

# FLTQC 26 November 2025

Wednesday, 26th November 2025 2:15pm

Teams | Faculty of Science Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee

## Attendees

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### Attended

John Benardis (JB)  
Zoe Burke (ZB)  
Andy Burrows (Chair)  
Marguerite Hallett (Secretary)  
Liz Haynes (Observer)  
Penn Mackintosh (PM)  
Barrie Marsh (BM)  
Sarah Paine (Observer)  
Tony Shardlow  
Arya Wood

### Partial Attendance

Yarden Brody  
Susan Crennell  
Nathalia Gjersoe (NG)  
Charareh Pourzand  
Philip Rogers  
Gan Shermer (GS)

### Did Not Attend

Florin Bisset  
Sumukh Chaluvaraju  
James Foadi  
Momna Hejmadi  
Nikki Hodgson

## 1.0 Welcome and Quorum (3463)

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The Chair welcomed members, particularly new members, noted apologies and observed that the meeting was quorate.

## 2.0 Declaration of Interest (3464)

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There were no declarations of any potential conflicts of interest.

## 3.0 Student voice and closing the feedback loop (3465)

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The Committee received a presentation (Paper 27A) from, and had a discussion with, Professor Nathalia Gjersoe, Associate PVC (Student Experience - Student Voice), about closing the

feedback loop ("you said, we did"), improving NSS / PTES / Course-level survey scores on the student voice questions, and sharing good practice and challenges, e.g. student reps feeding back to their cohorts.

NG explained that at the previous Senate meeting there had been discussions about safeguarding the NSS for next year, given concerns that CT might impact scores. Next year will be the first time that students who have completed a fully CT course graduate, alongside pre-CT students returning from placement to complete their final year on a CT programme. Early indications from vanguard programmes are encouraging: Chemical Engineering saw an initial dip in NSS results before rising to its highest scores to date, and Health experienced a smaller dip followed by improvement. This suggests that CT is having a positive overall effect, but highlights the need to work with students to ensure expectations are clearly and appropriately set.

The University will enter survey season next semester. In Semester 2, every student except doctoral students will complete a survey; the PRES will not run this year, as it operates on a two-year cycle and was conducted last year. Undergraduate non-finalists will take part in the course-level survey, UG finalists will complete the NSS, and PGT students will complete the PTES.

The University typically performs well on the NSS, but less strongly relative to the sector on the PTES. The picture for the course-level survey is less clear. This survey was introduced to better understand students' experience of CT and to engage with them on its delivery, particularly given the low response rates to OUEs, which limit the reliability of that data. Moreover, the core principles of CT, such as a programme level approach, inclusivity and assessment for learning, are difficult to assess at unit level, making a course level survey more appropriate.

The Departments of Chemistry and Physics both introduced early release of Semester 1 marks last year and subsequently saw an increase in their Student Voice scores (NSS Theme 7), along with a modest improvement in Assessment and Feedback scores. A recent review of the NSS found that the Student Voice theme is the only metric that correlates positively with all other NSS themes. This suggests that strengthening student voice has the potential to positively influence students' perceptions across multiple aspects of their experience.

Within Theme 7, which comprises questions 22-24, all departments in the Faculty performed well on Q22 ("To what extent do you get the right opportunities to give feedback on your course?") and strongly, though slightly less so, on Q23 ("to what extent are students' opinions about the course valued by staff?"). As seen across the sector, there was greater variation between departments in responses to Q24 ("How clear is it that students' feedback on the course is acted on?"). This suggests that while we take student experience seriously and engage meaningfully with the feedback we receive, we are not always effective at communicating to students how their feedback has informed our actions, i.e. closing the feedback loop. Importantly, this is an area where we can make tangible progress before the NSS opens in February, even though there is limited scope to make major changes to delivery in that timeframe.

Some tips to consider in the run up to February are:

- Tell / evidence to students that their feedback (e.g. from SSLC and OUE) has led to change that benefits them, through 'You Said, We Did' activities, e.g. slides in lectures, posters in teaching spaces and email out to students (use templates provided by the Student Engagement Team), Moodle, short video from a senior member of staff, Rep promotion through social media channels.
- Also tell students how student feedback has been used in the past, e.g. last year's cohort, previous years' cohorts, and student engagement in CT.
- Choose 3-5 examples for the cohort you are targeting where student feedback has led to positive change. Consider a combination of big and small wins. Where possible, include something related to improvements to assessment and feedback.
- Give Student Reps a couple of minutes in a core teaching session to talk about changes they have influenced for their cohorts through SSLCs.
- Take opportunities between now and February to respond to easy student feedback quickly and communicate that (e.g. mid-semester stop-start-continue).

