
Report from the Teaching Task Force

1. Purpose of Paper

1.1. To ask the Academic Board to approve a number of recommendations which the Teaching Task Force has made to improve the teaching and learning experience, and career development of academic staff, at the School.

2. Background

2.1. The Academic Board on 17 October 2007 approved the establishment of a 'LSE Task Force on Teaching and Career Development' which would report back to the Academic Board and Council during this academic year.

2.2. This decision followed the presentation of a paper to the Board on 'Teaching at the LSE: an Overview and Proposal for a Way Forward' (AB/1).¹ The introduction to this paper read:

"The School's stated primary purpose is to 'to continue to enhance its position as the leading centre of international excellence in the study and application of the social sciences'. The *Strategic Plan* states that we seek to achieve this through 'excellence in teaching' (priority one) and producing 'research of the highest quality' (priority two).

There are inevitable pressures in a research-intensive institution like the LSE, particularly in light of the preparations for the next RAE, for academic staff to prioritise research over teaching. The School should, however, aim to achieve the same level of excellence in teaching as in research. Some of our students make considerable financial sacrifices to study at the School, but all of them, at all levels of study, rightly have high expectations of the School not only because of the level of some of our fees but also because of our international reputation. We should aim to meet those expectations by providing a first-rate intellectual experience, achieved by excellent teaching in an environment which stimulates debate and is supported by a world-class research library and high-quality student support services."

2.3. The paper described the Harvard initiative which established a Task Force in September 2006 to address a range of issues 'to support and reward a commitment to the steady improvement of teaching' within a research-intensive university, the declared aim of which was to 'enrich student learning, make the lives of faculty teachers more enjoyable, and distinguish [the institution] even further in the ranks of leading research universities'.

2.4. The School's Teaching Task Force began its work at the end of October 2007, when it decided to send out a consultative document on teaching and learning to all academic departments, student consultative fora, and all relevant committees and administrative divisions in the School. That process is described in more detail in Appendix 1 of Annex A.

¹ AB/1 can be found at :

<https://exchange.lse.ac.uk/public/LSE%20Website/collections/academicBoard/2007-2008/2007%2010%2017%20AB1%20Teaching%20at%20the%20LSE.doc>.

3. Issues

3.1. The report to, and subsequent debate at, the Academic Board on 17 October 2007 and the responses to the consultative document highlighted the following main issues of concern within the School community:

3.1.1. Fee income and expectations:

The School, as an elite research-intensive institution, aims to offer equally high-quality research-led teaching product at a premium price. Academic departments have stated that teaching needs to be of a superior quality to sustain the level of fees. The largest source of income for the School is fees (the highest proportion in the UK HEI sector); our Masters' programmes are the most expensive in the UK; our undergraduate overseas fees and General Course fees are high within the UK sector. Recruitment is buoyant in most areas but some students have queried during their studies the extent to which they were getting 'value for money'.

3.1.2. Student perceptions:

Surveys of student opinion (both our internal surveys and national surveys of undergraduates and Masters' students) over a number of years have highlighted several areas of concern, particularly on the limited contact between permanent faculty and students, academic advice and feedback, class size at Masters' level, and the competence in English of some members of staff, GTAs and fellow students. The School has scored lower than other Russell Group universities in some key areas of teaching provision in the National Student Surveys and the International Student Barometer. At the same time, concerns have been expressed by academic staff that the current method of student evaluation is insufficiently reliable and timely.

3.1.3. Staff perceptions:

The perception by many academic staff is that at the School and departmental levels, only research output is valued at all levels of review and promotion. There is a perception that there is little encouragement at an institutional level for stimulating innovative ideas about teaching within or across subject areas.

3.1.4. Undergraduate syllabus:

Concern has been expressed that the LSE did not offer a sufficiently distinctive degree at undergraduate level, and that best use was not being made of complementary social science disciplines and the commitment to research-led teaching at the undergraduate level. Some members of staff are of the opinion that students are not sufficiently stretched intellectually, especially in their first year of a degree.

3.1.5. GTA teaching:

A number of issues arose in regard to the use of GTAs in the School. For example, the amount of teaching by GTAs over the last decade, which has mainly but not exclusively been at undergraduate level, has reduced the level of contact between permanent members of staff and students. This particular concern was recognised in several Department Development Plans and has been formally acknowledged by the School in its analysis of strategic risks. Student representatives have raised the matter at the Student Affairs Committee and it often appears in written comments in student surveys. Students have also expressed a desire for GTAs to be available outside of formal classes to give them academic feedback, while GTAs have expressed disappointment at the inconsistency of pay across departments.

