

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Report: Semester 2, 2024/25

Introduction

Context

This report, authored by Winchester Students' Union, functions as a compilation of key findings and trends in feedback from across submitted Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings at Undergraduate and Postgraduate level that took place in Semester 2 of the Academic Year 2024/25.

SSLCs are mandatory student-led, programme level committees whose primary function is to represent the student voice. Student perspectives on their respective courses are communicated through elected Student Academic Representatives (StARs) to Programme Leaders (PL) in a partnership approach which aims to facilitate the review, extension and/or development of effective practices on students' programmes of study and/or to their university experience.

SSLCs are also an opportunity for PLs to report on the issues raised and actions taken from previous meetings, as well as assign actions for items raised in situ. In order to promote an effective feedback loop, both StARs and PLs are required to report back to the student cohort on the issues raised and action taken at SSLC meetings, and to more generally make the impact of their feedback clear. In this vein, minutes are also shared with the Students' Union, who process these minutes to produce this summary report, which is then shared with the Deans of the university's Faculties, Executive Leadership Team, and Education Committee.

Representation

This report brings together feedback from a total of 58 distinct sets of SSLC minutes (19 Postgraduate, 39 Undergraduate, including Foundation) from across the five university Faculties. According to the Student Union's data on the courses available this academic year, these SSLC minutes account for approximately 83% of programmes on offer – an increase on the previous SSLC report (+9ppts). This may be explained by greater communication between programmes and the Students' Union in sharing minutes, as well as updates to the methodology for comparison, and updates to the Union's records on courses running in this academic year.

Comparison of programme coverage in received SSLC minutes against a Faculty breakdown of all programmes on offer this year, illustrated in fig.1, indicates that the findings of this report are broadly representative of the views of the student population – with variances between the two no greater than 3ppts. Continuing a trend from the Semester 1 report, the findings may have a greater representation of students from Health & Wellbeing, while students from Business and Digital Technologies, and Humanities and Social Sciences may be slightly underrepresented.

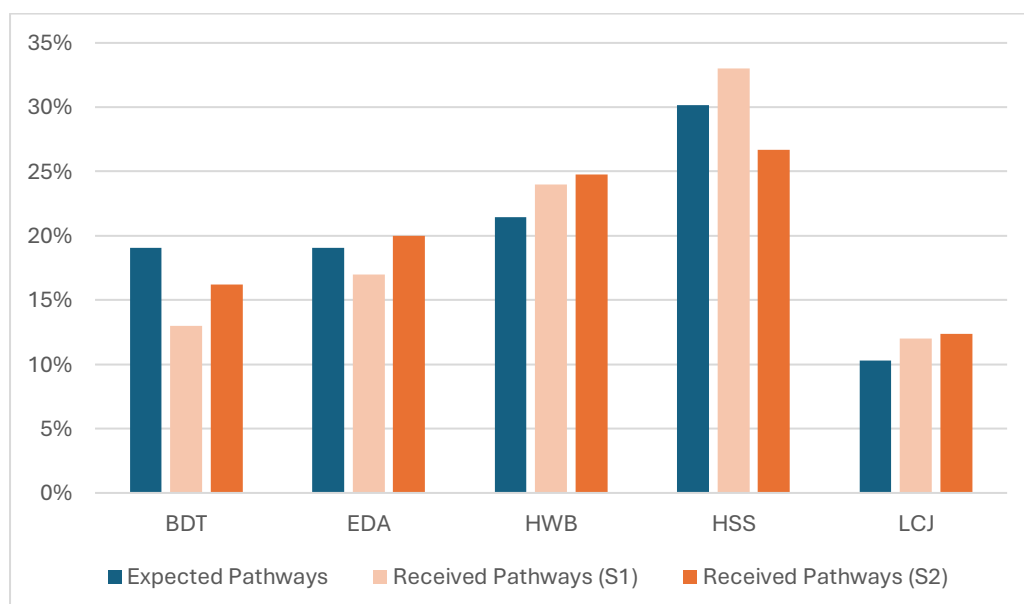


fig 1. Comparison of the proportion of pathways by Faculty (est.) and the proportion of programmes represented by received SSLC minutes (Semester 1 and Semester 2).

