



University
of Dundee

New Combined School of

Humanities, Social Sciences and Law

The Student Voice | Multi-School Feedback Report



This report has been co-produced by the 2021/22 School Presidents for Social Sciences, Humanities and Education & Social Work. The student leadership within every discipline were directed to form small strategy groups. Each group have created summarised reports on the most prevalent student concerns, demands and proposals specific to their discipline. This report is part of the wider effort to ensure a strong student voice and to help shape the future of the New Combined School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law (NCS). This report also features information on the recent NCS Student-Led Survey, a future representation proposal, student representative statements, and other external resources on the merger project. The affected student community and associated representatives expect this report to be treated with all due regard and acknowledged at every relevant stage and decision of the merger process, but also referred to during any future reviews or plans.

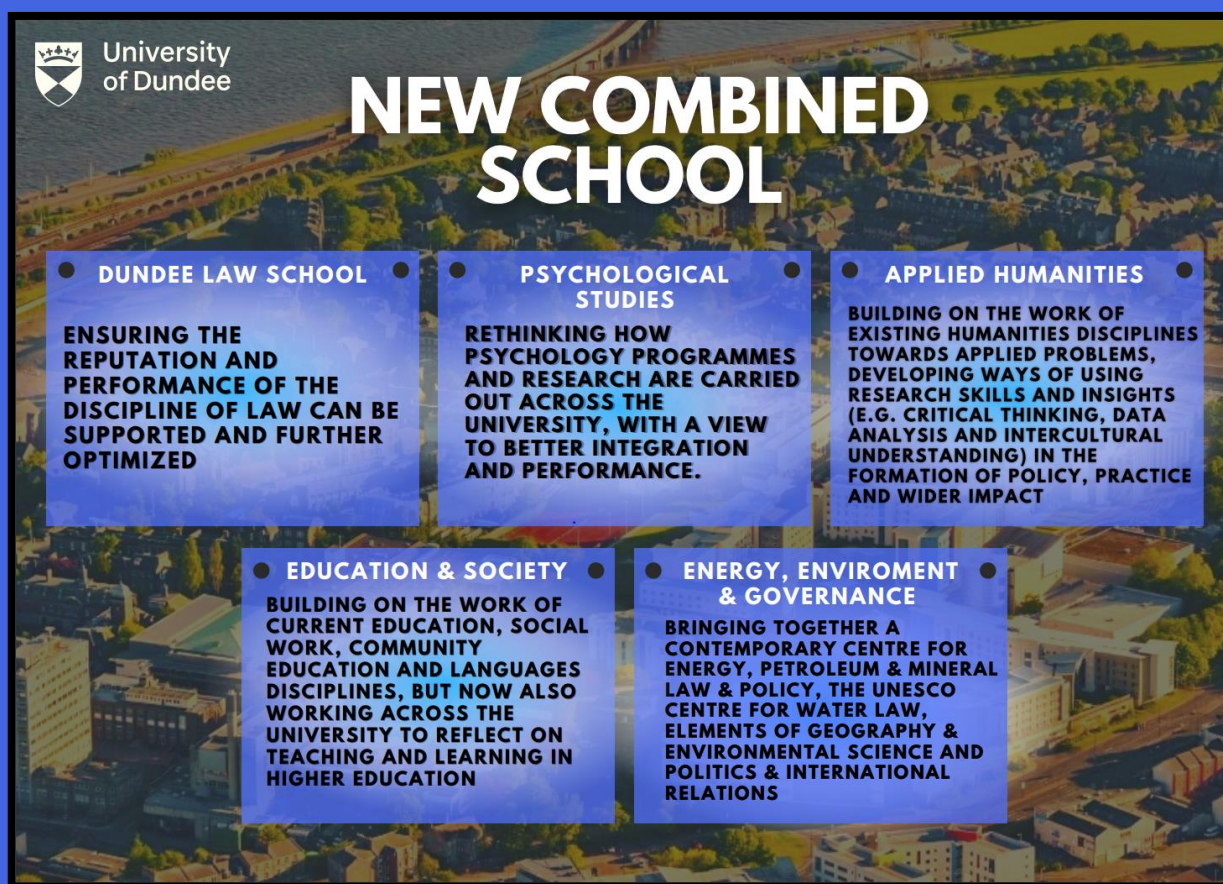
Report Author: Cameron Irons

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Overview

A general awareness around the proposed amalgamation of the three academic schools arose in the previous session of 2020/21, since then, several University consultations and decisions have been made that have led to the proposed (generalized) structure illustrated in the image below. This report exists as a reference document and is written evidence of the student voice for the various decisions and committees involved in the NCS initiative. There is rarely a need for such a report, but considering the situation, there must be clear access to the most widespread student concerns and requests.



It was clear in the initial stages of the merger process that there was uncertainty and concerns amongst the affected student community. This session, the University released a video statement, outlining the project and addressed some of the apparent concerns that students had. That video can be accessed via this link: [Combined Academic School - YouTube](#). The University also ran various open town-hall consultations for students to engage with. Such consultations were poorly attended and thus, raised the need for a report of this nature.

School President Statements

Cameron Irons

President of Social Sciences – SRC Vice Chair | Level 4 LLB Scots Law

“It is crucial that the student voice is prevalent throughout each of the phases and decisions relating to the formation of the School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law. The concerns, feedback and ideas of the student body have never been so important, especially for a project this large and this consequential. The future layout, aims, and success of the new School partially rests with effective student input. That is why I wanted to create this report, to have a coherent and detailed collection of feedback and desires from each of the affected schools and their respective disciplines. I hope this report is used as a reference and tool for future decisions, consultations, and proposals around the NCS. This is a solid testimony of the student voice, that is why it must be taken seriously and cannot be overlooked.”

Contact: President.sosci@dundee.ac.uk

Hannah Comrie

President of Humanities | Level 3 MA English Literature & Film

“Effective representation, during the merging of the three is vital during the development and establishment of the student voice. The announcement of the NCS was frightening to many. Students are worried about their futures, their classes, the staff, and their developing future. As school presidents, it is our responsibility to take a stand and ensure that every single voice within the three schools is communicated. This report is the best chance that we have, as a collective student body, to ensure our voices are heard on what we want to see in the new school. Let this document be a legacy of the student voice, the suggestions they have as a student body. Taking control of their education and claiming their future.”

Contact: President.humanities@dundee.ac.uk

Martha Umeh Ude-Eze

President of Education & Social Work | Final Year MSc Social Work

“This report is a collection of the student voices within the three merging schools, resulting from the huge efforts and dedication of respective vice presidents, course reps, and student volunteers. The merging of the three schools has raised concerns among students with several questions and suggestions that they would like to contribute and so, as School presidents within the three merging schools, we must ensure that every student voice is heard – hence the need for this report. I do hope that the suggestions and concerns within this report are taken into consideration, especially within the decisions and proposals around NCS.”

Contact: President.education@dundee.ac.uk

NCS Student-led Survey

In the fourth week of the first semester, a short survey was circulated to students within the affected schools. The aim of this survey was to capture the wider student voice to support the student representatives. The subsequent response from the University aimed to achieve greater certainty around the main NCS concerns and questions, providing a summarised FAQ report that provided a comprehensive breakdown of NCS implications and information. The survey featured one key question:

1. Do you any have questions, ideas or concerns that you wish to pass onto the University regarding the NCS? *

Enter your answer

The survey data was received anonymously, but participating students were asked to clarify specific details so we could categorise the responses. A total of 177 responses were received.