3.1.6. Academic and pastoral roles:

Staff and students believe that the 'office hour' system and the academic and pastoral roles within the School need to be clarified to try to ensure that students get accurate and timely feedback. Staff and students also believe induction and pre-arrival processes could be developed for better management of 'student expectations' of teaching and learning and to communicate support available to students within the School.

3.1.7. Facilities:

Staff and students stated that teaching rooms need to be of a consistently high standard to ensure a quality learning experience. Staff and students believe they benefit from the availability of social space within the department.

4. Preamble to Recommendations

4.1. The Teaching Task Force has tried to address the concerns above in its recommendations. In doing so it is mindful of the following which it would like to draw to the attention of Board:

4.1.1. The Task Force believes that the recommendations have to be considered as a 'package' in order to address fully the concerns listed above.

4.1.2. The task force considers our current structure and delivery of teaching, and the current School Major Review and promotions procedures to be fundamentally sound.

4.1.3. The Task Force set out to improve and refresh the teaching and learning experience, primarily at undergraduate and taught Masters levels, within our current practices and structures. These are aimed in particular: to encourage more contact between permanent staff and students; to encourage, value and reward good and innovative teaching; to use and reward GTAs more effectively; to provide more training and support for staff and students (see recommendations).

4.1.4. The Task Force believes a balance has to be struck between School-wide consistency and departmental autonomy on teaching practice and is confident that it has achieved this balance in its recommendations. The task force also encourages the adoption of examples of good practice in departments on various aspects of teaching and learning.

4.1.5. The Task Force believes that the primary role of academic staff in the tutor/tutee relationship should be to concentrate on academic advice and academic feedback for students and tutees, and therefore has put forward a number of recommendations which shift some of the current burdens to the School administration and service divisions, in particular the extension of LSEForYou at Masters' level and increased support for students in the counselling service.

4.1.6. The implementations of the task force's recommendations will have to be monitored. Some of its recommendations could be introduced almost immediately but the total 'package' will require two to three academic years to implement in full. A summary is outlined in Appendix 2.

4.1.7. The recommendations of the task force carry considerable costs, estimated to be in the region of £2,500,000 recurrent. The bulk of these costs – some £1,500,000 – will cover adjustment to staffing levels within departments to decrease the maximum class size at Masters' level and increase contact between students and permanent staff. Reducing the class size at Masters' level will have an impact on the Timetables Office and the Estates Division. Additional resources will be required for a new structure of payment for GTAs and to enable administrative departments to improve the accuracy of the School's student survey; extend teaching observation, counselling, the communication of support and welfare services, support for e-based courses, English language training for staff and students; and allocate funds for training, innovation, prizes and the celebration of teaching and learning. There will also be increased costs in the region of £500,000 recurrent associated with the introduction of the course 'Thinking like a Social Scientist', for a course organiser, appropriate administrative support and teachers (LSE fellows) and student materials. All of these costs are outlined in Appendix 3 of Annex A.

5. The recommendations

5.1. The Board is asked to approve the recommendations of the Teaching Task Force, which are attached at Annex A, subject to the Finance and General Purposes Committee approving the costs of implementing the proposed recommendations. The costs are set out in Appendix 3 of Annex A of this paper. The Pro-Director will make a report on the TTF to Council.

Janet Hartley
Pro-Director (Teaching and Learning)
May 2008

Recommendations of the Teaching Task Force

Introduction

The recommendations fall into the following broad categories:

1. Teaching contact and feedback
2. Teaching and learning improvements/innovations
3. Graduate teaching assistants
4. Recruitment, training and support
5. Improved evaluation
6. Valuing teaching, rewards and promotions
7. Monitoring the outcome of the TTF

1. Teaching contact and feedback

1.1. Increase contact hours between permanent academic staff and undergraduate students. The group thought it was particularly important to increase contact between senior academic staff and undergraduates beyond lectures, which are usually given by permanent staff (although the group particularly commended the use of senior staff in first-year lecture courses). The group noted the difference between departments in teaching contact hours but did not think it useful to attempt to impose an institutional norm. It nevertheless thought that departments which currently had low contact hours between permanent staff and undergraduates should take positive steps to increase this contact. The group recognised that contact need not be solely through teaching traditional classes but could be through a variety of other means. For example, responses to the consultation document suggested course leaders and/or Heads of Department attending at least one session; Q&A sessions with course leaders either mid or end of term; Q&A sessions formally included as part of a lecture slot; permanent staff marking a set of assignments; academic tutorials (as operated in the Anthropology and IR departments). One proposal was for students to carry out a small piece of research for their tutors or teachers on a voluntary basis in the vacation. Of course, increasing contact hours entails costs, which are outlined in Appendix 3.