SSLC Minutes received

The table below records the pathways covered in the minutes received, with pathway groupings reflecting representation at the same SSLC.

Undergraduate (L3-6)				
BDT	EDA	HWB	HSS	LCJ
BDT Foundation Programmes	Acting	Animal Science and Conservation	Classical Studies	Criminology (and pathways)
Computer Science; Computer Systems & Networks; Cyber Security; Data Science; Software Engineering (Level 4)	Childhood Studies	Childhood and Youth Studies	Creative Writing (with Professional Writing; and Drama, and English Literature)	Forensic Investigation (& Cyber Crime, and Cyber Security); Forensic Science
Computer Science; Computer Systems & Networks; Cyber Security; Data Science; Software Engineering (Level 5 & 6)	Education Studies (& pathways); Physical Education and Sport; Education and Youth Studies	Health and Social Care	Film Studies (& Screenwriting)	LLB Law (with foundation) and pathways
Economics, Accounting and Finance	Film Production; with Foundation Year	Midwifery (incl. Degree Apprenticeship)	Geography	Professional Policing
Marketing; Fashion Marketing; Fashion Business; Event Management	Journalism; Sports Journalism; with Foundation Year	Nursing (Adult, Child, Mental Health & Learning Disabilities)	History (all pathways)	
	Media and Communication (& Advertising, & Journalism); Film and Media Studies	Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (Adult, Child, Mental Health & Learning disabilities)	HSS Foundation	
	Music and Sound Production; Popular Music; Performance & Production	Nutrition & Dietetics	Philosophy, Politics and Economics	
	Musical Theatre	Social Work	Politics with International Relations; History with Politics	
	Primary Education; Primary Education with QTS	Social Work Apprenticeship	Psychology Foundation	
		Sport Coaching; Sport Management	Psychology (and Child Development; with Criminology); Forensic Investigative Psychology;	
		Sport & Exercise Psychology	Sociology	
		Sports Therapy; Strength and Condition; Sport & Exercise Science	Theology, Religion and Ethics; Philosophy, Religion and Ethics; Philosophy	

Postgraduate (L7/8)				
BDT	EDA	HWB	HSS	LCJ
Digital Marketing and Analytics	Primary PGCE	Occupational Therapy	Creative Writing; English Literature	
International Business Management	Secondary Humanities PGCE (incl. School Direct)	PGCert Practice Education	Cultural Heritage and Resource Management	
Master of Business Administration		Public Health	Death, Religion & Culture	
Project Management		PGDip (Step Up) Social Work	History	
		Social Work	Politics & International Relations	
		Health Science; Sport & Exercise; Applied Sport Psychology	Forensic Psychology	

Key Findings by Faculty (for key themes and recommendations, see page 8).

The following sections of the report relate key findings of the student experience on a faculty-by-faculty basis. Under each faculty heading, undergraduate and [postgraduate](#) experiences (noted [in blue](#)) have been differentiated. Estimated programme coverage has been compared with the previous report, with values marked in green and red to demarcate an increase or decrease, respectively.

Business and Digital Technologies				
Est. Programme Coverage	Quoracy Rate	Use of updated minutes format	Noted a Staff Co-Chair	Invited additional staff members
71%	40%	80%	10%	30%

Teaching & Content

- **Positive:** Students found teaching highly effective and engaging, and praised helpful supplementary materials on referencing and report writing, in addition to workshops. Modules were highlighted for their creativity, efficiency and detail in slides, and where content was linked clearly to assignments.
- **Constructive:** Feedback highlighted over-detailed, and late uploads of, content slides, and instances of too-fast pacing. Students were keen for more engaging methods of teaching, and additional support for students grappling with new content.
- **Postgraduate:** Praise was given for supportive teaching, engaging seminar activities and helpful 1:1 feedback, as well as the enriching impact of a diverse student cohort. Issues were raised with incomplete Canvas pages, and overly detailed or contradictory content.

