Training for LTR Team Members

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Presenters

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Aims of Training

• To explore the practicalities of taking part in an LTR
• To provide an opportunity to ask questions
• To understand the sources of data available to LTR teams
• To understand how to use a SWOT to identify areas for questioning
• To understand how to plan and run meetings
• To understand how to devise recommendations and commendations
Assumption

• That you have read the LTR policy document and are familiar with the purpose and basic format of LTR.
• That you have looked at the SWOTs we sent out to you.
Coverage

• Documentation on which LTR is based
• Using the SWOT
• The pre-meeting
• Planning the visit and the meetings
• Running the meetings
• Phrasing recommendations and commendations
Documentation

• SWOT
• QA summary - based on a template
• QE and Technology Enhanced Learning Summary – Annex 3
• Blackboard site with key documents – Annex 2 of the policy

• Should be available 4-5 weeks before the visit
Team role in relation to evidence base

• Need to read through before the pre-meeting.
• Identify areas which need follow up – clarification, gaps in knowledge, potential issues, potential good practice.
• QA check may highlight non-compliance with University policies which will need follow up.
• Look at a typical Blackboard site for an LTR.
• How to use and read the data, as the quantity may seem quite frightening.
• QE and TEL summary will show level of engagement with learning technology and may lead to follow up questions.
• Trying to triangulate and see whether the SWOT fits the other data.
Discuss one of the SWOTs provided in advance

• In groups discuss one of the SWOTs sent out in advance.
• From the SWOT what issues can you pick up for follow up?
• Where might you triangulate against the data provided on Blackboard?
• We’ll ask you for your ideas at the end.
Pre-Meeting

- To agree the schedule
- To identify whom to meet
- To agree areas of questioning, rough timings, and sharing out of work – chairing and questions
- To identify main lines of enquiry which will be reported back to the provider
- Exceptionally to identify gaps in documentation so that requests can be made before the visit
- Will involve the external if possible and at least written comments
Planning the visit

• Usually one day, but can be longer or shorter.
• See example schedule in your pack.
• May include a tour of facilities where relevant to the discipline.
• Need to allow time between meetings for follow up and preparation for the next meeting.
• Time needed at the end of the day to agree conclusions.
• Meetings organised by staff type rather than subject matter.
• Identifying who you want to see – usually by role rather than by name – students as well as staff
Typical LTR meetings

• Short meeting with HoS and senior staff at start of day to set the scene (30 minutes).
• Meeting(s) with students – possibly separating PGT from UG. Useful to meet students early on as they may change the agenda and raise unanticipated issues. (60-90 mins)
• Meeting with DELT, DPDs, Senior Tutor, more senior staff to discuss teaching and learning (90 mins).
• Meeting with more junior staff, liaison from NUIT, Library, Careers, TAs/PGRs who teach, part-time staff, peer mentoring co-ordinator to discuss support for staff and students as well as some teaching and learning matters (60-90 mins).
• Final feedback meeting (30 mins) at the end of the day/visit
• Sometimes that may be it, as you’ll need the rest of the time to pull your findings together.
## Planning meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Questioner</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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| 10.00 | XYZ        | Introduction and welcome  
How do they determine the mix of assessments (EE reports suggest there is a lot of inconsistency)                                                                                                    |
| 10.10 | XYZ        | How do they ensure feedback is provided on time?  
Data shows 20 day turnaround is regularly missed – why is this and what could be done to improve matters                                                                                             |
| 10.15 | XYZ        | How do they ensure that feedback is useful (Student meeting; NSS)?                                                                                                                                 |
| 10.20 | ABC        | What’s their approach to the use of learning technology (QE summary suggests this is very limited)?  
Follow up on specific issues.                                                                                                                                  |
| 10.30 | ABC        | How do they ensure students have the information they need?  
More specific follow up about handbooks, which students have criticised and which don’t comply with University policy                                                                                   |
|       |            | Etc.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
Key issues for planning meetings

• Chair should explain the approach and the need to curtail discussion and move things on. Also very focused nature of questions which may seem to jump around, since the team is focusing on the areas where it needs more information.

• Don’t have too many questions (usually 5 mins minimum per area and for more complex areas 10)

• Can of course ask follow up questions.

• Concentrate on what matters most.

• Be prepared to be flexible – meeting with students may bring up new issues; replies may raise new questions.

• Time has to be managed carefully by the Chair, who needs to move team members on where necessary and end discussion when enough information has been collected.
Purpose of questions

- Simple clarification.
- To gain information where documents don’t provide all you need – especially true of student meetings e.g. do students find feedback helpful?
- Where the team suspect there is an issue, to test whether there really is and to give the provider the opportunity to put its side of the story.
- To explore possible areas of good practice to test whether they are worthy of commendation.
Example of question setting

In the meeting with students, concerns were raised by some PGT student representatives about their experience of personal tutoring. They indicated that they had raised this at the Staff Student Committee but had not received a response. This does not seem to support the assertion made by the School that in the last three years they have reformed personal tutoring and have fully implemented the revised personal tutoring framework.

*In groups, construct a line of questioning that explores this with members of staff*
Commendations

• Pats on the back for good practice
• Should provide enough information to allow readers to see whether it would be a good idea for them too.
• Exemplary commendations need to be:
  • Exceptional and above normal expectations
  • Of things which can be replicated elsewhere
• Exemplary commendations should be quite rare and some LTRs won’t have any at all.
• These need to be agreed before the final feedback session.
Recommendations

• These need to be agreed more or less verbatim before the final feedback session.

• They can refer to detail in the text of the report, but need to make sense on their own.

• They need to:
  • Be clear and sufficiently specific
  • Be realistic and achievable
  • Have a clear timescale
  • Relate to important and not to trivial issues
Recommendations can be addressed to:

- The subject area/provider (the vast majority)
- The School (issues where decision-making powers rest at School and not subject level e.g. working across subjects)
- The Faculty (issues where the Faculty controls resources e.g. staffing; equipment; estate (also University) or where Faculty policy is the issue)
- The University (issues relating to central services or University policies)
- Try not to use recommendations to the University to settle old scores!
The Report

• The LTR Secretary from LTDS will draft the report
• All team members asked to comment
• Chair has final say if there are disputes
Any questions?

• Over to you