1.2. Reduce class size at Masters level to a 'normally' 15. The group felt that a benchmark had to be set if the issue of class sizes was to be taken seriously across the School and to justify an allocation of additional resources. Class sizes at Masters' level were a source of student complaint. The group proposes that Masters' classes should be brought into line with undergraduate classes where there is a set maximum of 15. It accepted, however, that it might not be practical or necessarily beneficial to work to a prescribed maximum on every possible occasion, and for those reasons it thought it sensible for the TLAC/GSSC to establish a procedure which enabled academic departments to justify teaching larger groups by making a case to it. This recommendation entails considerable costs to increase staffing: these are outlined in Appendix 3.

1.3. Redefine the function of the office hour. The group recommends that the primary function of the office hour becomes academic advice and feedback from teachers of courses and tutors. The current 'office hour' system is not working effectively: some students were not sure if they could approach tutors who were not their teachers; and some teachers complained that students did not come to see them. The group thought it would be helpful if academic departments could provide a number of examples of the types of issues which could be addressed by academic members of staff during their office hours to encourage students to make better use of the system. The TTF also supported office hours starting on the half hour to facilitate better take-up.

1.4. Redefine role of tutors. The group wished to retain the role of tutors as the first port of call for students wanting to discuss personal or welfare issues, as a relationship can and should develop between a member of staff and his/her tutees. However, the group thought the tutor role should primarily involve the members of staff directing the student to a more appropriate part of the School for welfare advice, such as the Teaching and Learning Centre, Language Centre, Disability Office or the Financial Support Office. 'Tutors' should be re-titled 'Academic Advisers' to reflect their primary role of offering academic advice, and feedback, to students. The group also recommended that communications between the School and students should be improved so that students were fully aware of welfare, and other, services which were available to them. The group recommends that more counsellors should be provided by TLC and that ARD should develop better means of communicating this kind of information to students. See Appendix 3.

1.5. Encourage use of dedicated tutors. The group thought that departments should be encouraged to consider employing full-time or part-time dedicated tutors to supplement the work of regular staff. It accepted that small departments might have to do this on fractional contracts. In making this recommendation, the group took into account a scheme of this kind which the Department of Economics had successfully introduced and offered to show to other academic departments.

1.7. Establish a career structure for 'teaching only staff'. The responses to the consultation document showed that there was no support for creating a cadre of 'teaching only' staff. The group recognised that the School already has some 'teaching only' staff in some of its quantitative departments and that these members of staff could free-up time for other academics to conduct research. The group therefore proposes that a proper career development structure and appropriate titles for the 'teaching only' staff be developed by HR and brought back to the Board in 2008/9. It considered the following titles appropriate: Teaching Fellow, Senior Teaching Fellow and Principal Teaching Fellow. Colleagues who wish to move into a 'teaching only' or 'tutoring only' role should be encouraged.

1.8. Encourage use of post-65 staff as teachers. The group recognised the value of the experienced teachers. It recommends that departments should be encouraged to consider the employment of post-65 staff who wish to continue at the School in teaching or tutoring roles.

1.9. Establish a career structure for professional practitioners. The group accepted that external teachers and professional practitioners could, and in some areas did, provide 'value added' teaching, especially at Masters' level. It believes that HR should clarify the employment conditions of, and develop a better career structure for, professional practitioners who were currently employed on an hourly basis to help departments attract and retain their services. This matter would be brought back to the Board in 2008/9.

1.10. Examine the impact on teaching in the departments of buy-outs. It was noted that a separate group of the HDF, chaired by the Pro-Director Planning and Resources, had been set up to look at School and departmental policy.

1.11. Extend LSEForYou to Masters level. The group recognised that this was not a mechanism to improve contact hours between a member of staff and his/her students but that it could offer a number of benefits which could improve the learning experience at a postgraduate level, such as identifying any problems and improving access to information on graduate students. It could also identify poor attendance records and relieve departments of some of the current burden of assigning students to seminar groups and internal reporting, as well as act as a mechanism to provide feedback on formative work, background information, materials for references and/or a structure to a meeting between student and tutor. The group also recognised the importance of LSEForYou for academic feedback to students and reaffirmed that records should be completed in a timely fashion by all teachers. The group recommends that LSEForYou should be introduced as a pilot at Masters' level in some departments in 2008-9 and rolled out in full in 2009-10.

2. Teaching & Learning improvements/innovations

2.1. Establish a special 'teaching group' as a sub-committee of TLAC. The teaching group would be chaired by the Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning. It will explore, encourage and disseminate good practice with regard to teaching, assessment and feedback and/or innovations in those areas. It will feed suggestions for changes to School policy on teaching into TLAC. This should include non-traditional methods of teaching, including group and team work, informal student workshops, and the encouragement of students' presentational skills.

