Learning and Teaching Board

Strategy Away Day, 7 March 2017

The Learning and Teaching Board held its Annual Strategy Away Day on Tuesday 7 March 2017. The main topics for the day were as follows:

- Personal Tutoring
- Peer Observation of Teaching
- Staff Engagement
- Feedback on Assessment
- Assessment Procedures

In addition to Board members, the following individuals participated in the Away Day discussions: Dr Bill Wallace, Edinburgh Business School; Dr Ruth Neiland, Head of Academic Leadership and Development; Mr Keith MacAskill; Student Induction and Transition Manager.

The sessions were led by: Ms Pamela Calabrese, Quality Enhancement Officer; Mr Diarmuid Cowan, Student President; Mr Keith MacAskill, Student Induction and Transition Manager; Dr Maggie King, Head of Academic Quality; Professor John Sawkins, Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching).

Selection of Discussion Topics
The Board had previously agreed that the focus of the Away Day should be on progressing the common, key areas for action which had been identified by the Board, at its meeting on 2 November 2016 in its consideration of the following:

- NSS2016 results/comments and action plans produced by Schools, relevant Professional Services and the Student Union
- First quarterly retention reports from Schools and Registry Services
- A summary of key, common themes and areas for action emerging from a review of all NSS action plans and retention reports

During January 2017, Board members had the opportunity to select, by correspondence, their preferences from the list of the above 5 topics; however, since rankings were relatively equally rated, it was agreed that the Away Day should incorporate all 5 topics.

A mixed-discussion format was adopted: for some sessions, participants were arranged in small groups to discuss the various topics, with a plenary at the end of each item which facilitated wider engagement; in others, a whole group discussion was adopted from the outset.

Throughout, the aim of each session was to produce an agreed framework for revised or new policies and procedures which would be formulated more fully after the Away Day and presented to the Board for consideration and approval. As the 5 topics had previously been highlighted and agreed as institutional priority areas for action, this more focused format was adopted in preference to a more open, initial discussion around identifying points for further consideration.

M.King
Quality and External Partnerships
13 March 2017
A. Summary of Key Points from Discussions

A1. Personal Tutoring

1. The opening session on Personal Tutoring had been selected by the Board in order to develop further the revised model of academic advising, which had been introduced in 2016/17. A review and further proposal for Personal Tutoring were due to be presented to the Student Learning Experience Committee on 5 April 2017; the Board’s points of agreement at the Away Day would be used to inform the proposal.

The purpose of the session was to identify, discuss and agree enhancements for Phase 2 of Personal Tutoring, including challenges still to be addressed. In addition, the session aimed to encourage participants to “think differently for quality and distinctiveness” with regard to future versions for Personal Tutoring.

1.1 Overview of Personal Tutoring

The Quality Enhancement Officer, the Student President and the Student Induction and Transition Manager gave a presentation on Developing Personal Tutoring, which was focused on a series of key questions for participants to consider in three groups. These key questions were as follows:

Group 1
- What would produce tangible improvements in personal tutoring?
- What does a personal tutor need to fulfil the requirements of the role?
- What recruitment, marketing, reputational or other benefits could the University gain from effective personal tutoring?

Group 2
- What would produce tangible improvements in personal tutoring?
- What measurements could we use which would indicate the quality and consistency of personal tutoring?
- What alternative models of personal tutoring could the university adopt in place of current arrangements?

Group 3
- What would produce tangible improvements in personal tutoring?
- How could we encourage and embed existing good practice in personal tutoring at Heriot-Watt?
- What challenges does a leading research university face in delivering high quality personal tutoring globally?