It is important to increase response rates to generate more meaningful data and to dilute

extreme views. Moreover, higher response rates correlate with higher overall satisfaction rates. Response rates can be increased by:

- Allocating time within timetabled teaching sessions for students to complete the survey, so they do not have to find additional time outside lectures. Students are far more likely to respond when encouraged by staff they know and trust, rather than through repeated reminder emails from the Student Engagement Team.
- Promoting the surveys in timetabled sessions. Explain why the survey matters and how the feedback is acted on; share a CT case-study or something specific to a unit / course.
- Making survey completion a team effort / fun, e.g. beat last year, beat other cohorts, leader boards, rewards at key completion points.
- Teaming up with student leaders (Academic Reps, PAL leaders, societies) to promote the surveys and explain why the surveys matter to them. The Department of Chemistry runs whole group feedback sessions with students. Student Reps can take on a facilitative role, helping to organise and run feedback sessions, potentially without staff present, and leading activities that foster a community of partnership with students. The Students' Union can support this work by providing training for Reps who wish to take on these responsibilities. The Department of Computer Science, led by JB, has been working over several years to build communities of student leaders.
- Having a surveys festival (How a festival makes student surveys fun | THE Campus Learn, Share, Connect), e.g. providing pizza.
- Considering the timing of communications and promotion, e.g. to avoid doing a big push just when students are receiving results, or an issue is being resolved, and during assessment periods.

GS asked whether there are any concerns regarding the methods used to encourage students to complete surveys, e.g. holding sessions with staff present or offering incentives like pizza. In particular, GS queried whether these approaches could be perceived as coercive, even if staff are not explicitly pressuring students, simply due to their presence or the way the sessions are organised.

NG explained that there is not concern because staff are not influencing what students say in surveys or directing how they should respond. Instead, students are being provided with opportunities, and incentives, e.g. pizza, to complete surveys. It was noted that, in the past, discussing the importance of the NSS with students was approached cautiously due to concerns about potential bias. This is now less of an issue, as it was acknowledged that the sensitivity was largely internal, with similar practices being common at other universities.

NG reported that the PTES is an area of particular concern for the University, as scores are relatively low compared to the benchmark, in contrast to the NSS where average scores are strong. The Office for Students' (OfS) Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) is expected to include PGT students in the future, in addition to UG, which is likely to lead to an OfS-run survey equivalent to the PTES. NG is working with Advance HE to encourage the OfS to adopt the PTES, given its widespread use and the availability of extensive trend data. The University has also invested effort to make the PTES more suitable for distance learners and apprenticeship students. Increasing response rates to obtain more reliable data is key to better understanding the PGT student experience; current PTES response rates (~50%) are reasonable relative to the sector, but could be improved.

NG highlighted the importance of building a culture of collaboration in which students feel their feedback is valued and acted upon. Actions to achieve this include:

- Promoting the course-level survey to improve response rates, particularly in the Faculty, to generate meaningful data for evaluating CT and informing future improvements, particularly around student voice (Questions 13 and 14), ahead of NSS.
- Encouraging participation in the OUEs. NG reported that if response rates for OUEs remain low, the surveys may be discontinued. This would place additional responsibility on staff to find alternative ways to evidence student experience of teaching for probation and promotion, and the absence of a central mechanism for this could lead to inconsistency.
- Supporting the extensive student representation network (~400 Student Reps) to be visible to their cohorts and make meaningful change, e.g. giving them space in lectures to introduce themselves to the cohort, posting a picture of them on the Moodle page where student feedback

and responses are shared.

- Communicating effectively the outcomes of decisions at SSLC to the wider cohort. Show how departments are responding to student feedback through their journey.
- Engaging SSLCs to help understand patterns in survey data, especially for EAPs.
- Co-creating solutions with students, e.g. via the TDF for student-led projects and the Student Changemakers Fund.