2.2. Increase support for Moodle. This would allow initiatives on e-based courses and course packs to be encouraged and supported, including electronic assignments, and question and answer sessions. This was thought to be particularly relevant for the support of large courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. See Appendix 3 for costs.

2.3. Provide financial support for projects for improvements/innovations in teaching. This support could include short buy-outs for academic staff in any area of teaching. The successful bid this year to the Annual Fund for £20,000 has been used to encourage innovation and excellence in the teaching of large courses; this should be used as a platform for future bids to the Annual Fund and to approach the School's alumni to fund such initiatives.

2.4. Encourage student engagement with teaching at a department level. The group approved the suggestion from the student focus groups that departments should be encouraged to have on-line and physical suggestion boxes for anonymous suggestions to improve the teaching and learning experience, which can then be fed into the staff-student liaison committees and encourage dialogue between academic departments and their students.

2.5. Improve and extend the induction and pre-arrival processes. The aim of this recommendation is to set out more clearly to all students the level of commitment and amount of work which the School expects of its students, and to inform them of the academic and welfare support which is available.

2.6. Support for inter-disciplinary initiatives. The group would like to propose to the APRC that some modest financial support should be given to departments as 'start up' funds for new inter-disciplinary or inter-departmental programmes. The group envisages the money being spent on such things as the employment of a research student to prepare and co-ordinate reading lists, and improve website entries.

2.7. Support for supplementary departmental activities. The group recommends providing a central budget of c. £15,000 to support a seminar series and/or outside speakers for 'added value' to courses and/or programmes.

2.8. Improve and maintain the teaching environment. The group accepted the desirability of providing departments with multi-function common rooms. It thought that future planning in estates could consider ways in which current space could be re-configured to support more group-work teaching and study space. The group also endorsed the paper approved by LISC and TLAC for 'teaching rooms standards'.

2.9. Introduce a compulsory undergraduate course for all students: 'Thinking like a Social Scientist'. This is intended to make the undergraduate degree more distinctive and to stretch students intellectually. It is described in detail in a separate paper.

See also valuing teaching, rewards and promotions 6.1-6.6.

3. Graduate Teaching Assistants

3.1. Establish new, transparent, pay and conditions for GTAs. The group recommends that GTAs should be put on fractional contracts. These contracts will set pay in 'bundles',

which would be a set of fixed sums, instead of the current variable and complex hourly rates. Each 'bundle' will define a set of duties, which will include teaching and office hours, class preparation, marking and contact with course leaders. The pay and conditions will also recognise the different levels of experience between PhD students and those already with doctorates. The new package would be produced on the understanding that the result will be an overall increase in pay for GTAs. The cost to the School of subsidising departments to pay GTAs on new contracts is outlined in Appendix 3.

3.2. Encourage more flexible use of experienced GTAs to help the learning experience.

Responses to the consultation document revealed many examples of good practice on the use of experienced GTAs, outside of 'core teaching'. The groups recommends that departments should consider adopting some of these examples, which includes 'drop in clinics' to address academic and welfare issues; on-line Q&A sessions over Easter vacation; basic undergraduate dissertation advice and problem solving sessions; organising 'case study' days and practical sessions in some subject areas; study skills advice; essay-writing support; preparing and updating course material; marking problem sets; and acting as GTA course Convenor/Rep for GTAs in large courses and becoming the link with the course leader (called a 'Senior Class Teacher' in one department which has adopted successfully implemented this process). The group noted that the Department of Media and Communications has proposed a new 'Study skills support programme' for 2008-9 to support core Masters' teaching in the department.

3.3. Re-assert the School's policy on GTA teaching at Masters' level. The group re-asserts that GTAs who are current PhD students should not provide 'core' teaching at Masters' level unless there are exceptional circumstances as set out in the School's Guidance on Good Practice for the Employment of Graduate Teaching Assistants and Guest Teachers at the LSE.²

3.4. Limit the teaching hours of PhD students. The group recommends that GTAs who are current PhD students at the LSE should teach a limited number of classes each week, and we recommend a maximum of six, to enable them to focus on their research.

3.5. Issue clear guidelines for GTAs. The group recommends that all departments should issue clear guidelines on what is expected of their GTAs; establish regular contact between GTAs and course leaders, which could be done in groups; provide support for GTAs; and ensure their work is of the required standard and consistent with material being taught in lectures.

4. Recruitment, Training and Support

4.1. Teaching to be assessed formally at the recruitment stage. The group commends current practice in many departments of holding a seminar or presentation for all staff so that their communication skills can be assessed before the formal interview. The group also recommends that all short-listed candidates should be asked to provide a short statement on teaching alongside selected publications to inform selection committees.