2. What course do you study?

Enter your answer

3. What school are you currently part of?

☐ School of Social Sciences

☐ School of Humanities

☐ School of Education & Social Work

4. What level are you currently at?

☐ Level 1

☐ Level 2

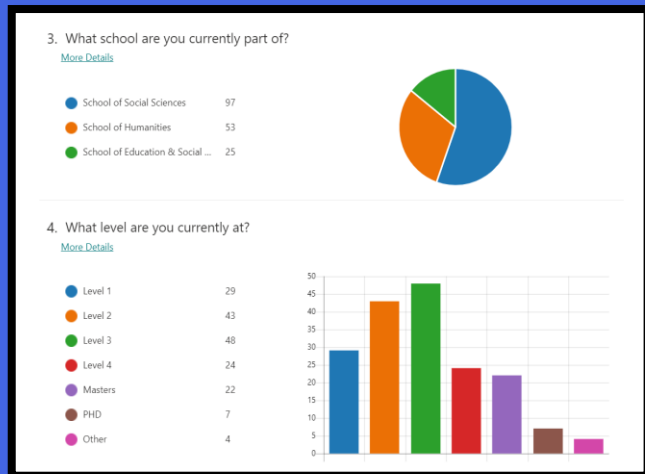
☐ Level 3

☐ Level 4

☐ Masters

☐ PHD

☐ Other



The responses were condensed into general/specific concerns, followed by any student suggestions and proposals. The data was then submitted to the relevant staff and groups overseeing the NCS, to be responded to accordingly.

The University response can be found at the *end of this report*.

Future Representation

Student representation is one of the fundamental tools that enhance the student experience. Learning and teaching should reflect the feedback and demands of the wider student community, which is best achieved through an effective representational framework. It is paramount that the formation of the NCS avoids any dilution and dispersion of the affected School's representation. With a large new school, there is widespread concern that the main functions and effectiveness of the student representative groups will be negatively impacted. To combat these concerns, and to ensure that the vast school will not overburden leading representatives, the model below has been developed by the current School Presidents, who all advise that this model is the most suitable for future implementation.



The School President

Lead the wider student voice for the entire school. Broadly manage the School VPs and class reps. Represent the student body at the School Board, School Management Group, Staff-Student Liaison meetings and the Learning & Teaching/Quality & Academic Standards committees. Run various academic and extra-curricular projects and initiatives. Sitting member of the School Presidents Forum and the Student Representative Council.

Student Rep Executive

- **Division Vice President** for Law
- **Division Vice President** for Applied Humanities
- **Division Vice President** for Psychological Studies
- **Division Vice President** for Education & Society
- **Division Vice President** for Energy, Environment & Governance (EEG)
 - **Senior Representatives** (at course level)
- **Associate Representative** of Welfare
- **Associate Representative** of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- **Associate Representative** of Environment/ Sustainability
- **Associate Representative** of Employability/Engagement
 - **Officers** (at Unit Level)

What are School Vice-Presidents?

The position of Vice-President is an important role within your School and they lead representation at the level of discipline or theme.

Vice-Presidents ensure that there is strong communication between the Class Reps and the School President. This allows both the School President and the Class Rep group to know what's going on at all times.

The Vice-President (VP) also acts as the School Presidents support team. They work with them to complete priorities from the School Partnership Action Plan (SPAP) as well as carry out other important functions, such as leading on specific projects or deputising for the School President if they cannot attend meetings.

The five constituent units within the NCS have a **Division Vice-President**. As the NCS units are larger than what a normal discipline size would be, it is necessary for the VPs to adopt some tasks that the School President would usually undertake, whilst maintaining strong communication and partnership with the President and the unit class reps. This will ensure that the President can comfortably oversee the wider student voice and initiatives, safe in the knowledge that the division VPs are concentrating on their unit.

Some units may require **Senior Representatives** for large courses. For example, Geography, CEPMLP and Politics within the EEG unit could have a senior representative to chair smaller liaison committees. This will reduce the workload of the VPs and ensure concentrated representation. The Associate representatives with portfolios should be appointed at a school level, sitting on the student representative executive. The Associate Directors may delegate work to assistant **Officers** within each unit, ensuring greater efficiency and a more palatable workload.

School of Social Sciences



Current School Homepage: [School of Social Sciences | University of Dundee](#)

This section includes the discipline feedback summaries for:

- ~ Psychology
- ~ Law
- ~ Politics & International Relations
- ~ Geography & Environmental Science
- ~ CEPMLP

Psychology

Psychology is a discipline that delves into the mind – the way we think of ourselves, view the surrounding world, and respond to stimuli. It covers varying aspects relevant to one's everyday life making it essential in understanding how we function. The students representing this discipline find the range of topics explored key to making the course fascinating and enhancing employability. Opportunities to participate in psychological experiments on field is deeply valued by our academic entity, as well as the strong connection and seamless communication between staff and students.

Psychology is an incredibly broad subject, and this is very much enjoyed by students, since they are exposed to lectures about Biological, Social, Cognitive, Evolutionary, Developmental internal processes for the first two years of the degree. This allows for a greater understanding of the complexity of the field and exploration of one's own interests to pursue in the succeeding years, thus the variety in topics taught by academics with extensive experience in researching them should be kept in the curriculum.

Moreover, students greatly appreciate the wide range of modules available in following undergraduate years, as this allows them to choose which field they would like to specialize in and be prepared for future Master and PhD degrees. Postgraduate students have shared a concern for PhD/MSc funding cuts and overall degree reduction. Many students are demanding that the course quality and variety stays consistent with what is being offered now, because a change in curriculum would most probably result in failure to meet expectations and thus impact overall student satisfaction. Furthermore, the close-knit relationship between staff and students is an integral part of the degree paths which students know and love, hence feedback against staff cutbacks and redundancies has been most prevalent for the last year.

Research skills is an essential part of conducting and interpreting studies and the modules teaching this discipline have been exceptional in getting across the theoretical knowledge data analysis is based on. However, students have regularly expressed dissatisfaction with the resources available to be able to complete statistics related course work from their own spaces. They think it is amazing library computers are equipped with SPSS and the introduction of Foivos Vantzios as the Psychology Support Specialist has been helpful. Still, many have been struggling to install and maintain this software on their personal devices and would like for an instructions leaflet/email to be distributed before the semester begins. It has been proposed this will allow for time to deal with technical issues before they have the power to impact academic excellence and cause mental distress.

Moreover, the shortened semester students and staff have had to adhere to has been heavily commented on. Although our academic society understands there was a need for a shortened semester back in 2020/2021 due to the unprecedented circumstances, this does not seem crucial for the current or following academic years. In doing more harm than good, the shortened semester has made workload and assessments difficult to bear with, as there's less time to fit the same content and deadlines in. This has been responsible for heightened mental health complaints during an already challenging time for everyone. Thus, Psychology students are firmly against the continuation of a shortened semester for the oncoming years.

Lastly, students would like to emphasize on the importance of communication about the New Combined School. They are still concerned with the unknown variables the new school could bring and would like to call for more clear and extensive communication on how exactly the New Combined School will impact our discipline and academic life in the future.

Law

Law within the University is not only one of the oldest fields of study, but it is a highly regarded and successful discipline. The “Law School” is a huge student community of varying streams, including English, Scots and Dual Qualifying law, and several postgraduates (e.g., Masters, the diploma and PHDs). Law students value the diverse range of services, legal societies and opportunities on offer throughout their studies. Although predominantly theory based, law has various practical elements and a vast array of alternative modes of study and assessment.

Whilst we appreciate the COVID regulations on university activity, students at the junior LLB levels must be given more opportunities to experience large lectures at the earliest possible stage. Large lectures are a crucial aspect of university life and will help revitalize the law school community, especially given that level 1 and 2s may never experience large face-to-face lectures.

However, “Capture and stream” has been a popular method this year, and students feel all future lectures (in-person or online) should be recorded for future use during revision, this supports students that cannot attend live lectures due to struggles outside of their student life (such as mental health, childcare, part-time work). Unrecorded tutorials are favored to encourage full participation and opinions in smaller group discussions.

Students wish for mini (topic specific) pre-recorded videos to continue and should occur across more modules. Students also stress the importance of practical components during their studies. Oral presentations, oral assessments, and public speaking opportunities are currently scarce and should increase across the curriculum. Students also stress that In-person lectures facilitating routine and social interaction must increase and the release of module material prior to teaching commencing will account for the shorter semester.