In summary, the key points were as follows (note: this summary does not repeat in full the points which emerged as recommendations; see section below):

Key Themes from Group Discussions
- Areas still to be addressed: Personal Tutoring (PT) for PGT, ALP and IDL students; the need for more than the prescribed two contact points per session; support for PT’s in dealing with different groups of students and with increasingly complex student concerns;
- Key role of PT in retention, student experience and student satisfaction;
- Students want “trusting, empowering relationships with proactive, empathic personal tutors … to promote personal and academic well-being and development, and … facilitate access to wider specialist services when required”. How could this be delivered in practice? How could the PT system be presented as high quality and distinctive at HWU?
- In terms of enhancing and supporting the PT, some HEI’s had employed recent graduates for 1 or 2 years as Student Advisors to provide additional, more accessible types of support and advice;
- A sense of community and belonging was key, with both students and PT’s being responsible for working together to create this and to cultivate a trusting relationship;
- PT purpose should be re-focused to be much more positive and as a mechanism for helping students to develop (not solely as a route for raising/dealing with problems), eg development of the HWU Graduate Attributes could provide a focal point throughout every stage/year study;
• Any enhancements to the PT model should be applicable across all campuses (PGT, IDL and ALP still needed to be considered);
• For effective interventions, PT’s need to have relevant data in an easy to access format: systems need to record number of PT meetings, number of interventions/contacts; there also needed to be clarity on how many times a PT should try to contact a student before referring on if there continued to be no response;
• As one means of addressing inconsistency, PT training should be made compulsory across all campus locations;
• The PT role could be challenging and difficult: PT’s need support in dealing with complex cases;
• There should be an opportunity for a community of PT’s to be established and to share practice with each other;
• PT should be delivered consistently across all campuses, Schools and disciplines: there was a need for increased commonality of structures and systems;
• PT should also help students with issues such as opportunities to transfer programmes, disciplines or Schools; this type of engagement should be done promptly, as early intervention and help could prevent students from leaving the University;
• There should be improved information and sign-posting for PT’s, including case studies; if a PT is facing a challenging problem, they should be able to access easily relevant information, including referral or options such as PowerHours, Maths Support. Such information could include Tips for Success and tips for developing a trusting relationship with students;
• The purpose of PT needed to be better explained to students and also at different stages: pre-arrival, induction and stage/year 2+; PT’s should be allocated early; there could be a role for Class Reps and School Officers in helping students to understand the PT role;
• Students were still not aware of what the PT role was and why they should go to their PT; there was a need to consider the PT explicitly from the student point of view; this should be an essential relationship for students;
• The Super Tutor model was not seen as scalable/manageable for all Schools; however, the role of Year Co-ordinator could be used to fulfil a similar function.

1.2 Recommendations for Developing Personal Tutoring

The Board endorsed the following recommendations for the further development of Personal Tutoring:

1. Personal Tutor training should become compulsory across all campuses for all staff undertaking this role; a certificate of completion could be issued. The face-to-face sessions should be supplemented by an online training module. It was envisaged that training would be time-limited and would need to be renewed after several years (to be specified) to ensure that Personal Tutors remained current with key issues etc. In this instance, refresher training could be online.

2. A re-focused message around the purpose of Personal Tutoring should be communicated to students at key stages (pre-arrival, induction and the start of each stage, as well as at the point of any transitions, eg Go Global, industrial placement). Personal Tutoring should be seen in a positive, developmental light (addressing problems should be seen as only one part of their role and not the main or whole focus), ie part of joining the University community, of building up a relationship between students and trusted staff members.

3. Advice and support mechanisms for Personal Tutors should be identified and put in place, as there was a need to clarify, and make more consistent, the co-ordination of, and support for, Personal Tutors. Personal Tutors should be confident to know the limitations of their role, to know when to stop trying to help a student and to refer them on to the Year Co-ordinator or to relevant Professional Services.

4. There was no need for a Super Tutor post/model to be introduced as a University-wide requirement. The post of Year Co-ordinator was proposed as the most suitable role-holder for providing the type of co-ordination for Personal Tutors as envisaged by the Super Tutor model; this should be put in place across all Schools and campuses. The Year Co-ordinator would be responsible for ensuring consistent, stage/year-specific messages (eg preparing for placement) to be communicated by all Personal Tutors (see Recommendation 5).
5. Communications to students provided via Personal Tutors should be co-ordinated to ensure that there were relevant, consistent messages (appropriate for stage/year and for discipline). University-wide messages to be communicated via Personal Tutors should likewise be co-ordinated to ensure key information was provided at relevant points throughout the year.