² This is the Guidance on Good Practice:

<https://exchange.lse.ac.uk/public/Admin/Human%20Resources/Web/Appointing%20Hourly-paid%20Staff/Guest%20Teachers/Occasional%20Teachers%20Good%20Practice%20Guidance%202003-04.pdf> .

The relevant lines are:

1.3 MSc students should not be employed as Graduate Teaching Assistants, other than in exceptional circumstances. Permission from the Vice-Chair of the Appointments Committee should be sought in such circumstances.

1.4 Graduate Teaching Assistants who are registered PhD students should not teach MSc students other than in cases where the PhD student is near to completion and/or has specialist expertise of direct relevance to the course on which s/he is to teach.

4.2. Increase English language support. This support would apply to all new non-native English speaking academic staff (unless the VCAC was satisfied that other training was being conducted), GTAs and students. The Language Centre will contact all new academic members of staff as soon as their appointments are confirmed to assess their standard of English. Courses for new members of staff could be organised before they start teaching. See Appendix 3.

4.3. Test language skills of GTAs. The group recommends that new GTAs who are not native English speakers should be tested by the Language Centre and not allowed to teach unless they have passed a School language test. See Appendix 3.

4.4. Adapt the current School postgraduate diploma course for new staff. The group recognised that views were divided over the value of formal training for new staff. It proposes what it regards as a satisfactory compromise: the current course to be broken into modules with a defined 'core' and 'options'; the 'core' part will be made compulsory for new staff with a number of 'options' taken according to their level of experience and subject area. The timeframe in which to take courses will be flexible over the period up to Major Review, so it supplements rather than hinders normal teaching and research duties.³

4.5. Make training more relevant for departments. The group recommends that departments should be encouraged to take 'ownership' of training by focusing on subject-related training, which can be tailored for their particular needs. TLC should be encouraged to find outside experts to perform this kind of training and would command the respect of the members of the department. Departments should be encouraged to hold centrally funded annual Away Days, which include a teaching element. See Appendix 3.

5. Improved Evaluation

5.1. Improve the timeliness and accuracy of surveys. The group accepted that the current system of surveys was considered by many staff to be inaccurate and that the awarding of resources to the evaluation of teaching had to be justified by establishing an improved system. The quality of current surveys should be improved by endorsing the work by the Survey Review Group (this proposes a reduction in the overall number of surveys, allows departments to add up to five specific questions, and will survey programmes as well as individual performance), but there is also a need for further resources to improve the current system's software to increase the accuracy of the feedback. Moreover, the group accepted that the need for timely feedback means that surveys have to be electronic rather than paper based. See Appendix 3.

5.2. Develop complementary and additional forms of evaluation. The group accepted that student responses cannot be the sole means to evaluate teaching, but should be combined with the following: more detailed reports on teaching at Major Review and other stages of the promotion procedure by the relevant Head of Department; more extensive use of teaching observations of staff by TLC (for its own sake and to feed into evaluations), which, in the case of staff applying for promotion, should be done by the relevant Head of Department or by a senior member of the department on his/her behalf. The group understands that CLT is developing an on-line teaching portfolio which teachers can maintain and to which they can add relevant information. The group felt this type of exercise would

³ The Director of the TLC recommend that the 'core' should be 20 workshop hours, which is not out of line with the current induction programme, and will comprise the following:

- basics of teaching - lecturing/seminars, mainly achieved through teaching observation and direct guidance + one day at the start (and there could be other options around that - e.g. one to one voice coaching)
- PhD supervision - mainly achieved through co-supervision + half day event at start
- course design - ensuring that anyone designing a new course gets proper guidance on how to do it; could be done through one-to-one tutorials with TLC and TQARO staff and mentor support.
- evaluation of practice - mainly achieved through a half day event run by TQARO and some practical work, e.g. reviewing student feedback, teaching observation, reading the department's most recent TLAC self assessment/report.

benefit the School and the individual by enabling teaching achievements to be considered at review processes and, in a wider context, raise the profile of teaching at the LSE. Costs of providing teaching observations and supporting CLT activities are addressed in Appendix 3.

5.3. Encourage higher response rates. The group thought that compulsory surveys would not necessarily lead to reliable comments and would be very difficult to enforce. The current response rate to School surveys is c. 40%. Suggestions on how this figure could be increased include: changes to the surveys as outlined above; departments, rather than the central administration, encouraging completion; stressing the importance of survey completion during the induction process; prizes for completion; donations to a charity for every form completed; feeding results more effectively into staff-student liaison committees to enhance departmental practice. See Appendix 3.