Law students are concerned about consistent cuts to several modules that have minimized the choices available, some modules that were removed were the initial selling point of Dundee law school for many students. We hope this reduction is not exacerbated by the merger. Instead, we hope there is an increase in choices – including across other disciplines. We also request that the mandatory Faculty of Advocates module of Roman Law is reinstated for the benefit of all aspiring advocates and those with an interest in private law generally. We also hope this option can extend to willing diploma students, who were unable to choose Roman Law during their undergraduate.

We hope there will be an increase in inter-discipline opportunities throughout the new school, allowing students to adopt courses that sit outside of law, both increasing diversity of learning and opening up students to alternative careers.

Whilst students acknowledge there has been consistent requests and knockbacks around the revival of the Dundee law clinic, we believe that serious considerations and discussions should begin to make this revival possible – in light of student demand, the universities triple intensity strategy and the NCS ambitions for law in general. Students fully appreciate that this may not be possible immediately, but a phased reconstruction might be possible and of course, this will be a matter for wider University managers and School Leadership to consider.

Politics & International Relations

Politics & International Relations explores the world in which we live in by considering how decisions, alongside conflict, cooperation and the increased significance of non-state actors, impact the culture, society and economy of the world as a whole. The discipline provides an in-depth look at political theories and frameworks that shape our current governments. Therefore, giving students the tools to analytically question and develop skills to make sense of the complex theories, and interrelations.

It is very clear that resources within Politics & IR have been underfunded for years, resulting in staff resignations, inadequate resources and an underlying poor student experience, despite the staff trying their very best with what they have. This student community can wholeheartedly attribute the main bulk of our grievances to these shocking realities, the lack of support for Politics & IR creates a high staff turnover, diminishing any academic relations between staff and students, lack of funding and staffing has further decreased the modules available and last-minute changes have greatly affected senior years and certainty in general. Positioning our discipline within the NCS and EEG division will inevitably degrade this discipline and deplete its resources once again, unless great reform occurs, and the University acknowledges the unacceptable situation that has existed for years.

Students also wish for an increased range of lectures on varying topics, allowing for a more diverse overview of political thinking. We understand this may be restricted, given the current staffing and resources available, but we hope an advantage of the NCS is more opportunities for Politics & IR students to engage in other modules across the school to enhance our learning experience. Such modules include Geography/Climate Change and its wider impact on future governance and politics generally.

Several Politics & IR students feel the Library & Learning Centre does not provide a reasonable number of textbooks – essential for their module – in comparison to other large theory-based disciplines. Students would like to see an increase in availability of core textbooks in the library, or at the very least, greater access to online reading lists. This would ensure fairness amongst many students who cannot afford the many required reading lists but would also mean the Politics & IR community do not feel under-resourced and neglected.

The discipline heavily focuses upon academic writing and reading. While these are fundamental skills in the study of politics, including exploring theories to fully grasp how these frameworks become key structures of modern society, there is still a clear lack of practical experience for students. Students therefore request for the NCS to consider more real-life, practical based opportunities (e.g., drafting policy reports). As is the case everywhere, politics students can seek career opportunities and work experience outside of their studies, but the NCS should ensure more opportunities are readily available to students throughout their degrees.

Centre for Energy, Petroleum, Mineral Law & Policy (CEPMLP)

The Centre for Energy, Petroleum and Mineral Law & Policy (CEPMLP) has forged a reputation for leading research and has offered over 6,000 students from over 50 countries an education in energy, petroleum and mineral law and policy since 1977. With well over 50 PhD students currently, the University of Dundee have established themselves as the leading institution in the field for this type of high-level research.

Future of Oil and Gas in EEG: The general consensus from CEPMLP students on the retention of Oil and gas in light of the Merger has been an Area of concern. A large majority of current CEPMLP student with includes both Masters and PhD have voiced their concern in the role Oil and gas Studies will play following the merger as it seems the University has decided to prioritize sustainable/sustainability in light of current geopolitical movements, namely the JUST TRANSITION.

Limited Resource Allocation: This has been an ongoing discussion prior to our knowledge of the petition, we believe that the lack of administrative staff in the areas of Alumni relations and Career services has affected our academic experience as most of the Job opportunities current presented by the University's Career Services division don't correspond/address (are not tailored towards) the needs of current CEPMLP students who seek for job opportunities in mostly developing countries and Niche international bodies.

Extended Facility Open hours: In light of the current pandemic which has resulted in the amendment of open hours for most University buildings such as the Scrimgeour, the students of CEPMLP would like to request for an extension to these open hours as the Scrimgeour building is one of the few places where both Masters and PhD student could congregate and host study session effectively.

Geography & Environmental Science

Geography and Environmental Sciences covers a variety of topics related to the interaction between people, places, and environments. The discipline provides an important set of analytical tools to understand current global issues such as climate change as well as local problems such as urban regeneration. Students of this field value the interaction between environmental sciences, physical, and human geography and the broad variety of topics it covers. The practical aspects of the discipline make studying Geography and Environmental Sciences at the University of Dundee unique.

Geography and Environmental Sciences is a very practical discipline which requires field work. They enable students to gather subject-specific, intellectual and employability skills. The University of Dundee has always put emphasis on the importance of field trips to the subject. To many students this emphasis is what makes the course stand out and attracts students to the course. Therefore, field trip modules should continue to be a large part of the course.

Additionally, Geography and Environmental Sciences encompasses a range of distinct themes which reach across social, economic, political, environmental, and technological issues and developments. Students want to this to be recognised on their degree certificate which is why “Geography & Environmental Sciences” should be kept on the certificate. Students appreciate that their 1st - and 2nd - year modules allow them to engage with Human Geography, Physical Geography and Environmental Sciences. This allows them to grasp the width of the field. Thus, it is requested to maintain the diverse range of topics covered for all Ge & Ev students in their 1st and 2nd year.

There currently does not seem to be much space for Human Geography within the area of Energy, Environment and Governance. Students worry that the subject will be flooded by the more technical side of Geography. Therefore, we propose to collaborate closely with Applied Humanities to ensure that Human Geography themes are appropriately covered. Students appreciate the broad range of Human Geography topics currently available to them and want to see them being carried over into the new school.

There has been a lack of climate science and mathematics identified in the current Environmental Sciences and Physical Geography courses, leading to students being outcompeted by students from other universities. This heightens the importance of the Oceanography and Biogeography modules. Further collaboration with other areas of the school and within the area of Energy, Environment and Governance could fill the current climate science and mathematics gap with new climate science modules.

Students suggest that the school merger should be utilized as an opportunity to introduce Geography & Environmental Science specific internship during the 1st or 2nd year. In doing so, the practical aspect of the field is underlined and integrated into the degree path.

Lastly, some modules (e.g. Creating Just Societies) currently follow the problem-based learning approach. Students find this to be a very effective and engaging way of learning. There is also research on the benefits of problem-based learning for teaching sustainability related topics. The exploration and application of new and relevant teaching methods should be maintained in the NCS.

School of Humanities



Current School Homepage: [School of Humanities | University of Dundee](https://www.dundee.ac.uk/school-of-humanities)

This section includes the discipline feedback summaries for:

- ~ English Literature & Creative Writing
- ~ Philosophy
- ~ History
- ~ Film Studies
- ~ Languages

English Literature & Creative Writing

English Literature and Creative Writing cover various social topics, particularly in reference to the interaction between people, both individually and as groups. All of these disciplines provide analytical tools to understand contemporary and shared human issues such as gender, communication, social pressure and discrimination in all its forms. Students of this field value the passion and friendly atmosphere shared by everyone, both lecturers and students. This, in combination with a variety of unique modules offered, provides the opportunity for academic, as well as personal, growth.

English Literature and Creative Writing are fields dealing with social constructs – their main value as agreed on by students is not their employability but their dealing with various shared human issues. The University of Dundee has always offered a large range of modules, enabling students to focus on their particular point of interest within these social concerns, such as feminism, education and constructing identity. This variety of modules should be maintained and broadened, particularly to include more writing by women, as well as texts by people of colour and LGBTQ+ voices.

A particular attraction in this context is the University's unique 10 credit modules, which students particularly enjoy. These offer the opportunity to engage with less common topics, thus preparing students in an ideal way for the career they choose pursue. In the past, these successfully included 'An Introduction to Children's Literature', 'Structuring the Novel' and 'Young Adult Gothic'. Therefore, students request that these modules will be maintained. They also offer part time students a larger variety of choice since many of them were scheduled in the evenings.