Resources & Support

- **Positive:** Students praised consistent lecture recording and their timely upload to Canvas.
- **Constructive:** Feedback highlighted students' desire for more pastoral and academic support, and to increase the availability of high-quality support resources. Dissatisfaction was raised over the closure of the Pantry, and a scarcity of food options on campus.
- **Postgraduate:** Students found One Search and session recordings useful, but raised concerns about outdated reading lists, and the availability of Canvas materials. Students called for greater guidance in ethics processes, and access to past papers.

Assessment

- **Positive:** Students praised opportunities for pre-deadline feedback, including formatives, and for the clear communication of assignment expectations
- **Constructive:** Students noted feedback delays, and a lack of assignment information, alongside a perceived lack of dissertation guidance. Frequent and complex assessments were linked to feelings of confusion, and unnecessary high workload.
- **Postgraduate:** Students valued clear assignment structures, and expectations, though noted this was not consistent across all programmes. In some cases there were noted delays in receiving summative marks, and a general preference for deadlines to fall after teaching is complete.

Engagement & Community

- **Positive:** Students reported general satisfaction with communication between students and staff, and effective feedback loop closures in some programmes.
- **Constructive:** Feedback was not widespread in this regard, with rare commentary on low attendance to classes.
- **Postgraduate:** Students were consistently concerned about the negative impact of low attendance on their learning, as well as the impact of low levels of engagement on teaching, especially in regard to group work and seminar activities.

Stand Out SSLC: Economics, Accounting and Finance Programmes

This SSLC was particularly noteworthy for its high degree of attendance at meetings, as well as the level of engagement with student feedback, with the programme team being notable for consistently actioning matters arising, and closing the feedback loop. Herein, particular praise is given for the team's implementation of formative practice questions and provision of additional assignment guidance.

Stand Out Practice(s) across the Faculty:

- Providing students with a chance to present each week, in order to consolidate their understanding of content.
- The arrangement of summer sessions to support part-time students with their independent study.

Education and the Arts

Est. Programme Coverage	Quoracy Rate	Use of updated minutes format	Noted a Staff Co-Chair	Invited additional staff members
88%	55%	64%	91%	55%

**Due to the small sample size, Postgraduate feedback has been integrated into the findings below*

Teaching & Content

- **Positive:** Students praised the integration of real-life examples and/or industry links, and opportunities to engage critically with content. Opportunities for interactive and practical learning were welcomed, alongside opportunities for independent, student-led study.
- **Constructive:** Feedback in this vein was typically module specific, with weak signals regarding disruptive seminar behaviour, repetition of content, and issues with last-minute session cancellations; more consistent pre-reading resources were also requested.

Resources & Support

- **Positive:** Generally, students felt confident in accessing resources, and praised the helpfulness of staff (especially PDTs, and mental health and academic support). SSLCs noted the impact of the library outage, and the excellent work of staff to accommodate in such difficult circumstances.
- **Constructive:** Equipment-focussed programmes made regular mention of issues with physical spaces and outdated or over-booked equipment; the university app was also regarded as 'clunky'.

Assessment

- **Positive:** Students noted that assessment feedback was highly useful, and they appreciated opportunities for dedicated workshops and 1:1 feedback.
- **Constructive:** Feedback identified programme or module specific concerns regarding the clarity of guidance, and irregular or delayed feedback, and calls to reduce deadline clustering.