• Closing the feedback loop whenever possible (e.g. induction, re-induction, lectures, Moodle, OUEs). Emphasise the importance of student voice and how it has led to positive change. NG reported that the University is currently revising QA48, the Code of Practice on Student Engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement. JB is the Faculty representative on this work as part of the Student Voice Leadership Team. A first draft has been developed in collaboration with Registry, the SU and the Student Engagement Team, and has been reviewed by the Leadership Team. Throughout December, the draft will be presented to various committees for feedback, with revisions to follow in January, aiming for the new QA48 to be implemented in 2026/27. The revised QA48 will be streamlined, and a separate Student Voice Partnership Agreement between the University and the SU will be created to establish clearer responsibilities, expectations and resource allocation.

PM thanked NG for emphasising the usefulness of Academic Reps. PM commented that it is important to email students when their feedback has led to action. It is also helpful to work with Academic Reps who often have access to informal channels such as WhatsApp groups that students tend to engage with far more than University email. Such channels can be an effective way to increase engagement.

NG reported that the Faculty Student Engagement Manager had developed a flowchart outlining where different types of issues should be raised. The SU has now incorporated this flowchart into the training for Reps across the University, which should help ensure that matters brought to SSLCs are those that staff can meaningfully address, rather than issues outside their remit. The Chair encouraged members to continue communicating with students even when certain changes cannot be made, ensuring that the reasons are clearly explained. He emphasised that closing the feedback loop is important even when no action is possible, as students appreciate being informed. NG added that it is helpful to begin the new year of SSLCs by outlining recurring issues, providing updates on progress, and clarifying which matters cannot be addressed and why, to help focus Rep efforts more effectively.

PM reported that Faculty Reps do not always have direct contact with SSLC Reps, so it is helpful when staff encourage Reps to close the feedback loop. In response to concerns raised at BoS about Rep access to mailing lists, NG explained that the new Department Reps have access to mailing lists for all students within a department, which provides an effective way to share feedback following an SSLC.

NG encouraged members to contact either herself (ng495@bath.ac.uk) or Sam Kilgour, Head of Student Voice & Academic Engagement, at the SU (sgk46@bath.ac.uk) with any questions or feedback.

## **4.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (3466)**

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The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 October 2025 (Paper 28A).

## **5.0 Matters Arising (3467)**

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The Committee noted the Schedule of Business for Education Action Plans (Paper 28Ai) as a matter arising from the previous minutes:

Minute 3451: Education Action Plans (EAPs): Faculty level concerns (standing agenda item): Chair to liaise with Registry to compile a set of guideline deadlines.

The Committee noted that the Chair had circulated the Schedule by email to DoTs after the

previous meeting. The Schedule indicates when data will be available to departments to update their EAPs.

## 6.0 Chair's Business (3468)

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The Chair brought to the attention of the Committee that the Faculty Education Annual Review and Enhancement (EARE) deadline is Friday 20 February (for upload to the EARE Teams site). This gives the Chair and Dean w/c 23 February to review and add comments to the EARE reports in advance of FLTQC and the institutional deadline of 4 March.

### Chair's actions:

Approval of retrospective change in assessment pattern for MA50292 Dissertation for 2024/25 from Dissertation 90% and Presentation 10% to Dissertation 100% (approved 17 October 2025) (no paper).

## 7.0 Education Action Plans (EAPs): Faculty level concerns (standing agenda item) (3469)

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The Chair reminded members that consideration of EAPs is now a standing agenda item of DLTQCs, as well as FLTQC. No departments had any Faculty level concerns arising from EAPs that they wished to flag from the data they have added to date. The Chair noted that the Departments of Mathematical Sciences and Physics had updated their EAPs recently, but some departments had not updated their EAPs for a while. The Chair encouraged DoTs to keep their EAPs updated, to report on at the next FLTQC meeting in January.

## 8.0 PTES 2025 course actions (3470)

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The Committee considered the PTES 2025 course action plans, as requested by UEB, for the following courses which scored lower for Overall Satisfaction this year, and had lower scores for some of the specific question themes.

UEB had set each department 3 actions:

1. Address the clarity and consistency of all course and unit information, ensuring it is provided in an accessible, timely and consistent manner for all students.
2. Address assessment and feedback issues, and implement specific actions based on the course data and context.
3. Engage with relevant stakeholders, including student representatives, to identify specific enhancements to student engagement and on-campus community, ensuring these are accessible to, and inclusive of, all students (including overseas students).