Since these disciplines often deal with the relationship between groups or individuals, students would also like to request a module focusing on Gaelic heritage. This is particularly important for students studying in Scotland, since it influences their own relation with their environment and their interaction with other cultures. As English Literature and Creative Writing are fields in which students learn not only with, but from each other, it would be beneficial both for local and international students to learn more about Scottish writers and Scottish literature.

Additionally, English Literature, Creative Writing and Film Studies encompass a range of distinct themes reaching across social and political issues, both on an individual and global level. Students want this to be recognised on their degree certificate, which is why "English Literature", and "Creative Writing" should be kept on the certificate, depending on which of these disciplines was chosen and consequently studied.

Lastly, students also value the possibility to use their first two years of their studies to explore other disciplines unrelated to their course of study. Therefore, the merger should be used as an opportunity to open up the courses of the other schools to English Literature and Creative Writing students. This would offer them an even broader range of knowledge and new insights into their own courses.

Philosophy

Philosophy covers comprehensive questions of life, such as truth, constructing identity and existence. The critical analysis of these topics provides students with important tools like critical thinking, challenging the status quo and dealing with highly complex questions throughout daily life. Students of this field value the argumentative structure of their modules and the encouragement to always develop ideas even further.

Philosophy deals with deeply human questions, both on an individual and universal level. As such, students agree that employability should not be the decisive characteristic of their discipline. While it enhances useful skills such as critical thinking, students focus on this for its own sake as they are driven by a desire for deeper knowledge. Therefore, the merger should be used as an opportunity to widen the range of modules offered, especially in level three and four of their studies.

So far, the discipline has been structured around introductory modules in year 1 and 2, such as 'Introduction to Aesthetics' and 'Plato and the Good Life'. These are perceived as ideal access points to the topic and students therefore express the wish to maintain this structure and these courses.

The particular attraction of Philosophy at the University of Dundee is the active encouragement of discussions with other students, as well as the development of one's own, independent opinions. Students are being encouraged to incorporate these into their daily thinking. The merger should be used to widen this approach and offer students a chance to apply the philosophical concepts they discuss and study outside of an academic context.

History

History covers a range of different focuses relating to social, cultural and political History through various periods in time. Students are able to explore areas of world history and reflect on the importance of this education. Relating many events to the contemporary period and discover how we, as a society can educate and learn from past occurrences. History provides students with a variety of different attributes, developing their communication, social responsibility and intellectual problem-solving

The diverse range of staff experience and modules available are greatly appreciated by the students. They feel that the time and effort staff put into their work both inside and outside of lectures and classrooms motivates the students to keep pushing and studying. Students would like to see staff expertise continued in the NCS as this is shown to be a main contributor as to why the students are attracted to History.

Students would like to see that the freedom and range of module choices, particularly the smaller and unique modules are driven forward in the NCS. The 10 credit modules through disciplines in Level 1 and Level 2 allow students to experience a range of Humanities modules and develop analytical and critical skill across the different degree pathway options.

The smaller modules need to remain. They are part of what brought me 450 miles from home. They are so varied and interesting that they often make great companions to my main modules. Human futures and Europe: time, space and peoples were excellent for that.

The NCS should be used as an opportunity to grow the range of materials that students are using during lectures, seminars and workshops. Students would like to see the introduction of more documentary modules into the course. An opportunity to intersect degree pathways with the other disciplines in the school, such as Film.

The range of diverse modules is something the discipline has continued to develop. Particularly modules such as 'Imperialism and Decolonisation', 'Scotland and the Wider World' and 'America in the Sixties' drew students to continue their studies at Dundee. This is something that they would like to see developed and continues in the introduction of the New Combined School.

Film Studies

Film Studies provides students with a unique understanding of its relation to popular culture, History, technology, art and the future. Students are taught a range of valuable, applicable skills that create an understanding of the cinema and its origins. Many students are attracted to Dundee's range of diverse and interesting module choices and the skills they develop studying the range of materials.

The diversity of the film modules is what attract students to study at Dundee. Students enjoy the ability to experience many eras in cinema, study the progress into modern film and analyse the beginning of cinema. Modules such as 'National Cinemas post 1945', 'Film Noir', Film Art and Classic Hollywood Cinema' encourage students to analyse films in relation to social, economic and historical significance. Providing skills that are applicable in many aspects of life.

As many other subjects within the Humanities, Students enjoy the diverse choice of 10 credit modules across the disciplines. Students feel that these modules, and modules alike create a great grounding and understanding of modern film opportunities/ styles, improving future prospects in the creative sector. In Particular students enjoyed the Scottish focuses film modules, exploring the history of the Scottish Industry and its success stories. These modules make Dundee University unique and highly prized; the staff bring their passions, and it ensures that students come away from their studies with joy, zeal and inspiration.

Students would like to see these modules/opportunities continue and grow in the new school, introducing even more diverse module opportunities.

Many students are attracted to studying film at Dundee as it is surrounded by people who truly care about their fields. The passion that the staff show for their subjects creates a drive in the students to complete their studies with an open mind. The students would like to see more of the staff expertise in the introduction of the new school. Opportunities to grow the film discipline would be appreciated in the development of the NCS. Students would like to see opportunities in learning and experience grow such as guest industry professionals, more module choices and growing the reputation of how enjoyable it is to study Film at Dundee.

Languages

Languages provides students with a unique understanding of the various dialects, native languages and accents around the world. Students are able to learn a different language as well as develop their abilities in presentation, written exercises, oral presentations and translation. Students are given opportunities to meet native speakers and interact with them. Languages provides students with transferable skills as well as an ability to interact with people from all over the world.

Students would like to see more opportunities for different languages to be taught such as Scottish Gaelic as part of the courses provided. An opportunity to explore Gaelic in relation to its origins and history could allow students to get an in depth understanding of the language and how it relates to Scotland now.

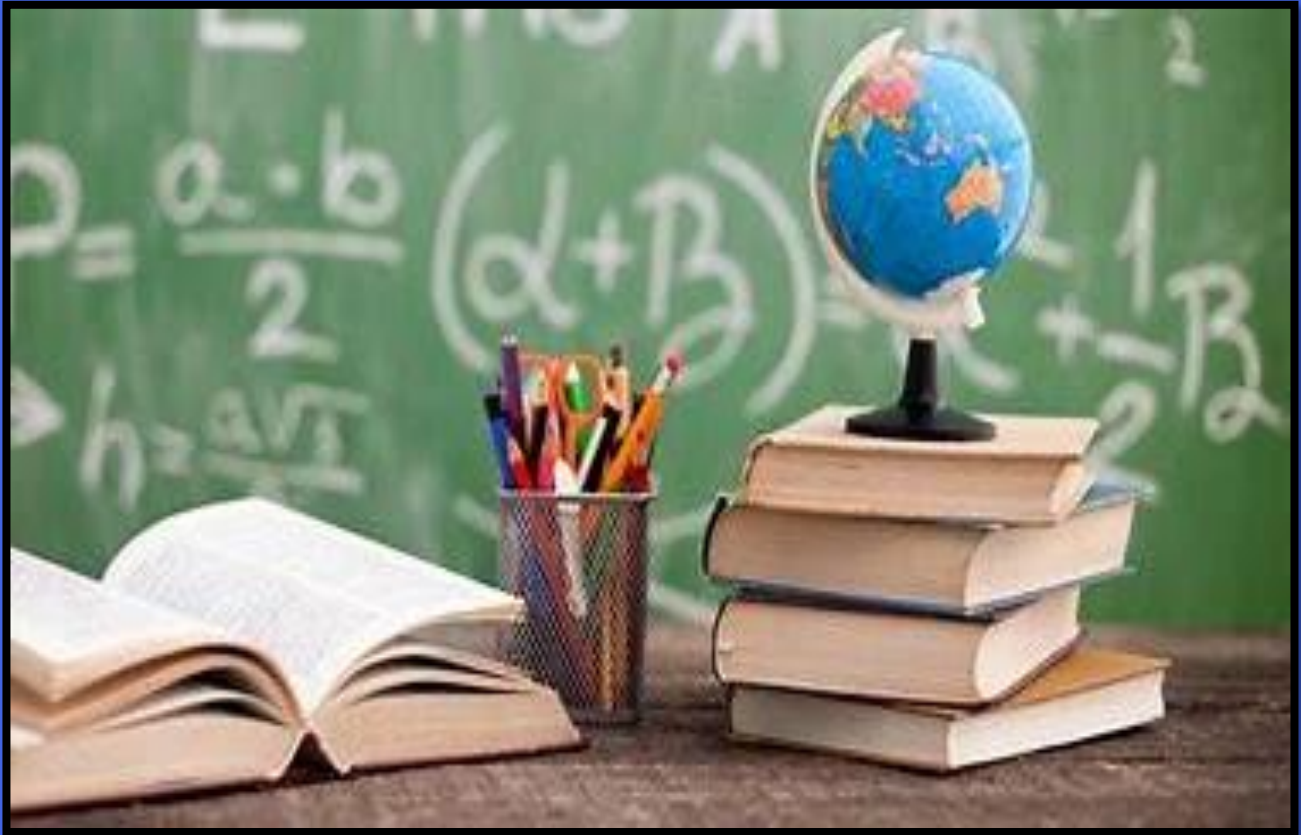
The current structure of languages allows this to be taken as secondary honours subject, students would like there to be more module options introduced and current ones developed further, the NCS being used as an opportunity to fund current subjects and make them even better.