Engagement & Community

- **Positive:** Feedback praised the responsiveness of key staff members, as well as efforts to provide social opportunities (e.g. Cathedral Walk, Pub Social), including cross-cohort socialising and peer support.
- **Constructive:** Feedback noted the difficulty encountered by teams to facilitate social events, while commuters noted difficulties engaging with short teaching days. In some cases, Canvas notifications were described as excessive and overwhelming, and students sought greater clarity around StARs and tutor availability.

Stand Out SSLC: Music and Sound Production; Popular Music: Performance and Production

This SSLC stood out for its dedication to supporting and enhancing the experience for its students, including facilitating work opportunities at The Railway, and other venues. The programme team also demonstrated a clear commitment to responding to feedback, as noted in their efforts to integrate careers content into modules, and collaboration and socialisation between students.

Stand Out Practice(s) across the Faculty:

- Bootcamps and workshops to enhance skills and provide additional support
- Linking students with industry professionals
- Buddy systems to link new students with older cohorts for support

Health and Wellbeing				
Est. Programme Coverage	Quoracy Rate	Use of updated minutes format	Noted a Staff Co-Chair	Invited additional staff members
96%	44%	94%	67%	11%

Teaching & Content

- **Positive:** Students praised informative and engaging teaching, and clear course structures. Interactive elements like quizzes, polls and videos helped engagement, and digestible slides were appreciated. Students enjoy practical elements, real-world insights, and strong links to employability.
- **Constructive:** Students raised concerns where content had unclear links between theory and assessment, and clearer and more consistent referencing on slides. In some cases, sessions were seen as disjointed or repetitive, with too much recap and off-topic discussion.
- **Postgraduate:** Feedback celebrating engaging and supportive teaching, especially seminar case studies, and real-world links. Feedback also called for more interactive sessions, and raised heavy pre-session workloads, and issues with underprepared temporary lecturers.

Resources & Support

- **Positive:** Programme Leaders and staff were praised for their strong levels of support, and availability, which has helped students feel like the university wants them to succeed. Consistent staffing has helped with this, and students feel the resources and support available helps them feel autonomous.
- **Constructive:** Some feedback called for more regular touch points, while other concerns focussed on the physical environment – noting poor room temperatures, lack of food choices, and low standards of cleanliness in facilities.
- **Postgraduate:** Students appreciated additional tutorials and support for part-time learners, and appreciated efforts to check and update resource links ahead of sessions.

Assessment

- **Positive:** Students felt greater confidence where assessment information (dates, rubrics, etc.) was up to date, especially when presented at the start of semester. They also appreciated weekly formative tasks and additional dissertation support sessions
- **Constructive:** Feedback noted unclear, inconsistent, or delayed feedback – which was described as unhelpful or lacking in depth. Assessment bunching was also criticised. Generally, students called for clearer assessment information, with clear expectations, released at the start of semester.
- **Postgraduate:** Some cohorts noted improvements since the first semester, which provided them with greater confidence ahead of upcoming assessments. Others noted unclear assessment briefs, and confusing or contradictory assignment feedback.

Engagement & Community

- **Positive:** Where noted, students praised efforts to interact and engage with their peers – including notable swap shop and teambuilding day examples.
- **Constructive:** In places, feedback noted that changes to timetabling had made engagement more difficult (e.g. late night lectures), with concomitant impacts on attendance in classes – especially where this conflicted with other vital commitments.
- **Postgraduate:** Feedback did not focus on these areas, and concerns reflected those above regarding attendance and scheduling conflicts.

Stand Out SSLC: Animal Science and Conservation

This SSLC stood out for its exceptional course content, highly valued and enjoyable teaching, and well-integrated, and much praised, links between content and employability. The use of interactive tasks, such as quizzes, videos, and polls were noted for helping keep students engaged with rich, and challenging content.