6. There should be a University-wide system for recording and accessing key information required by Personal Tutors (to be part of SARP) – this was essential to forming a trusting, supportive relationship.

7. There should be greater consistency in PT across all campuses and Schools: HWU could not claim to have PT as high quality and distinctive if approaches were different in campuses, Schools and disciplines.

1.3 Next Steps – Student Learning Experience Committee

The Board agreed that the above recommendations should be incorporated into the proposal for Phase 2 of Personal Tutoring, which should be presented for consideration by the Student Learning Experience Committee at its meeting on 5 April 2017.

A2. Peer Observation of Teaching

The second session was on Peer Observation of Teaching, which had been selected for a variety of reasons: continuing challenges in sharing good practice in a consistent, effective way; the evaluation of teaching as a theme in TEF; the use of teaching observation schemes (in addition to PG CAP) at the Dubai and Malaysia Campuses. Dr Ruth Neiland, Head of Academic Leadership and Development, joined the Board for this item and that on Staff Engagement.

2.1 Overview of Peer Observation of Teaching

The key points covered by the Head of Academic Quality in the presentation on Peer Observation of Teaching … for Enhancement and Sharing Good Practice were as follows:

- Context: Scottish QEF; TEF: HWU: PG CAP and observation of teaching schemes for all academic staff in Dubai and Malaysia;
- 3 models for Peer Observation
  - Development Model (eg PG CAP)
  - Evaluation/Management Model (eg used for performance evaluation/management)
  - Peer/Collaborative Model: a positive learning experience, with opportunities for:
    - Reflection on current practices and identifying improvements
    - Sharing innovative and good practice
    - Enhancing learning and teaching
    - Supportive conversations about teaching practices
- The following topics were discussed by Board members:
  - Developing a HWU model for peer observation of teaching;
  - Top tips for teaching observation;
  - What should a teaching observation proforma include/exclude?

2.2 Discussion on Peer Observation of Teaching

The key points emerging from the discussions were as follows:

Developing a HWU Model
- Many staff are used to PO through PGCAP and view it positively for enhancement and sharing good practice;
- Models were already in operation at the Dubai and Malaysia Campuses, which could provide a basis for a University-wide scheme (it was, however, recognised that there was an evaluation/performance element of the HWUD/M schemes which had been introduced in part
to review alignment of teaching practices with those of the UK and should not be incorporated into a University-wide scheme);

- Student surveys provided rich information in terms of teaching, but were not particularly effective as a mechanism for sharing practice;
- PO was also being conducted at some ALP’s as part of PAMR or Visit processes;
- Global model: the first year should be focused on introducing the scheme across the University, aiming to achieve a consistent approach, with an opportunity to reflect, evaluate and revise at the end of the year; the experiences of HWUD/M should be used to shape the initial model. After five years, the scheme could be contextualised for different disciplines, different campus locations; it could be broadened beyond review of teaching to include review of learning materials or assessment methods. There should, however, be an overarching set of shared principles.

- Challenges: resources; how feedback to the observed would work in terms of changing or sharing practice; how the scheme would be managed. Benefits: global scheme; opportunities for sharing practice more widely within and across disciplines, Schools and campuses; opportunities for research;
- Key Principles: the criteria need to be clear; transparent and clearly understood process; sharing key values; clear/only purpose: enhancement and sharing good practice.