With regards to the languages discipline seemingly being repositioned under the Education & Society division, students request that the current resources and choices on offer are not diminished as a result of this.

Languages on offer at our university are already very minimal, the NCS should be an opportunity for a revival and optimisation of languages - driven forward alongside the education disciplines- and not further diminishment.

It seems the new school is structuring itself around the core themes of climate change, innovation and the future generally. In an increasingly interconnected and globalising world, the academic field of languages is and has always been an imperative aspect within such themes. The NCS should reflect this reality.

School of Education & Social Work



Current School Homepage: [School of Education and Social Work | University of Dundee](#)

This section includes the discipline feedback summaries for:

- ~ Community Education
- ~ Education
- ~ Social Work

Community Education

Community Education consists of the connections between schools and individuals, businesses, and formal and informal organisations and institutions that can leverage community resources and assist students in achieving positive outcomes. Community Education promotes learning and social development work with individuals and groups in their communities.

Students have enjoyed most of the modules offered, with a variety of study which makes it interesting, this shouldn't be taken away during the merging process. Instead, we would like to see more cross-curricular and inter-disciplinary opportunities.

Some students were attracted to community education by the opportunities of the degree. As there are not just one or two areas of work you go into after graduation. There are so many domains and variety of work that you can find a job that is truly perfect for you, this should not be undermined the standard of courses offered after the merging. In fact, these opportunities and insights should expand.

Community education is rather small, so it is of concern that it will be lost in the sea of courses within the super school. We already had to do everything possible to get students in this past year and we are worried for the future of the courses. There are concerns that Community Education will not be prioritized compared to other courses, as we are small and already undervalued as a discipline. We are worried that we would get lost in a much bigger school. Furthermore, a huge concern is that: if in a larger school, that small courses like community education will not be able to make their own decisions as much. If decisions end up being about the majority, will small courses get left behind or not have as much say in these discussions. This cannot be the case; more must be done to show we are valued and a priority.

Students don't feel that there has been an accessible consultation process, which has engaged the student population, and also, we don't feel that DUSA has promoted this important consultation. The Student Union should have done more. They are our union after all! Future representation of our school must also be maintained, we are hugely different to Humanities and Social Sciences in the way we operate, learn and our opportunities and paths, we want to keep at least some identity and student representative structure.

The name given to the merged school gives a sense of belonging to the affected schools involved, where is our Schools mention? I think it's important that Community Education students are able to graduate from the School of Education and Social Work, so when they go out to practice or further study it is clear the type of degree they will have, and that this course or other related courses do not seem like the poorer and less prestigious courses on offer in the University.

A bigger worry for students is staff cuts. Being in a smaller school means that we have a closely connected community and we can comfortably access support from staff. Losing staff within the community education and across the university as a whole would have detrimental impact on students, especially during the pandemic. The School and University should be very cautious with this factor, especially for courses like this.

Education

Education covers transforming knowledge and skills. Education certainly is a discipline as it has laws, principles, logical reasoning regarding the better and desirable modes of education. The critical analysis of these topics provides students with proper training and skill acquirement. Most of educational skills comes through training and experience.

Many students wish for lectures to be better aligned with the assignment content, whilst these lectures are informative and enjoyable to many, they can often be irrelevant to what we examined on. Lectures are sometimes repetitive too throughout each level (particularly teaching across the curriculum on Module 1 and 2/Pedagogical Studies Module 1,2,3). Therefore, a lot of us were bored and frustrated as there are so many other areas about teaching, we would benefit from learning. This just made the University appear as there was little communication between each module leader. Students ask for more variety that would increase engagement and stimulate wider debates and depth of learning.

For tutor directed tasks, students are often asked to plan lessons, however, we are not always given a hypothetical class to work with, making it difficult to know what to include in plans regarding differentiation/ groupings etc. In being given a hypothetical class this may increase engagement and knowledge of how to best meet particular children's needs. Tutor directed tasks are very beneficial, though it has been viewed by some that there may be a slight lack of communication concerning workload across each module, as when students are prioritising essays and assignments as deadlines approach, they will less likely be prioritising tutor directed tasks since they are not assessed.

With the merger, there is potential worry that a much smaller discipline of Education could be very much underrepresented or looked over with a bigger focus of the bigger disciplines in the New School. Without even a remote mention of Education in the new name subconsciously lessens the value and contributions of the Education courses and staff, though not being acknowledged directly. Without Education, no other discipline would essentially exist, making it very important that education should be acknowledged. We hope to be proved wrong when it comes to the realities of next year and daily operations.

Students are happy with written assignments but are very open to new forms of assessment. The MA3 module required a presentation, which was a positive challenge and refreshing change from the norm, also accommodating students who do not perform as well in written tasks.

More off campus field trips would be appreciated by students. MA2 students who chose the Social Studies module experienced a trip to the Verdant Works which was viewed very highly of and additionally all in the cohort experienced a trip to the Botanical Gardens which was an enjoyable way of learning about outdoor learning for children. Getting to experience learning off campus in another place could be exciting to students and worthwhile incorporating more into the course. Additionally, it has been suggested that a great opportunity for education students could be for current practicing teachers/headteachers to talk to us students of as what it is like to be a teacher at this current time, providing their knowledge in a particular field. For example, discussing how they plan/organise their learning/classroom or even how to maintain a work/life balance. This could be very useful for students. This should all be considered in future plans for education.

Social Work

Social Work covers comprehensive social services topics, particularly in reference to becoming a professional and working for the betterment of the country. The critical analysis of these topics provides students with important tools like critical thinking, practice reflection, the importance of communication, how to socially interact, and understanding other people's problems with the aim to promote social change. Students of this field value the unique structure of their modules, which revolves around Social Work principles based on social justice, human rights, and many more. This prepares students as professionals for the future.

I have studied and worked in the university sector for over a decade, support staff play a crucial role in the smooth functioning of the courses. This merger must not endanger them. Taking away funding to put to other more 'successful' schools, e.g: science, gives not only a bad taste but also makes us feel that we are not respected by the university. Can more be done to acknowledge the merged schools' achievements in future? Also, the new merged school name did not include Education or Social Work? We feel sidelined!

As PhD students: we feel this will affect the level of time our professors have to work with students, there is a lot of time given currently to supervise students which is really vital to the success of the students and the program. Can we guarantee that same level of support is offered to students and staff whilst these resources are already in short within separate schools?

The lecturer-student relationship is a great point for progress and integration. The modules are very interesting and enriching, it would be a great idea to put these into consideration during the merging process for social work. Also, it would be good if students get the opportunity to choose elective/selective courses.