5.4. Make the current teaching scores more widely available. Current practice is to make teaching scores available to the teacher in question and his/her Head of Division. The group recommends that, in addition to this current practice, teaching scores for individuals are made available to the Director of TLC, the Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning and appraisers who are not a Head of Department. The group also recommends that a 'revision' process be established so that courses with consistently poor scores over a number of years are automatically taken to TLAC for potential review and/or to assess whether any support is needed to improve those courses. The group recommends that scores for programmes should be made freely available, including to the student body.

6. Valuing teaching, rewards and promotions

6.1. Continue teaching prizes. These prizes include awards at major review and for GTAs. The Teaching Excellence prizes for staff and GTAs nominated by students should continue and permanent resources (£10,000) allocated for them. Heads of Department should be encouraged to put forward for prizes not only 'star' teachers but also successful course leaders and/or a number of teachers involved in improving large courses. It is proposed that prizes for the latter awards should be divided up in a way that reflected the input of each member of the team in question. See Appendix 3.

6.2. Celebrate teaching and learning achievements. The group recommends holding a Summer Term 'teaching and learning' party to celebrate success in teaching and learning for staff, GTAs and students who have been awarded departmental prizes. See Appendix 3.

6.3. Disseminate more widely teaching successes. These can include national awards to LSE teachers, teaching innovations, 'good news' stories regarding teaching and learning on the School's website, *LSE Magazine* and in alumni communications etc.

6.4. Make use of the Increments Committee for rewards for teaching. The group recommends that Heads of Department should be encouraged to put forward colleagues to the Increments Committee for increment rewards for teaching. This is on the understanding that the Increments Committee would judge not only 'star' teachers but also give consideration to good performance in the teaching of large, compulsory courses and that the awards should be monitored to make sure there are no biases against particular subject areas, gender etc.

6.5. Fuller information on teaching to be provided for the Promotions procedure. Fuller information on teaching (see 5.1-5.3) should help appraisers at career development reviews and the professoriate to assess cases for promotion. It should also enable Heads of Department to provide more thorough statements on teaching to the Promotions Committee at all levels of the promotion process. The group thought that the Promotions Committee should reiterate to academic staff that it has the right to approach their respective Head of Department to address any evidence of poor teaching.

6.6. Feed teaching quality more explicitly into the Remuneration Committee. The group recommends that professors should provide a statement on their teaching experience as a

matter of course when applying to the Remuneration Committee, even if that application was based on another activity.

7. Monitoring outcomes of the TTF

7.1. Use TLAC as the appropriate monitoring strategic committee. Department teaching profiles should be monitored annually through TLAC. These will include teaching scores, staff-student ratios, teaching contact hours at undergraduate and Masters' level, the extent of GTA teaching including innovative use of GTAs at undergraduate and Masters' level to support 'core' teaching, evidence of increased teaching contact at undergraduate level, developments and innovations in teaching at all levels, training undertaken by departments, 'good news' on prizes etc. In 2008-9, academic departments will be asked to provide TLAC with proposals on the ways and timeframe in which they will be addressing the recommendations made by the TTF. In particular, they will be asked to state the resource implications for them of decreasing class size at Masters' level and increasing contact hours between permanent staff and undergraduates. TLAC will be asked to look at courses which have scored poorly in teaching surveys over a number of years (5.4).

7.2. Teaching quality to be included in the RAM. The group recommends that a summary of teaching scores and average departmental contact hours should be added to the RAM on the understanding that this will not be used as part of a formal calculation about a department's 'health', but will be used, alongside other factors, to help 'inform' decision making.

7.3. Maintain and establish mechanism for awarding prizes and monitoring use of central funds. Current groups which evaluate teaching prizes (teaching excellence awards and incremental awards at Major Review) and submissions for National Teaching Fellowship awards will continue to meet. The Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning and Director of TLC will convene a group to judge the allocation of funds for innovations in teaching from the Annual Fund and/or alumni. The Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning and Director of TLC will monitor the use of central funds for training events at departmental away days. Awards given by the Increments Committee will be monitored by that committee.

7.4. Report back to the Board on the implementation of the TTF recommendations. The Pro-Director for Teaching & Learning will report back to the Academic Board on the outcomes of the TTF process after three years. The timetable for implementation of recommendations is set out in Appendix 2.

