at this meeting.

32.   Staff/Student Consultative Committee/Student Representation

32.1   The Panel noted that a separate Staff/Student Consultative Committee had been set up specifically for postgraduate students. The Panel noted that, at the meetings of 18 December 2002 and 17 March 2003, there had been only one MPhil representative present (from the MPhil in Mediterranean Archaeology) and that only one issue had been raised. The students were asked if they had been aware of these meetings. The MPhil students informed the Panel that they had been informed by e-mail but that they had had nothing to raise. The students saw it as "another thing to get involved with" and were sceptical about its efficacy. They did acknowledge, however, that staff did try to address specific complaints. In view of the discrepant comments made by the MPhil students, the Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews the remit of the Postgraduate Staff/Student Consultative Committee and that postgraduate students are fully informed of the role of this committee during their induction period.

32.2   The undergraduate students met by the Panel informed members that it was difficult to find students willing to be student representatives. The Panel asked if the students felt the representation was adequate and noted that there was a considerable time gap between Staff/Student meetings. The students

responded that the Department would hold an emergency meeting if required. Minutes were posted on a notice board.

33. *Student Questionnaires*

33.1 The Panel was informed that there were no questionnaires on the programmes as a whole, only on the modules. The Panel were informed that it was the intention to introduce these in session 2002-03.

33.2 The Panel noted that some questionnaires were handed out in tutorials and some in lectures. Some of the undergraduate students present commented that they had felt intimidated when questionnaires were handed out in small tutorial groups. Others welcomed the offer by staff to contact them if they provided their matriculation number on the questionnaire. Some of the staff questioned the value of the questionnaire and expressed the view that students were weary of completing them. Some staff had employed other means of eliciting feedback, eg a feedback session with students. Staff did not support the suggestion from the Panel that there be a standardised questionnaire form. The Panel **recommends** that a mechanism be established to ensure that feedback received from students in an informal manner is fed into the reporting system and that departmental responses to such feedback are reported to the students.

33.3 It was noted that there was no formal mechanism for seeking feedback from graduates on their perception of the programme. Some informal feedback was received from those graduates with whom the Department had continuing contact (eg those working in GUARD). The Panel **recommends** that the Department, in conjunction with the Head of the Careers Service and the Development Director, Development and Alumni Office, investigates possible mechanisms for obtaining more formal feedback on the degree programmes from recent graduates.

34. *Feedback to Students*

34.1 The Panel was informed that feedback to students was through the Staff/Student Consultative Committee meetings and that every effort was made to respond to issues raised as quickly as possible. The Panel noted that the Level 1 and Level 2 representatives were not recorded as having attended since March 2001. There was no formal report back to students on the Student Questionnaires. Where change was proposed, consultation with students would be initiated. The Head of Department pointed out that student comments did lead to changes, eg the requirement for all students to prepare a Fieldwork Report linked to the compulsory Field Course resulted from informal discussions with students during the Field Course. The undergraduate students met by the Panel informed members that they had received feedback on actions taken as a result of the previous year's questionnaires. The Panel **recommends** that procedures be put in place to ensure that formal feedback is provided to students on the responses to the questionnaires. The Panel further **recommends** that the Department makes every effort to encourage and enable all student representatives to attend the Staff/Student Consultative Committee meetings.

34.2 The Panel noted that the Student Representatives would report back to the person who had raised an issue with them either in person or by email although the Panel noted that on one occasion the departmental response to a request relating to archaeological practice raised in March 2001 did not receive a response until March 2002.

35.   Annual Course Monitoring Reports (ACMRs)

35.1   The Panel questioned the staff on how ACMRs are considered. The Panel was informed that they were considered at a Staff Meeting and then forwarded to the Faculty Quality Assurance Officer who organised their review by a team of Faculty of Arts Departmental Quality Assurance Officers. The resulting report was sent to the Faculty Quality Assurance Officer who reported to the Faculty of Arts. Communication with the Faculties of Science was achieved through a member of staff's membership of relevant committees. It was noted that the Faculty QA Officer was giving consideration to making the team report available.

35.2   It was noted that the ACMRs had not been available in time for the Departmental Annual Teaching Review meeting but that, under changes to the Arts Faculty QA procedures, they would be in the future.

C. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Review Panel commended the Department for the overall quality of its provision and for its commitment to, and support of, its students. However, the Panel expressed concern at the lack of formalised and documented quality assurance procedures.

The recommendations interspersed in the preceeding report and summarised below are made in the spirit of encouragement to the Department of Archaeology to address the issues identified by the Panel and to document its procedures. The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer.