The university offers a diverse course catalogue within these schools and the merger should not endanger this. Decisions regarding the merging should not be made based primarily on the financial implications, the university cannot be a 'for profit' entity, dressed up using terms such as 'financial sustainability'.

It would be good to see the social work program recognized as eligible for the Saltire Scholarship and a more holistic engagement with other social sciences and community practices.

Additionally, if modules were offered to social work from other schools, this could strengthen areas of weakness in the education school. If we wanted to further any experience of history or geography etc. then having access to another module may be beneficial.

Students urge that NCS leadership ensure that all current practice learning and work experience opportunities are not hindered, especially given the impact we have felt during COVID. These practical elements are core to our student experience, and we would like to see this continue,

Other NCS-Related Material

Throughout the formation of this report, we have liaised with the Dundee University Students Association (DUSA) on our representational activities, proposals, and concerns. DUSA are committed to ensuring the very best outcome for the thousands of students under the new School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law.

DUSA Statement

“DUSA will always advocate for student engagement with their academic experience and pursuits. The New Combined School project is a complex process that the student body have found uncertain. This high-level initiative is susceptible to many challenges under one school, however, as student representatives we must hold the university authorities accountable, they must offer best sector practices within our educational landscape. I believe a clear roadmap for feedback and representation will act as a powerful tool in addressing some of the potential weaknesses anticipated by the merger. Let's all get involved in building an educational community we can all understand and utilise. I pledge my support to students and staff of the new combined school, while wishing you all continued success.”

Zechariah Laari
DUSA VP for Academia
Contact: vpa@dusa.co.uk



Further Comment on Future Representation Model (See Page 6)

DUSA will also be consulted in the new year (2022), regarding the future structure of student representation within the NCS. The model presented on Page 6 is a draft proposal as things stand. Several discussions and votes will be needed before an agreed structure can be implemented. DUSA acknowledge the need for some urgency on the matter, given the fast-paced progress made by the NCS. We hope, as does DUSA, that the agreed structure will be as effective, fair, and smooth as possible.

Other NCS Resources

 **[Open Letter Regarding the Proposed School Merger - DUSA | 2020](#)**

 **[‘Academic Excellence & Structure’: Student Consultation Summary - DUSA](#)**

A special thanks to all the students and representatives who were involved in the feedback groups and surveys for this report.

Response of Interim Management Board to NCS Student Survey

- Student-led Survey Circulated: October 2021
- NCS Board Response: January 2022
- NCS Multi-School Report Concluded: January 2022

Common Questions

- Why is the merger necessary and happening in this way?
- What are the positive and negative financial implications of the NCS?
- There are many rumours around staff cuts, including academic and administrative posts, what are you doing or going to do to put them at ease?
- Will there be improved support for staff during and after the merger?
- What are the practical day-to-day changes?
- What will the merger 'look' like and what direct effect will it have on the quality of teaching, research, and student learning?
- Will there be any new investment in the development of the NCS?
- Why was the NCS kept so secretive from the students and announced during COVID-19?
- When will the NCS come into being, will this be a gradual transition, or will it officially begin next academic year?
- How will this impact our current studies?
- How do you address the students who would not have attended Dundee University if they knew of the merger before applying?
- How will this affect future student representation?
- What will be the name of the new School, and why will you be choosing such a name?
- Can you guarantee the same level of support from staff and the same number of resources, despite the merger?

Response:

The main rationale for the creation of the new school is to create exciting opportunities for our disciplines to work more closely together, to develop new initiatives in teaching and research, and to establish the foundations for future growth and investment in our key strengths. It is more difficult to achieve these aims as separate schools.

Financial sustainability for the future is important too, as our income and expenditure must be aligned. Greater cooperation across disciplines – for example, where there are natural synergies, or where there are opportunities to

create new courses for which there is clear student demand – will help us to achieve this.

The new school will enable us to build ‘critical mass’ in our activities. With a greater shared purpose, we can manage workloads and staff support more effectively than we can as separate, smaller schools where there is duplication of effort and fewer opportunities to work more closely together, for example on new interdisciplinary modules and research projects.

The new school will be launched officially in August 2022. We have been discussing the idea and its potential shape since early 2021. This process initially involved consultation with academic and professional services staff. After we had produced an outline vision -- which took most of the spring and summer -- we asked the Student Presidents of the three separate schools about the best way to involve the wider student community in the consultation process. This resulted in a Q&A event on 6 October, with a presentation about plans for the new school, however no students were able to attend on that occasion. We also asked the Student Presidents to canvass views among our student community about a name for the school before we finalised the name. We have asked the Student Presidents and DUSA to propose a student representative structure for the school that works best for you.

The name of the school will be School of Humanities, Social Sciences & Law. This was discussed and approved by Senate on 13 October 2021. Why this name? The disciplines in the new school come under the broad knowledge categories of humanities and/or social sciences, and these are common designations for these disciplines when combined together. The inclusion of Law in the school’s name reflects external feedback that it can help international recruitment to that discipline.

All degree programs that students are currently taking will continue, so there will be no disruption to your studies. From time to time, we update our provision in response to demand and staffing, and to enable us to develop new programs, but we would never halt a program when students are still taking it. Therefore, the degree program you are currently taking is the one you will graduate with.

General: Courses & Modules

- How will this affect the structure, quality, and reputation of my degree program?
- What effect will the NCS have on the ‘identity’ of degrees, will it affect the value of current degrees?
- Does the merger ‘create’ funding to re-establish courses that have previously been cancelled/ create funding for diverse courses?
- What will happen to 10 credit modules, will there be less flexibility/choices?

- How will the university ensure that the quality of courses will remain the same/improve after the merger? What are they going to do to ensure this?
- In what way will the merger create new opportunities for inclusive and exciting courses?
- How will this impact my options if I choose to return for Postgraduate studies, will it limit my options?

Response:

One key aim of the new school is to enhance quality in learning and teaching by promoting the sharing of good practice in curriculum development. We think that the new school will create opportunities to refresh the curriculum and to develop new interdisciplinary modules that respond more effectively to student interests. All degree programs that students are currently taking will continue, so there will be no disruption to your studies. The 10-credit modules are Upskilling Modules funded separately by the Scottish Funding Council and the creation of the new school has no effect on them, except that there are likely to be opportunities to develop additional ones.

Academic staff across the new schoolwork in many closely related intellectual fields, and by pooling these interests we are confident we can develop inclusive and exciting new courses. Regarding postgraduate studies, we regularly review our provision in response to demand and staffing. The creation of the new school does not change that, but it does present us with more opportunities to devise new courses that will be popular.

General: Suggestions & Requests

- We want real benefits from this NCS. This includes:
 - Assurances that our programs will not be adversely affected in any way.
 - A vast increase of inter-disciplinary modules.
 - A vast increase of School-wide collaboration and partnering.
 - Increased investment and resources akin to that of other schools.
 - More facilities on campus, additional to the spaces already used by the three schools.
 - A clear School identity – a unique and fresh purpose that is inclusive of all the disciplines within the school.
 - Degree Certificates should include the exact program undertaken - unique to the various cohorts.
- Ensure better support for incoming students in the coming years, especially now there is risk of uncertainty and remoteness as a student of a very large school. There is a lack of opportunities to discuss the various resources and facilities open to us. I would recommend wider drop-in sessions and promotional/tutorial-

based videos. Make the first few weeks as welcoming, inclusive, constructive, and engaging as possible.

- There must be greater transparency at every stage of the merger process and beyond. This project will not be a finished product in a matter of months, the NCS leadership and the staff should ensure more student engagement and a meeting of the minds to optimize the end goal.

Response:

Regarding the list of benefits set out in the bullet points above, we share most of these ambitions, and we think the creation of the new school is an exciting opportunity to pursue them, in line with our resources. (Regarding the information on degree certificates, we would have to consult with Registry about that and discuss further.) It will be much easier to achieve these aims if we are not in separate organizational units but have the structure that makes it easier to work together. Regarding transparency, it is absolutely our intention to ensure extensive and meaningful consultation, which is already well underway, and we share the view that building the new school will take time: it will be a journey rather than a one-off event.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your questions. We hope that we have been able to address these in our response. As the details of the new school take shape, we will seek your further feedback and look forward to your input.