Top Tips
- Building trust was key: safe space for conversation
- Encourage reflection, including self-reflection
- It should not be labour-intensive, nor paper intensive
- It should be informal, not a bureaucratic, formalised process
- PO should take place within and beyond a single discipline; and also across other Schools and other campuses
- “2 ticks and a wish” was an effective, efficient approach

Proforma
- The model needed to be developed first, before any proforma; nor was it clear that there was an actual need for a proforma at all: peer observation could take place without one, although the issue of extracting and sharing good practice would require consideration;
- A proforma should not include any marks/ranking (although a traffic light system could be useful for reflecting on “stop-change-continue”), nor any link to marks/ranking or PDR; although it could be a PDR objective to complete a PO to ensure that there was widespread participation;
- A proforma could include: aims and objectives; extent of interaction with and between class; space for reflection; feedback from students; feedback to students. There could be a mirror form for both the observer and observed

General Discussion
- There were concerns about developing a model which ended up being too process/paper-driven. It could be as simple as specifying that every academic needs to undertake one PO (as both observer and observed) once per session; this could, however, result in a tick-box approach;
- Behind all this, a culture change was needed, seeing the value of PO for enhancement;
- The proforma/process could be used as guidelines and as a prompt, not as compulsory;
- There could be common, University-wide themes each year to focus PO – this had the risk of making the scheme seem like a management tool with a set agenda, rather than an opportunity for shared, safe and honest discussions; the scheme should be outside management structures;
- Given the above, the mechanism for sharing practice beyond the pair involved in the observation was not clear; this could be done, for example, by reporting through the Board of Studies; it need not be a prescriptive process to make this happen;
- A truly enhancement-driven approach would allow individuals to choose whom they wanted to observe/be observed by; in what School; what type of activity;
- The necessity of sharing practice across Schools and campuses was recognised to avoid a particular campus-based or School-based approach developing; this could be an issue when it impacted on students;
- Consideration should be given to PO at ALP’s: as well as visits, could lecture capture/live streaming technology be used?
The Course Feedback Survey could include a good practice section, which would enable DLT's to collate and then pair up individuals to share practice.

2.3 Recommendations for Peer Observation of Teaching

The Board endorsed the following recommendations for Peer Observation of Teaching:

1. Peer Observation of Teaching as a mechanism for enhancing learning and teaching and for sharing good practice should be adopted University-wide.

2. At this stage, there was little support for use of a formal proforma for observers and observed to document their views of and reflections on teaching; however, consideration would have to be given as to how good practice could be shared more widely beyond the two individuals involved in the observation.

3. The Course Feedback Survey form should be adapted to encourage students to highlight examples of good practice which they would like other lecturers to adopt; this could be extracted and disseminated across Schools and/or progressed to institutional level discussion at the Student Learning Experience Committee.

4. There were several issues requiring further consideration: the title of the scheme; how to encourage staff to make use of PO; possibility of a pilot, with evaluation and lessons learned before roll-out across the University; there were some very real practicalities to be addressed in order to facilitate true cross-campus observation (eg live streaming of lectures; lecture capture technology).

2.4 Next Steps – Learning and Teaching Board

The Board agreed that a proposal for an enhancement/good practice model of Peer Observation of Teaching should be produced, taking into account the above recommendations and key points from the discussion.

A3. Staff Engagement

The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) provided a presentation on the theme of staff engagement, as staff availability, helpfulness and engagement with students had been identified through NSS results and action plans.

3.1 Key Areas in Presentation

The key areas covered in the presentation were as follows:

- Context for staff engagement
- Importance of student engagement
- Ways to get students engaged
- What contributes to a sense of belonging for students?

3.2 Discussion

In relation to the discussion, the following themes and questions were offered:

“Think-Pair-Share” on Staff Engagement: Availability, Helpfulness and Engagement with Students:

- As a student, what kind of teachers made the biggest impact on you? What did they do? What other individuals or factors contributed to your success?
- What is needed for meaningful interaction between staff and students?
- How can we create a sense of belonging for students?
The key points emerging from the discussion were as follows:

- Individual teachers who made an impact tended to be those who:
  - were seen as subject experts
  - challenged students beyond their expectations
  - enabled students to develop confidence
  - enabled students to develop in areas such as critical analysis, evaluation, argument
  - built up a trusting relationship
  - made a personal connection
  - knew students by name
  - used techniques which were engaging and innovative

- it could be difficult to create meaningful interaction in large classes of 400+ students;

- activities to create a sense of belonging should be part of the programme structure; there were diverse approaches, such as: student-student interaction; cohort-building; pre-arrival; clubs and societies.