Aims & Learning Outcomes

Recommendation 1   The Panel **recommends** that the fieldwork elements be highlighted as a strength and given greater prominence in the marketing of the programme.(2.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 2   The Panel **recommends** that consideration should be given to developing specific aims and intended learning outcomes for both degree programmes. (2.2)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 3   The Panel **recommends** that the documentation be reviewed to ensure that the terms "aims" and "intended learning outcomes" are used as appropriate and not interchangeably with "objectives".(2.4)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 4   The Panel **recommends** that the Department carries out a benchmark mapping exercise of the overall programmes to ensure compliance with the Benchmark requirements.(3.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Curricula

Recommendation 5   The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews the provision for BSc students.(4.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 6	The Panel **recommends** that, in the review of Level 2 provision, consideration be given to how best to provide "hands-on" experience for students interested in continuing with the subject while maintaining a realistic attitude to the relative benefits of genuine "hands on" practicals compared with computer simulation. (5.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 7	The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews the support provided to students with respect to finding placements.(6.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 8	The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews its MPhil provision to ensure that it complies with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. (7.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Assessment

Recommendation 9	The Review Panel **recommends** that the Department monitors the use of the Code of Assessment with respect to its impact on grades/Honours classifications awarded and reports progress to the Working Group on the Code of Assessment.(8.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 10	The Panel **recommends** that the Departmental Special Needs Co-ordinator ensures that the Departmental Policy on Special Needs is integrated with University policy in this area.(11.1)

Action: Departmental Special Needs Co-ordinator

Student Progression and Support

Recommendation 11	The Panel **recommends** that the Department introduces a structured programme of 'academic induction' over the first semester. (17.2)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 12	The Panel **recommends** that the Department discusses with the Head of the Careers Service and the Development Director, Development and Alumni Office the possibility of carrying out a 'follow up' exercise with alumni with a view to identifying any gaps in the skills provided.(22.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 13	The Panel **recommends** that the Department introduces a more phased Induction process for taught postgraduate students, separate from that for postgraduate research students, and ensures regular communication with them, particularly during the first term. (23.4)

Action: The Head of Department

Learning Resources

Recommendation 14	The Panel **recommends** that any future probationary staff are allocated a reduced teaching load in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Teaching and Learning Service (an approximate guide is 50% workload in first year, 75% workload in second year and full workload in final year of probation with no substantial administrative task allocated). (27.1)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 15	The Panel **recommends** that the Department prepares a written statement of policy and procedures with respect to mentoring. (27.3)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 16	The Panel **recommends** that the Department gives consideration to the introduction of formal peer review of teaching for probationary staff, to include tutorial and practical teaching where appropriate. (27.4)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 17	The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews its procedures for analysing students' feedback with a view to ensuring that all feedback is considered in appropriate fora and any resulting actions are communicated back to the students. (27.5)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 18	The Panel **recommends** that the Department develops and documents procedures for Departmental induction, monitoring and mentoring of GTAs. (28.2)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 19	The Panel **recommends** that there should be greater consistency in practice with respect to the preparation of GTAs for tutorials and that prior information about tutorial topics be supplied to students. (28.3)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 20	The Panel **recommends** that student feedback on GTAs be sought in a uniform way. (28.4)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 21	The Panel **recommends** that the Head of Department discusses the issue of overheads with the Dean and the Territorial Vice-Principal. (30.1)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Maintenance and Enhancement of Quality Standards

Recommendation 22	The Panel **recommends** that the Department reviews the remit of the Postgraduate Staff/Student Consultative Committee and that postgraduate students are fully informed of the role of this committee during their induction period. (32.1)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 23	The Panel **recommends** that a mechanism be established to ensure that feedback received from students in an informal manner is fed into the reporting system and that departmental responses to such feedback are reported to the students. (33.2)

<div align="right">**Action: The Head of Department**</div>

Recommendation 24	The Panel **recommends** that the Department, in conjunction with the Head of the Careers Service and the Development Director, Development and Alumni Office, investigates possible mechanisms for obtaining more formal feedback on the degree programmes from recent graduates. (33.3)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 25   The Panel **recommends** that procedures be put in place to ensure that formal feedback is provided to students on the responses to the questionnaires.(34.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Recommendation 26   The Panel **recommends** that the Department makes every effort to encourage and enable all student representatives to attend the Staff/Student Consultative Committee meetings. (34.1)

Action: The Head of Department

Prepared by: Elaine Shearer, Senior Administrative Officer

Last modified on: 18 September 2003

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