Interim Management Board
School of Humanities, Social Sciences & Law
January 2022

(Update) Responses of NCS Leadership to this Report

As of February 2022, the NCS leadership board made efforts to create responses to each of the school's feedback contained within this report. Please see all the responses below:

School of Education and Social Work

Response to students' comments and recommendations

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the concerns you raised in your '*Student Voice / Multi-school Feedback Report*'. Several of the specific programme related suggestions and points made within the report have been passed onto the appropriate programme/discipline leads to consider through the core mechanisms of Student Staff Liaison Committees, Programme Boards and other student focussed forums, to consider in more depth and respond to as part of our ongoing practice of curriculum review and enhancement.

Meantime please be assured that the key points you raised about Education and Social Work are valued and addressed below:

Community Education

- Maintain variety of modules offered with the introduction of cross-curricular and inter-disciplinary opportunities.
- Ensure that more is done to show we are valued and a priority and not lose out to a majority decision.
- We want our student voice to be heard. We must keep some identity and student representative structure going forward.
- It is important for Community Education students to graduate from the School of Education and Social Work.
- Ask that the University is mindful of the SSR which has resulted in a closely connected community.

The creation of the School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law (SHSSL) will provide us with increased opportunities for cross-curricular and interdisciplinary programmes and research, thereby providing you with a richer curriculum. The University is committed to ensuring a strong identity for all the disciplines and all the programmes will bear the name of the disciplines that the students study in. Similarly, you will graduate from programmes that incorporate the name of your discipline. The student structures and representation will be maintained in the same way as they are in

current Schools and across the University. The SSR will be taken into consideration for each programme.

Education

- Provide more variety and increase engagement and stimulate wider debates and depth of learning.
- Provide hypothetical classes to help students plan lessons better.
- Improve communication concerning workload across each module.
- Education must be acknowledged in the new school.
- Open to new forms of assessment – the presentation used in MA3 was a welcomed challenge and refreshing from the norm.
- Provide more off campus field trips.
- Experiencing learning off campus in another place is exciting and worthwhile.
- Suggested opportunity could be current practicing teachers/head teachers' to talk to students of as what it is like to be a teacher at this current time.
- Lectures to be better aligned with the assignment content.
- The University is committed to ensuring a strong identity for all the disciplines. Your suggestions regarding diverse andragogical/pedagogical, spaces, speakers and assessment approaches will be considered by the programme staff carefully.

Social Work

- Can more be done to acknowledge the merged schools' achievements in future?
- Maintain the level of time professors have to work with students to ensure the success of the students and the programme.
- SSR is a great point for progress and integration.
- Provide our students the opportunity to choose elective/selective courses.
- Maintain diverse course catalogue within the schools.
- Recognise the Social Work programme as eligible for the Saltire Scholarship.
- Offer social work students modules from other schools.
- Ensure that all current practice learning and work experience opportunities are not hindered.

The creation of the School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law (SHSSL) will provide us with increased opportunities for cross-curricular and interdisciplinary programmes and research, thereby providing you with a richer curriculum. For qualifying programmes, the professional body requires that you take a number of core modules; however, there will be options to choose electives from across SHSSL and the University as relevant. The SSR will be taken into consideration for each programme. For qualifying programmes the practice learning is an important aspect and a condition of graduating as a Social Worker. Therefore, there will be no detrimental changes to that.

School of Humanities

Response to students' comments and recommendations

English Literature & Creative Writing

- Maintain variety of modules currently available and broaden to include more writing by women, as well as texts by people of colour and LGBTQ+ voices.
- Keep the 10 credit modules
- Introduce a module focusing on Gaelic heritage.
- Provide students further opportunities to learn about Scottish writers and Scottish literature
- Keep “English Literature” and “Creative Writing” on degree certificates
- Open up other courses to English Literature and Creative writing students

Variety of module provision is a key feature of the MA degree structure and this will certainly be maintained. From time to time, we update our provision in response to demand and staffing, and to enable us to develop new modules and programmes. We are committed to developing more diverse and inclusive curriculum content within the framework of the new school, and we will involve our student community in that task. Our capacity to develop new modules on particular topics depends on our resources and staff expertise, but we want the curriculum to be as responsive to student interests as possible.

Regarding the 10-credit modules, these are Upskilling Modules funded separately by the Scottish Funding Council. As long as this funding continues, we will offer such modules and will look to develop additional ones within the new school. Regarding

information on degree certificates, this is the remit of the University Registry, but we have no proposals to change that information.

Philosophy

- Widen range of modules offered, especially in level three and four of students' studies.
- Maintain structure around introductory modules in year 1 and 2
- Offer students chance to apply philosophical concepts that they discuss and study outside of an academic context.

As the Philosophy team is relatively small in number, we need to be careful how we balance the module provision between levels 1 and 2, and levels 3 and 4. One of the aims of the new school is to provide greater opportunities for collaborative and interdisciplinary teaching, so there should be greater scope to review the curriculum. Regarding the application of philosophical concepts outside of an academic context, we are planning to develop an 'applied' strand to what we do in Humanities, which should include opportunities to apply philosophical insights to non-academic contexts.

History

- Continue using staff expertise in History
- Allow freedom and range of module choices, particularly 10 credit modules.
- Introduce documentary modules into the course
- Intersect degree pathways with other disciplines such as Film.
- Continued development of diverse modules such as 'Imperialism and Decolonisation'

Variety of module provision is a key feature of the MA degree structure and this will certainly be maintained, including expertise in History. From time to time, we update our provision in response to demand and staffing, and to enable us to develop new modules and programmes. We are committed to developing more diverse and inclusive curriculum content within the framework of the new school, and we will involve our student community in that task. Our capacity to develop new modules on particular topics depends on our resources and staff expertise, but we want the curriculum to be as responsive to student interests as possible.

Film Studies:

- Continue providing and broadening a diverse range of modules, especially the choice of 10 credit modules.
- Continue using staff expertise in their field
- Opportunity to broaden the film discipline such as guest industry professionals and more modules.

Variety of module provision is a key feature of the MA degree structure and this will certainly be maintained, including expertise in Film Studies. From time to time, we update our provision in response to demand and staffing, and to enable us to develop new modules and programmes. We are committed to developing more diverse and inclusive curriculum content within the framework of the new school, and we will involve our student community in that task. Our capacity to develop new modules on particular topics depends on our resources and staff expertise, but we want the curriculum to be as responsive to student interests as possible.

Languages

- More opportunities for different languages to be taught such as Scottish Gaelic as part of the courses provided.
- Provide more module options and develop current one further.
- Ensure current resources are not diminished as a result of being repositioned under Education & Society.
- Revive and optimise languages alongside the educational disciplines.

Our capacity to develop new modules and provision for different languages depends on our resources and staff expertise, as well as student demand, which varies from language to language, but we want the curriculum to be as responsive to student interests as possible. The inclusion of Languages within the new Division of Education & Society is designed to maximize the opportunities for those subject areas to work more closely together, not to diminish them in any way.

School of Social Sciences

Response to students' comments and recommendations

Dundee Law School

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the concerns you raised in your '*Student Voice / Multi-school Feedback Report*'. Several of the specific programme related suggestions and points made within the report have been passed onto the appropriate programme/discipline leads to consider through the core mechanisms of Student Staff Liaison Committees, Programme Boards and other student focussed forums, to consider in more depth and respond to as part of our ongoing practice of curriculum review and enhancement.

Meantime please see below our responses to the key points you raised:

- More opportunities for junior LLB levels to experience large lectures as early as possible

We have reinstated these this week (7 Feb), as soon as we were permitted, using a 'split and rotate' model where class sizes are above the 80 student limit.

- Continue recording lectures (capture and stream)

The University has committed to this and staff will continue to do so, using mobile technology if necessary as lecture rooms are upgraded.