Procedure of the Teaching Task Force

Introduction

1. The Academic Board on 17 October resolved to convene a Teaching Task Force to review teaching and career development.
2. The membership of the Teaching Task Force was:
 - Professor Janet Hartley (Pro-Director Teaching & Learning, chairman)
 - Ms Ruhana Ali (Students' Union Education and Welfare Officer)
 - Professor Martin Anthony (Head of the Mathematics Department)
 - Dr Clare Hemmings (Gender Institute)
 - Professor Emily Jackson (Law Department)
 - Dr Liisa Kurunmäki (Accounting Department)
 - Professor David Marsden (Employment Relations and Organisational Behaviour Group)
 - Professor George Philip (VCAC, Government Department)
 - Professor Danny Quah (Head of the Economics Department)
 - Dr Karen Smith (International Relations Department)
3. The TTF held six meetings on 31 October 2007, 7 January, 16 January, 23 January, 4 February & 6 March 2008.
4. On 5 November 2008, a consultation document was sent to all academic departments, student fora, relevant committees and service departments. Responses were received from the following academic departments:
 - Accounting Department
 - Anthropology Department
 - DESTIN
 - Economic History Department
 - Economics Department
 - Employment Relations and Organisational Behaviour Group
 - European Institute
 - Finance Department
 - Gender Institute
 - Geography and Environment Department
 - Government Department
 - Information Systems Group
 - International History Department
 - International Relations Department
 - Law Department
 - Mathematics Department
 - Media and Communications Department
 - Methodology Institute
 - Operational Research Group
 - Philosophy Department
 - Social Psychology Institute
 - Sociology Department
 - Statistics Department
 - Undergraduate Studies Sub-Committee
 - Graduate Studies Sub-Committee
 - Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee
 - Undergraduate Students' Consultative Forum
 - Taught Postgraduate Students' Consultative Forum
 - Careers Centre
 - Language Centre
 - Teaching and Learning Centre
5. Two forums were held for GTAs, on 26 November 2007.
6. The Students' Union was consulted through a number of focus groups.

Timetable of Implementation of the Proposed Recommendations

Many of the recommendations of the TTF relating to good practice can be implemented immediately or in the academic year 2008-9 but the some have major new resource implications and/or require new HR procedures and will not be implemented fully until 2009-10. The recommendations are cross-referenced.

2008-09

- **Centre for Learning Technology**

Additional post of learning technologist (2.2).

Upgrading pf VLE maintenance grants to support existing courses (2.2).

Develop on-line teaching portfolio (5.3).

- **Language Centre**

Language training for permanent staff, GTAs and students (4.2).

English tests for GTAs (4.3).

- **Teaching and Learning Centre**

Additional counselling (4.1).

Increase pot for training, development and teaching innovation (2.2, 4.5).

Establish a 'core' and modules for the current PGcert diploma and introduce for new staff (4.4).

Celebrate leaning and teaching achievements (6.2).

- **Academic Registrar's Division**

Better communication of welfare and advice services (1.4).

LSEForYou at Masters' level offered as a pilot for a small number of departments (1.11).

Supplementary pre-arrival and induction processes (2.5).

New technology introduced for student surveys (5.1).

Introduction of new measures to encourage completion rates for student surveys (5.3).

Make current scores more widely available (5.4).

- **Academic Planning and Resources Committee**

Allocate additional funding to departments for increased contact with undergraduates and for reduction of class sizes at Master's level (1.1-2).

Allocation of funds for subsidising new GTA fractional contracts (3.1).

Assess whether to support inter-disciplinary programmes with 'start up' funds (2.6).

Summary of teaching scores and average teaching contact to be included in the RAM (7.2).

- **Graduate Studies Sub-Committee**

Establish procedures for assessing exception to the 'normally 15' for class sizes at Masters' level (1.2).

- **Increments Committee**

Encourage HoDs to put forward colleagues for rewards for teaching (6.4).

- **Promotions Committee**

Committee to be provided with fuller teaching statements (6.5).

- **Remuneration Committee**

Committee to be provided with statements on teaching (6.6).

- **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee**

Establish a teaching sub-committee (2.1).

Monitor outcomes of the TTF and of courses which consistently score poorly (7.1).

- **Academic departments**

Establish mechanisms for better contact between undergraduates and permanent staff (1.1).

Clarify use of office hour (1.3).

Clarify roles of tutors/academic advisers (1.4).

Use results of student views on teaching more explicitly through staff-student liaison committees etc (2.4).

Use of central budget for support for extra academic activities (2.7).

Encourage better use of experienced GTAs (3.2).

Limit teaching hours of PhD students (3.4).

Issue clear guidelines for GTAs (3.5).

Teaching explicitly included at recruitment stage (4.1).

- **Estates**

Implementation of 'teaching rooms standards' policy (2.8).

2009-10

- **Language Centre**

Additional pre-sessional language training for GTAs and permanent staff (4.2).

- **Academic Registrar's Division**

LSEForYou available at Masters' level for all departments (1.11).

- **Human Resources**

New career paths for 'teaching only' staff (1.7).