- There were various types of “sense of belonging” (to Halls; to discipline/programme), which would require different types of actions; branding was seen as a key contributor.

3.3 Summary – Staff Engagement

In summary, the Board agreed that Schools and relevant Professional Services should consider taking forward the various suggestions for student engagement and for creating a sense of belonging for students, as outlined in the presentation.

A4. Feedback on Assessment

The Head of Academic Quality provided a presentation and series of questions for discussion relating to Feedback on Assessment, with a view to determining the need for an institutional policy.

4.1 Overview of Feedback on Assessment

The key points covered by the Head of Academic Quality in the presentation on Feedback on Assessment … towards an Institutional Policy were as follows:

- Current position:
  - Feedback on Assessment had been a long-standing, sector-wide issue emerging from NSS. While there had been a 5% improvement for HWU in NSS2016 as regards timeliness of feedback, there remained issues regarding quality and usefulness, and timeliness continued to be an issue for ALP and IDL students in particular;
  - “Assessment and Feedback” was an area for review in TEF under “Teaching Quality” (HWU had a positive flag in this area);
  - 2015/16 HWU had introduced a 3-week turnaround time for feedback on coursework
  - Two L+T Quick Guides on Feedback had been produced (one for staff, one for students), which contained a series of Feedback Principles developed in collaboration with the Student Union;
  - Numerous actions had been taken by Schools to improve feedback, as documented in NSS-PTES Action Plans, AMR, Academic Review and Retention Reports; the topic had also been discussed at a recent DLT’s lunch.

- HWU's Feedback Principles were around the following themes: constructive; supportive of student learning; timely; inclusive; accessible; relevant.

- Staff and students tended to have differing views on feedback, with staff stating that students did not often recognise nor know how to use feedback; students in NSS had highlighted the variability in quality of feedback, resulting in some not being useful for future learning. A focus on marks encouraged lack of use of feedback to improve learning.

- The following topics were discussed by Board members:
  - 3 current successes and 3 key challenges
Priorities for enhancing policy and practice
- Key features of a HWU policy

4.2 Discussion on Feedback on Assessment

The key points emerging from the discussions were as follows:

Successes
- University-wide policy: 3-week turnaround time for feedback on coursework;
- NSS as a catalyst for improvement – we should keep progressing;
- Good practice in feedback was being shared, especially in terms of using technology;
- Students providing peer feedback helped them to understand how to recognise and use feedback.

Challenges
- Difficulty in getting students to act on feedback and to use it as a tool for development and improving future learning;
- It was particularly resource-intensive for staff to provide extensive feedback – there was a need to manage expectations and to help students better understand feedback, particularly that volume was not an indicator of useful, effective feedback; the focus should be on consistency and quality;
- Students needed to understand better the different types of feedback and to appreciate that feedback was not always related to formal assessment;
- Giving marks straight away detracts from feedback; there was a need for greater dialogue, but this was particularly time-consuming to provide in an effective way;
- Getting all staff to engage consistently with the University’s Feedback Principles was a challenge, recognising that these could and should be operationalised differently in different disciplines.