- Continue and widen mini (topic specific) pre-recorded videos across more modules

Staff utilise a variety of methods of conveying information and this will continue as appropriate to the module, its level, its learning goals and teaching plan. In some modules mini pre-recorded lectures are used, in others there are synchronous live online lectures or campus lectures (which will both be recorded). Some modules have a mixture. At levels 3 and 4 in seminar-based modules there may be no lecture component. This variety of teaching styles is likely to continue.

- Incorporate more practical components into studies

We agree that this is useful and desirable, and this is done in some modules. In general practical activities already take place in class in small group settings and we look forward to increased attendance at the classroom opportunities we already provide.

- Increase module choices (including inter-disciplinary offers)

We agree that there have been several modules not available this session, including one that was withdrawn at short notice. Staff illness as we continue to deal with Covid-19 has contributed to this and we hope this is a situation that abates in the near future.

Law students can already take options in MA subjects such as History, Politics or Philosophy; this may, but does not need to be, as part of a joint degree. It is the case that the first two years of our programmes are mainly taken up with core subjects and that is unavoidable. There are also a couple of Honours options in Human Rights Advocacy and Environmental Criminology and we will do more to bring them to students' attention as there will be more opportunities to promote these in the new School. We have also started discussions with colleagues across the wider School about a module in Criminology.

This year we have introduced modules from the Leverhulme Centre in both Forensic Science for Lawyers and Digital Evidence, and these have been popular. The Leverhulme Centre was established to work on justice in a digital age and we are very pleased to be able to work with this world-leading Centre here at Dundee.

- Re-instate Faculty of Advocates module of Roman Law

This module has been reinstated this session, after a gap of just one session, and students have been able to take it.

- Consider revival of the Dundee Law Clinic

We are making a case for the necessary resources to support a clinic, and we hope this will be forthcoming in the new School. Modules in Mediation and in Applied Learning have already been introduced to support students in developing skills, and we work with voluntary and third sector organisations to ensure that students are aware of the opportunities they provide to develop skills including giving advice.

Geography and Environmental Science

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the concerns you raised in your '*Student Voice / Multi-school Feedback Report*'. Several of the specific programme related suggestions and points made within the report have been passed onto the appropriate programme/discipline leads to consider through the core mechanisms of Student Staff Liaison Committees, Programme Boards and other student focussed forums, to consider in more depth and respond to as part of our ongoing practice of curriculum review and enhancement.

Meantime please be assured that the key points you raised about Geography & Environmental Science are valued and addressed below:

We will continue to offer both programmes for the foreseeable future. Both programmes have excellent track records in terms of quality teaching, positive outcomes for students and exceptionally high levels of student satisfaction as measured by NSS. The university stands by its commitment to students who enrol on our courses, so there is

no threat to the degree programmes which you enrolled on and which will be shown on your degree certificates.

Regarding the concern expressed by students about the 'loss' of human geography - we will continue to teach human geography and are actively considering linkages across the disciplines in the expanded school to enrich our curriculum going forward.

Field based learning is a valuable part of our programmes and we remain committed to retaining field courses as integral and essential parts of both programmes. Beyond the emphasis on fieldwork, both degrees are also distinctive in terms of the breadth of transferable skills which students develop in their studies. These cover research skills, critical analysis, data handling, statistical analysis, oral and written communication, IT skills, teamwork, independent study, fieldwork and more – the Royal Geographical Society and the Institute of Environmental Sciences both recognise the value of this breadth of skills in putting our graduates at an advantage over others.

Climate change is the subject of increased focus in the Level 1 Environmental Science programme this year, and also forms a component of modules at Levels 3 and 4. We are receptive to calls to increase this focus, but will do so while teaching other core areas of our disciplines integral to the development of a broad knowledge base for well-rounded graduates. We are also providing new learning opportunities through climate change module on the MSc Sustainability programme.

As regards “a lack of mathematics”, we challenge students to reflect on the numerical work which they undertake over the course of their degrees. Numerical work is integral across both Geography & Environmental Sciences with numeracy based assignments from L1-5. Environmental modelling is part of our future development planning for UG and TPG courses within the wider development of our programmes.

The university is committing to its future portfolio building-in applied / employability skills and opportunities wherever possible. We remain committed to working with the Careers Service to support students, Careers colleagues and employers in these mutually beneficial collaborations and already have active targeted placements in relation to the Internship module in year 2 (and that these are also available to year 3 and 4 students). We are aware of the limitation of the level 2 module as it clashes with key modules in year 2. We are exploring future opportunities in relation to support and resources. At TPG level we have a very successful internship module in "Research in Practice".

Specific mention of problem-solving and novel teaching methods is well warranted. We

are keen to continue to innovate in our teaching practices, as prompted lately by the pandemic, and always value student feedback on teaching and student participation in planning for module review.

Politics & International Relations

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the concerns you raised in your '*Student Voice / Multi-school Feedback Report*'. Several of the specific programme related suggestions and points made within the report have been passed onto the appropriate programme/discipline leads to consider through the core mechanisms of Student Staff Liaison Committees, Programme Boards and other student focussed forums, to consider in more depth and respond to as part of our ongoing practice of curriculum review and enhancement.

Meantime please be assured that the key points you raised about Politics and IR, increasing the range of lectures on varying topics, providing opportunities for students to engage in other modules across the school, and providing more real life practical based opportunities, will be considered in light of the new developments that are taking place in relation to the creation of the NCS and also the new EEG division.

Wider resources and more collaboration with other disciplines in the new School and in our new division, will allow PIR access to a more varied provision of module including interdisciplinary modules, and this will make it easier for students to engage with other subject areas. On the issue of more practical modules, this is something the VP Education is seeking to introduce across all curricula and something we will engage with fully. We are also looking to contribute to the development of a School-wide undergraduate research methods module. We note your concerns over library provision, and we can endeavour to find more details about this, through our student staff committee meetings where we shall also discuss the other key points raised in the feedback Report.

Psychology

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the concerns you raised in your '*Student Voice / Multi-school Feedback Report*'. Several of the specific programme related suggestions and points made within the report have been passed onto the appropriate programme/discipline leads to consider through the core mechanisms of Student Staff Liaison Committees, Programme Boards and other student focussed forums, to consider in more depth and respond to as part of our ongoing practice of curriculum review and enhancement.

Meantime we would like to reassure all students that Psychology have no plans to reduce the variety of Advanced Modules currently offered. We recognise that the wide selection of modules allows students to personalise and focus their studies in a way that

is not possible in many other universities. Staff also value the smaller group sizes and feel strongly that the active student-led learning that is enabled in these modules enhances the student learning experience immensely.

We appreciate your concerns over our Staff-Student Ratio and want to assure you that the school management are fully aware of the BPS requirement to maintain our SSR at their current levels and the school and university are committed to maintaining our SSR as required.

Regarding SPSS access, we are sorry that remote learning has brought with it the added complication of not having reliable SPSS access at home. Psychology, working with the university, have tried to develop a number of different solutions and we believe access is improved this year. Psychology's reliance on specialist software, like SPSS, is one of the reasons we are currently recruiting to restore the technical support students need as soon as possible.

In relation to the shortened semester, we have advocated together with other disciplines and your Psychology representatives, to ask the university to review their decision to continue with this shortened semester calendar.

We appreciate that there has been much uncertainty around the SHSSL merger. Psychology did organise a Q&A session in Semester 1 for any student with question about the merger, but that event was not well attended. If students would like to have another such information sharing event, Psychology are more than happy to arrange that. We will discuss this option with you.

CEPMLP

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the concerns you raised in your '*Student Voice / Multi-school Feedback Report*'. Several of the specific programme related suggestions and points made within the report have been passed onto the appropriate programme/discipline leads to consider through the core mechanisms of Student Staff Liaison Committees, Programme Boards and other student focussed forums, to consider in more depth and respond to as part of our ongoing practice of curriculum review and enhancement.

Meantime please be assured that the key points you raised about increased admin support in areas of Alumni relations and Career services, and extend facility open hours in the Scrymegour Building, are being addressed as resources are being planned presently for our new school of Humanities Social Sciences & Law.