Stand Out Practice(s) across the Faculty:

- The addition of scripts alongside lecture slides
- Provision of additional weekly scheduled sessions to support with dissertations
- StAR organised 'Student Dissertation Experience' talks with second-year students

Humanities and Social Sciences				
Est. Programme Coverage	Quoracy Rate	Use of updated minutes format	Noted a Staff Co-Chair	Invited additional staff members
74%	47%	94%	71%	18%

Teaching & Content

- **Positive:** Feedback praised engaging and interactive content and teaching styles, opportunities to share work, and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- **Constructive:** Feedback was varied, with some cohorts keen on more opportunities for facilitated class discussion, and inconsistencies in the increase in challenge between levels of study. As a minor theme, some cohorts were keen for the return of module fairs.
- **Postgraduate:** Students identified specific staff members for high praise, linked to additional support and an interactive and personal approach to teaching and learning; while some cohorts noted a need for greater structure to ensure workshops remained focussed and valuable.

Resources & Support

- **Positive:** Feedback was scarce, yet noted that support was generally good, and staff have been approachable.
- **Constructive:** Comments varied, with minor themes on inconsistent access to learning materials, unsuitable rooms for teaching, and difficulties students faced in navigating university policies. A need for clear and consistent AI guidance and a centralised source of information was raised.
- **Postgraduate:** Student feedback praised back to study days, professional development plans, and the futures fair, whilst also noting difficulties with IT systems, and inconsistent information on Canvas.

Assessment

- **Positive:** Comments praised the integration of content with assignments, and the variety of assessments.
- **Constructive:** Concerns were varied, and often module specific. General points include requests for clear guidance, and structure, and consideration for assignment timing and deadline crowding. Students were also concerned about the removal of self-certification options.
- **Postgraduate:** Feedback praised assessments and how they encouraged critical thinking, the variety of assignments, and excellent staff support; students also commonly found word counts too restrictive, and requested they be increased.

Engagement & Community

- **Positive:** Students generally felt that feedback was heard and actioned; many felt comfortable in their learning community, and had even noted improved attendance in some cases.
- **Constructive:** Feedback was specific to programmes, with a general theme of concerns regarding attendance, especially relating to seminars. In some cases, students noted frustration with unactioned feedback.
- **Postgraduate:** Comments showed a general appreciation for feedback follow up and inter-student communication, while also noting how issues with parking and facilities made them feel isolated from the wider academic community.

Stand Out SSLC: Psychology, Forensic Investigative Psychology, Psychology and Child Development, Psychology and Criminology

This SSLC stood out for its evident commitment to creating an enriching learning experience for its students, with noted praise for engaging content and passionate, supportive staff, who have enhanced learning through practical applications for theory, and the use of formative quizzes to test and reinforce learning. The team have also been proactive in running focus groups to understand student perspectives on learning resources, and shown a consistent commitment to responding to student feedback.

Stand Out Practice(s) across the Faculty:

- Running a student focus group to discuss attendance
- Facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration to allow students from different programmes to work together and pool knowledge and experience from different backgrounds
- Back to Study days to support transition between levels of study

Law, Crime, and Justice				
Est. Programme Coverage	Quoracy Rate	Use of updated minutes format	Noted a Staff Co-Chair	Invited additional staff members
100%	0%	100%	67%	33%

**NB. Postgraduate commentary was not included as no minutes were received from this level of study.*

Teaching & Content

- **Positive:** Feedback praised well-structured teaching, valuable content, and practical experiences; and seminars which encouraged discussion, and linked clearly to assessments, were noted to build student confidence.
- **Constructive:** In some cases, content was noted as outdated, repetitive, or overly dense, especially where missed session content was squeezed into later sessions. Calls were made for key information to be introduced earlier, and breaks in sessions, where applicable.

Resources & Support

- **Positive:** Where provided, students found that additional resources, including session recordings and key point summaries were very useful.
- **Constructive:** Feedback noted a general desire for more consistent upload of lecture recordings, as well as for presentation slides to be made available in a timely manner.

Assessment

- **Positive:** Where noted, feedback praised the provision of example assignments, and fair and constructive feedback, alongside additional material for modules and formative tasks.
- **Constructive:** In some instances, students noted a strong desire for more detailed and consistent feedback, and for inconsistencies in guidance to be addressed.