- The question was posed as to whether HWU and the sector in general had made feedback more of an issue than it actually was by continually asking students about it. Edinburgh Campus student representatives had not raised issues about feedback, although it was noted that ALP and IDL students had done so repeatedly in surveys;
- It was agreed that there should be a single release date for all Schools, all campuses, all modes for examination results and no results should be released prior to this; this would contribute to managing expectations (one School had introduced a policy of all staff members adhering to the agreed turnaround time so that feedback/results were not issued early even if marked; in this way, there would be consistency and expectations could be better managed);
- Staff and students should be reminded of the different ways of providing feedback; students should be informed that feedback comes in different forms and that staff would want to try out different types of feedback;
- The focus for discussions with staff and students should be on the University’s Feedback Principles: these should be communicated during induction; by Personal Tutors; during the first class of each course; through Year Co-ordinators;
- There was a role for the Learning and Teaching Academy in providing sessions for discipline groups on how to provide different types of feedback in different ways;
- There should be greater use of “feed forward” in terms of comments provided on assessments as a means of helping students to improve in their learning and to give students the opportunity to review, reflect and decide what to do;
- The Feedback Principles should be adopted across the institution and promoted more widely, but there was no need for a more prescriptive approach beyond that. Current policies and processes should be linked to the Principles in order to provide more consistency. The forthcoming student portal and L+T Matters could be used to promote consistent communications about feedback;
- There still remained the issue of disparate information on, and approaches to, feedback on assessment at the institutional level:
  - there was disparity across campuses in the extent to which students had access to their exam scripts (some Schools arranged exam script consultation/feedback sessions; however, for some students in Dubai and Malaysia, they had to request formally and pay for access to their script under Subject Access Request);
the University’s only consistent policy related to coursework turnaround times, which did not address issues related to consistency and usefulness of feedback;
- the Student Learning Codes of Practice contained expectations related to feedback;
- the University’s Feedback Principles were not widely known nor promoted, being contained only in the L+T Quick Guides.

4.3 Recommendations on Feedback on Assessment

The Board endorsed the following recommendations for Feedback on Assessment:

1. There should be a single date for release of exam results, adopted across all Schools, campuses and modes of study.

2. The current, disparate information on feedback on assessment should be integrated, made more consistent across all modes and locations, and presented coherently.

3. The University’s Feedback Principles should be made more prominent.

4. There was no consensus as to whether the above constituted a formal Policy on Assessment; however, there was a need to provide a single source of information on feedback on assessment.

4.4 Next Steps - Feedback on Assessment

The Board agreed that a proposal for a University-wide approach to/statement of Feedback on Assessment should be produced for consideration, taking into account the above recommendations and key points from the discussion, including the need to integrate current, disparate sources of information.

A5. Assessment Procedures

The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) provided a presentation on a series of more procedural matters related to assessment, which had been highlighted by students in NSS 2016. It was emphasised that these could be addressed in a relatively straight-forwarded manner, and could help disciplines meet their NSS targets. The key procedural matters were as follows;

- Marking Criteria
- Scheduling
- Deadlines
- Links to Learning Outcomes

5.1 Discussion and Recommendations on Assessment Procedures

The Board discussed the various procedural matters and endorsed the following recommendations related to Assessment Procedures:

1. Marking criteria should always be produced and made available for assignments, otherwise judgements regarding marks/grades could not be made consistently nor justifiably.

2. Some Schools had a consistent approach to scheduling; others did not. All Schools should have a consistent approach to assessment scheduling; this could be managed and facilitated by Year Co-ordinators.

3. Deadlines for assessments should be published sufficiently far in advance to facilitate workload planning. Schools should seek to ensure that there was no undue bunching of assessment deadlines.
4. There should be an explicit link between assessments and course learning outcomes. With regard to learning outcomes, there should be no more than 4-6 learning outcomes per course. The existing course and programme descriptors, and associated guidelines, should be revised to reflect the University’s Graduate Attributes. Guidance should be provided on writing appropriate learning outcomes and on mapping learning outcomes to those of other organisations (e.g., MQA, PSRB’s, KHDA), so that there was a single set which was not altered for specific bodies.

In addition to the above, the Board also discussed and agreed the following:

5. There should be a consistent approach to penalties for late submission of assessment: at present, the Student Learning Experience Committee was trying to get all Schools to have a consistent, School-specific policy on penalties; however, in Dubai and Malaysia, where assessments could be handed in centrally, this diversity was proving difficult to manage. A University-wide approach would be more equitable and easier to manage.