Implementation of new career structure for teaching-only staff and professional practitioners (1.9).

Implement new system for payment of GTAs (3.1).

- **Academic departments**

Implement maximum class sizes of 15 at Masters' level (1.2)

New staffing following additional resources allocated by the APRC to meet the recommendations on class sizes (1.1, 1.5, 1.9).

Assessment of impact of buy-outs on teaching in departments (1.10).

- **Thinking like a Social Scientist course**

Pilot scheme introduced (2.9).

2010-11

- **Teaching and Learning Centre**

Additional counsellors as a result of re-focusing of the tutorial system (1.4)

Additional educational developer for supporting initial training for new lecturers and for more teaching observations and feedback (4.4 & 5.2).

- **Thinking like a Social Scientist**

Full course up and running (2.9).

2011-12

- Report to the Board on the implementation of the TTF recommendations by the Pro-Director Teaching & Learning.

Resources

Introduction

The proposed costs in the TTF recommendations are in the region of £2,500,000 recurrent. The bulk of these costs – some £1,500,000 - would be spent on staffing in academic departments to enable the decrease in size of Masters' classes and increased contact hours with undergraduates. There costs for teaching and administrative support for 'Thinking like a Social Scientist' need to be determined fully but will be in the region of £500,000 recurrent. A subsidy to academic departments is also proposed for moving GTAs from hourly rates of pay to fractional contracts. The other major costs concern provision in service departments to support teaching and learning: Teaching and Learning Centre, Academic Registrar's Division, Centre for Teaching and Technology, Language Centre.

Costs

The costs (with cross references to the recommendations of the TTF) are:

- **Academic Departments**

The proposed financial support for academic departments to reduce class sizes at Masters' level to a 'normally' 15 and to increase contact between permanent staff and undergraduates (1.1-1.2) is in the region of £1,500,000 recurrent. Departments will be able to make bids to the APRC for additional resources in 2008-9 for implementation in 2009-10. APRC will assess the requirements of individual departments to meet the aims of recommendations 1.1-1.2 based on the existing class sizes at Masters' level and current teaching workloads.

A proposed fund of £100,000 to move GTAs from hourly-paid to fractional contracts (3.1). Departments will be able to make bids to the APRC from this fund in 2008-9 for implementation in 2009-10.

- **Thinking like a Social Scientist**

The course is proposed to be given to all first-year undergraduate students and to comprise 20 two-hour lectures and 10 1.5 hour classes. It is estimated that the cost of providing an honorarium for a course director, appropriate administrative support for the course, teachers (8 to 10 LSE Fellows) and student materials would be in the region of £500,000 recurrent from 2010/11 (2.9).

- **Service Departments.**

The following posts and additional costs are proposed:

Teaching and Learning Centre:

- Two additional counsellors connected with refocusing the tutorial system, one from 2008/9 and one from 2010/11 (1.4).
- Additional educational developer for broadening teaching observation from 2010/11 (5.2).
- Additional training and innovations funds of £20,000 recurrent from 2008/9 (2.3, 4.5).
- Additional funds for prizes (£13,000 to increase value of GTA prizes and the transfer of £10,000 from temporary HR budget to TLC for Teaching Excellence Awards), total of £26,000 recurrent from 2008/9 (6.1).

Academic Registrar's Division:

- £30,000 for the provision of better communication of welfare and advice to students for 2008/9 (1.4).
- Costs of improving the reliability and timeliness of students surveys (software and staffing) of £20,000 non-recurrent for 2008/9 plus £10,000 recurrent from 2009/10 (5.1).
- A sum in the region of £2,000 recurrent to encourage students to complete the teaching questionnaire (prizes and contribution to charity for each completed form) from 2008/9 (5.3).

Centre for Learning Technology:

- Support for Moodle for large classes, curriculum development and teaching portfolios of £55,000, recurrent from 2008/9.
- Additional VLE maintenance grants £25,000 recurrent from 2008/9 (2.2, 5.2).

Language Centre:

- Two posts, one to support pre- & post-appointment support for permanent staff, and one to support enhanced English for Academic Purposes and e-based course, both of from 2009/10 (4.1-3).

- **Miscellaneous**

A proposal that the APRC could consider modest sums to assist department putting on new inter-departmental and inter-disciplinary programmes for paying research students to help initial co-ordination of teaching materials, websites etc. from 2008/9 (2.6).

A proposal that £15,000 should be made available to departments to hold seminar series and/or pay expenses of outside speakers for 'added value' to courses/programmes from 2008/9 (2.7).

A proposal that £2,500 be made available for an annual celebration for 'rewarding excellence in teaching and learning' in the summer term – for staff, GTAs, and students who have been awarded prizes from 2008/9 (6.2).