Engagement & Community

- **Positive:** Feedback in this area did not feature significantly across SSLC minutes; where noted, students had expressed satisfaction with concerns being addressed.
- **Constructive:** As above, feedback was scarce, and spoke to specific instances of low attendance and/or disruptive class behaviour.

Stand Out SSLC: Professional Policing

This SSLC stood out for its effectiveness in connecting with students to gather feedback, as well as its consistent closing of the feedback loop to ensure that standing actions had been completed, and outcomes had been shared with the student body. This dedication to the student experience was evidenced through the provision of additional support sessions for Research Methods, creation of additional resources and activities to aid learning, and scheduling of guest speakers.

Stand Out Practice(s) across the Faculty:

- Providing 10-15 minutes at the end of lectures for Q&A and links to assignments
- Providing dedicated assessment support sessions, which included exemplars
- Sharing/integrating Key Point Lists into session content

Conclusions

Key Themes from across the University

1) Enhancing teaching through interactivity

Continuing a trend seen in the most recent SSLC reports, students continue to praise lecturers who demonstrate enthusiasm and passion for their subjects, and work collaboratively with students. Herein, praise identifies activities such as quizzes, polls, formative weekly tasks, opportunities to present and discuss content, and group work (where dynamics are productive) as elements of content delivery which enhance their engagement and build their confidence.

2) Making Links; Demonstrating value

A clear trend in feedback on content delivery was students' praise for content structuring which clearly evidences the value of what is being presented, and its meaningfulness to students and their academic and/or professional lives. This is evidenced in the minutes through consistent praise for content structuring and delivery which makes links between session content and assessments, as well as approaches that link theory to real-world practice, illustrated through the personal and professional experiences of teaching staff.

3) Supportive Environment

As with previous reports, students continue to praise the work of module and programme leaders, alongside Personal Academic Tutors, in providing high levels of support, approachability, and responsiveness to independent student concerns. A minor theme herein also valued efforts by programmes to integrate Careers/Employability support and information into course content and events. Students' experiences with more centralised services noted long wait times and difficulties in making contact.

4) The Impacts of Attendance

SSLC minutes continue to note low attendance across seminars, lectures, and group activities, with causes sometimes linked to timetabling (e.g. sessions being scheduled late in the day, long days, or large gaps between sessions), and students' decision-making processes in light of commuting demands, and external commitments (e.g. employment). It is clear that students and staff note the impact of low attendance on their learning experience, especially in the context of quality of discussion, and group assessments. For some courses, recent changes to timetabling have been viewed very positively, especially where they aligned with student feedback.

5) Virtual Learning Environment

Feedback from across faculties evidences a shared experience of difficulties with the Canvas platform. These difficulties vary, from issues with the architecture of pages which complicate finding needed resources, to problems with the resources themselves – which may feature broken links, incorrect information, and/or missing resources. Where present, students consistently praise those teams who regularly update and review their Canvas pages, and ensure that lecture recordings, and other associated materials, are uploaded in a timely manner to allow students to review sessions and plan forward effectively to manage multiple time demands.

6) Difficulties with Student Voice Engagement

In reviewing the minutes, it became evident that, though many programmes evidence good voice practices, and work hard to engage students in closing the feedback loop, engagement with these processes has declined. The majority of SSLCs were not quorate, and lacked representation for whole levels of study, while surveys (both programme specific, and wider) had low uptake, limiting the representativeness of these meetings and their capacity to enhance the student experience.

7) Food Provision and Physical Spaces

The suitability of teaching spaces was minor theme of the feedback received – with students noting concerns with accessibility, heating, and the general cleanliness of rooms and facilities. Additionally, many commuting students, and those based up at West Downs, expressed frustration with the limited availability of food on campus, and the variety therein to cater to differing dietary requirements.