6. Consideration should be given to different types of assessment, to assessment timings, to frequency of assessment and to potential revision periods as part of the Academic Framework project, which was due to report to Learning and Teaching Board. It was agreed that these types of issues should be owned and developed by Learning and Teaching Board.

5.2 Next Steps – Assessment Procedures

The Board agreed that the above points of agreement should be presented to the Board at its meeting on 5 April 2017 so that these could be endorsed and read into the record, with a view to dissemination and wider implementation.

B. Actions

The Key Actions and Points of Agreement emerging from the Away Day were as follows:

Personal Tutoring
1. The recommendations regarding Personal Tutoring should be incorporated into the proposal for Phase 2 of Personal Tutoring, which should be presented for consideration by the Student Learning Experience Committee at its meeting on 5 April 2017.

Peer Observation of Teaching
2. A proposal for an enhancement/good practice model of Peer Observation of Teaching should be produced for consideration by the Learning and Teaching Board, taking into account the recommendations and key points from the discussion.

Staff Engagement
3. Schools and relevant Professional Services take forward the various suggestions for student engagement and for creating a sense of belonging for students, as outlined in the presentation, with a particular focus on opportunities for establishing connections with members of academic staff.

Feedback on Assessment
4. A proposal for a University-wide approach to/statement of Feedback on Assessment should be produced for consideration by the Learning and Teaching Board, taking into account the recommendations and key points from the discussion, including the need to integrate current, disparate sources of information.

Assessment Procedures
5. The points of agreement regarding Assessment Procedures should be presented to the Board at its meeting on 5 April 2017 so that these could be endorsed and read into the record, with a view to dissemination and wider implementation.

Action for Learning and Teaching Board
The Learning and Teaching Board is invited to consider and approve the above actions and points of agreement.
C. Summary of Feedback from Participants

This section summarises the feedback provided by participants on the Away Day: rating the Away Day and the venue; most useful/interesting aspects; suggestions for improvement; future topics for Away Days; additional comments. 9 responses were received:

1. Rating the Away Day
   1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent. 5 ratings of "5" were received; 4 ratings of “4” (higher than 2016)

2. Rating the Venue
   1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent. 2 ratings of “5” were received; 2 ratings of “4”; 5 ratings of “3” (lower than 2016)

3. Most Useful/Interesting Aspects
   - Discussions on assessment
   - Good that actions emerged from the day
   - Time to reflect and share ideas as good, but maybe we could have been more action-oriented
   - Discussing ideas and new concepts with members of staff of other Schools
   - Actually getting decisions on each of the sessions
   - The team-based discussion leading into the wider discussions
   - The links between each of the session topics
   - Talking through the issues in friendly and supportive atmosphere with colleagues
   - Well-organised and focused
   - Teaching observation and personal tutoring probably the most interesting
   - Useful to share/reflect on policies/ideas of other Schools
   - The discussion across the Schools and Professional Services
   - Being able to share ideas and thoughts in a comfortable, accepting environment
   - Personal Tutoring and Peer Observation discussion, closely following by Feedback on Assessment discussion

4. Suggestions for Improvement
   - 5 responses did not identify any specific topics
   - 4 responses suggested the following:
     - Time at end to enumerate actions
     - Circulate questions beforehand
     - Less small group discussion and more time in open discussion
     - More frequent meetings/discussions
     - During the lunch break, some fresh air or short walk may clear heads for the afternoon session
     - Additional reference material

5. Future Topics for Away Day
   - 3 responses did not identify any specific topics
   - 6 responses suggested the following:
     - Development of integrated, web-based solutions for much of what was discussed
     - Assessment
     - Relevant topical issues at the time – that's worked well this time
     - Similar variety of things rather than one topic
     - Innovative assessment; reducing number of assessments
     - Retention/student engagement in more detail

6. Additional Comments
   - 7 respondents did not make any additional comments
   - 2 respondents commented as follows:
     - Great Away Day
     - Very useful use of time; it is important that the items are implemented/acted upon