The Chair noted that the action plans apply in practice to a broader range of PGT cohorts, not just the courses mentioned above, as these run alongside other programmes.

### **Department of Computer Science:** MSc Data Science (Paper 28B):

JB highlighted that the Curriculum Transformed PGT courses had run for the first time in 2024/25. In response to the actions required, JB reported the following:

1. The DoS will ensure close communication with students at every level, including pre-arrival, regarding core information, and will brief the teaching team even more explicitly on CT.

Assessment deadlines were coordinated and communicated early on and a universal coursework specification has been introduced this year for all on campus PGT students, that was co-created with students and is now compulsory for all assessments. Some suspensions of units were communicated to students and new Moodle pages have been created using a TEL template to ensure consistency and clarity.

2. The Department has established an examination paper review panel, comprising the

Assessment Officer, Director of Teaching, and Directors of Studies, to reduce errors in both UG and PGT examination papers. The panel serves as a secondary layer of review following the internal checking process. The Department has convened a groupwork policy team, which will meet on 8 January under JB's guidance to continue developing a departmental groupwork policy. The policy will address all stages of groupwork, from group formation and collaboration to issue reporting, assessment, and contribution monitoring. Its aim is to provide clear expectations for both staff and students, enabling the Department to manage groupwork matters consistently and effectively. Assessment criteria are prominently detailed in the universal coursework specification. The previous Director of Teaching (now Deputy Head of Department) developed a dashboard to monitor assessment feedback turnaround times. This shows that the Department performs well in returning feedback to students within the required timeframe. This year, the Department has introduced a new approach to constructive feedback for both UG and PGT, a focus on constructive feedback, e.g. highlighting the biggest wins for the individual or group.

3. The Department has worked to keep Wednesday afternoons free for PGT students, giving them time to take part in sports, join societies and build connections as a cohort. PGT students have also been given access to a dedicated, 24/7 lab space, which they voted to name the Kernel Lab. The Department has encouraged the PGT Academic Reps to hold events in this space, and will encourage the wider cohort to do the same, so that it becomes a community meeting space. Through the first SSLC, the Department has empowered the PGT Academic Reps to act as leaders within their community. As a follow-up to Welcome Week, they led a series of activities during Focus Week (Week 6), a lecture-free period featuring external speakers. These included Hexcloud introductions, career talks, social events and networking workshops, all of which have received positive feedback from students. The Department has also introduced a PGT buddy scheme, supported by a tailored transition toolkit, to help foster early student integration.

**Department of Life Sciences:** MSc Biotechnology (Healthcare Technologies) (Paper 28C): ZB reported that the 2024/25 academic year had run more smoothly than previous years and had the largest cohort to date, with 70 students across the suite of MSc courses. Of these, 32 were enrolled on the MSc Biotechnology course. However, only 5 students from the MSc Biotechnology (Healthcare Technologies) pathway responded to the PTES. 1 student had responded very negatively, which had skewed the overall results. Nonetheless, there remain areas for improvement. At certain points in the academic year, the Department is unable to provide feedback as quickly as desired. For example, students complete 2 research projects, the first of which may be marked by only 2 academics. Given the substantial workload and the need to provide meaningful feedback to inform the final project, meeting the 3-week turnaround can be challenging. The Chair suggested providing students with initial or partial feedback on their first project within the 3-week timeframe, followed by more detailed feedback later. ZB agreed to take this suggestion back to the Department. ZB reported that, for the first time this year, the Department has scheduled classes and workshops in which students compile the figures for their reports and receive feedback on them. This is intended to help students feel they are receiving timely guidance to better prepare them for the write-up. The impact of this approach will not be known until a full cycle has been completed.

ZB highlighted that the MSc students sit their exams around Easter yet do not receive their results until the Board of Studies meets in July. This delay means students are already halfway through their final project before learning whether they have passed the taught component, which may negatively affect their perception of feedback. The Department therefore plans to liaise with Registry about releasing these marks earlier, as provisional results.

ZB reported that MSc teaching staff have been reorganising Moodle pages and updating marking criteria. This year's total MSc cohort is slightly larger at 73 students, and several new academics have been recruited specifically to support teaching and research on the MSc Biotechnology courses. The Department noted that staffing constraints in previous years may have contributed in part to the PTES results. However, it does not consider the PTES feedback to be fully representative of the cohort.