Comparison with 24/25 Semester 1 Report

In comparing feedback and themes from the previous SSLC report, the following brief points may be noted:

- **Interactivity in Teaching**

A strong and consistent appreciation for interactive, student-centred teaching is prevalent across both semesters. This is evident across most programmes, and, as may be expected, varies dependent on individual staff approaches, and student responsiveness

- **Assessment Support and Structure**

Assessment feedback continues to feature strongly in minutes. Where the focus in Semester 1 was on the timely provision of structured assessment guidance, Semester 2 has seen a slight emphasis on ensuring content remains relevant to assessments.

- **Staff Support and Approachability**

Feedback gathered for this report continues a trend of high regard for supportive and engaged teaching staff, especially for PATs. This praise is often contrasted in more recent minutes with dissatisfaction with the accessibility of non-programme-based support

- **Canvas and the Digital Learning Environment**

Discussions at SSLCs from Semester 2 continue a trend of student frustration with Canvas, linked to the navigability and up-to-date-ness of pages.

- **Attendance**

Discussion of attendance, and concerns therein, has increased since the last report, however, the focus has shifted away from confusions linked to the new attendance policy and procedures, and focusses more on the lifestyle factors driving attendance, how these interface with timetabling, and felt impacts of low attendance on learning experience.

- **Student Voice and Engagement**

Semester 2 minutes evidence a decline in student participation in SSLCs, and the StARs process, though praise for staff availability, and their efforts to action feedback and close the feedback loop are in greater evidence.

Recommendations to the University

This report wishes to recognise the efforts of staff across the University of Winchester, evident throughout the collated minutes, to maintain and enhance high quality provision – especially given the numerous and varied challenges facing the Higher Education sector created by the current financial climate. We also wish to recognise the propensity in feedback processes for respondents to focus on next steps, and areas of development, rather than to necessarily celebrate achievements and the continuity of good practice – to this end, we wish to reiterate students' general appreciation of the high quality teaching and provision they receive at Winchester from dedicated and passionate staff, and to thank teams for their ongoing work supporting student voice through the StARs scheme, and SSLCs, in a number of different capacities, each of which vital to the operation of the whole.

In consideration of the above, and the preceding student feedback, this report offers the following recommendations for further enhancement of the student experience at Winchester:

1) Develop a consistent, high-quality Virtual Learning Environment

- a. Understand what constitutes good practice in the eyes of students, identifying common concerns and requirements.
- b. Implement cross-institution guidance and expectations in relation to the VLE, and wider digital experience, and establish monitoring procedures to ensure consistency (e.g. recruiting student volunteers to test site navigation, etc. and provide feedback on their experience)
- c. Review current architecture and conduct research into alternative providers in order to compare functionality now, and against predicted future functionalities and needs.

2) Review Student Voice mechanisms

- a. Conduct research to better understand the experiences of students, and the drivers for/against engagement with student voice mechanisms; this should include members of the general student population, as well as Student Academic Representatives (StARs). Use this research to inform and refine current practices.
 - i. Form a joint working group (University & Students' Union) to collaborate on research and recommendations.

3) Facilitate opportunities for inter-programme knowledge and expertise sharing to ensure that good practices are disseminated throughout the institution

- a. Develop and implement regular opportunities for knowledge sharing; this could include inter-programme/interdisciplinary informal meetings, and/or opportunities to observe good practice in action as part of CPD.

4) Gain a clear understanding of drivers for Attendance, and integrate this into the review and development of policies and procedures

- a. Conduct student focus groups and/or surveys to gain an understanding of attendance drivers; this could be differentiated by student groups (e.g. commuting students).
- b. In the longer term, conduct an impact assessment for the recent changes to the attendance policy; integrate these findings into the review process.
- c. Review hybrid approaches to teaching and learning, and its implementation at other institutions and consider how such approaches could form part of attendance and engagement strategies at Winchester.