## **9.0 Monitoring of timeliness of feedback (standing agenda item) (3471)**

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The Chair noted that he had asked DoTs to report back to him by email on progress with returning feedback to students within a 3-week timeframe.

## **10.0 General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) reaccreditation (3472)**

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The Committee approved the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) reaccreditation submission (without appendices) for the Independent Prescribing unit (Paper 30), subject to correction of a number of typographical errors. The Chair also highlighted the need to ensure that references to QA documentation were to the most up-to-date versions.

*Secretary's note: a list of errors was provided to Dr Tim Rennie immediately following the meeting.*

The Committee noted that the Independent Prescribing unit is completed for the award of a Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing, a postgraduate qualification for pharmacists in practice, making them eligible to be designated as Independent Prescribers by the GPhC. Some students complete the Independent Prescribing unit as a standalone unit, to get their annotation which is sent off to the GPhC, while others take it as part of a Bath award, e.g. a PG Cert / Dip or MSc.

## **11.0 Degree Apprenticeship Quarterly Monitoring Report and Annual Report 2024-25 (3473)**

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The Committee noted the MSc Computer Science Degree Apprenticeship Quarterly Monitoring Report (May - July 2025) (Paper 32A) and Annual Report 2024-25 (Paper 32B). The Chair reported that the Department of Computer Science is no longer recruiting to the Degree Apprenticeship because the government no longer funds Level 7 apprenticeships. The students currently enrolled on the Degree Apprenticeship will be taught out over the next 2 years. The Chair asked members to inform the secretary of any issues they wish to discuss in future reports received by the Committee, so that the Director of Teaching for distance-learning can be invited to address them at the meeting.

## **12.0 Intern Moodle update report (3474)**

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The Committee noted the report on the work undertaken by the interns on Moodle (Paper 33). The Committee noted that 2 interns had been recruited last year to address basic accessibility issues in Moodle, ensure the new Moodle template was being used, and improve consistency and clarity of the information provided. It was acknowledged that a few Unit Convenors had expressed concerns about this work. The Committee was asked whether it supported the continuation of this initiative next summer.

BM reported an issue that had come to his attention within the past 48 hours. One of the interns had made changes to questions in the question banks, including those used for student coursework. A colleague attempting to update this semester's questions discovered that some had been replaced with new versions. BM also raised concerns that these questions may now be accessible online. The Chair requested that the incident be investigated to determine exactly what changes the intern made. It was noted that, going forward, the guidelines outlining the limits of the interns' role will need to be emphasised.

JB reported that the interns had made substantial changes to content, which colleagues subsequently had to redo. JB requested that any future interns begin by conducting an audit and then seek approval from the relevant Unit Convenor before implementing any suggested changes to Moodle pages. The Chair agreed, emphasising that the purpose of the interns' work is to save staff time, not create additional workload.

## 13.0 Feedback from Committees (3475)

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### **Education, Quality and Standards Committee (EQSC):**

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2025 (Paper 34).

### **Academic Programmes Committee (APC):**

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2025 (Paper 35), in particular approval of:

- a) withdrawal of the MSc Computer Science Degree Apprenticeship course from 2027/28.
- b) new course MSc Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacotherapy for commencement from April 2026 (by Chair's action on 9 July 2025).

### **Education Advisory Board (EAB):**

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2025 (Paper 36).

### **Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee (CPAC):**

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2025 (Paper 37), in particular approval of:

- a) new student exchange proposals between the Faculty of Science and i) University of Groningen and ii) Technical University of Denmark (DTU) from 2025/26.
- b) new course MSc Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacotherapy for commencement from April 2026.

## 14.0 Department Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (DLTQC) Minutes (3476)

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The Committee noted the minutes of the meetings held on:

**Department of Chemistry:** 24 September 2025 (Paper 38).

**Department of Mathematical Sciences:** 29 October 2025 (Paper 40).

**Department of Physics:** 17 September 2025 (Paper 41):

The Chair requested that the Department of Physics submit to FLTQC for approval a full set of CT-updated 'programme regulations' that cover all programme transfer, recovery route & cash-in eventualities, so that these can be included in the Programme Handbook.

*Secretary's note: this was submitted immediately following the meeting.*

## 15.0 Any Other Business (3477)

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There was none.