



UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON
INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMMES

ULU



Student Written Submission

QAA Institutional Audit 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword.....	3
Introduction	4
What...	4
Who...	4
How...	5
1. How accurate is the information that the institution publishes about itself?.....	11
1.1 Prospective Students.....	11
1.2 Current Students	13
1.3 Expectations	16
1.4 Summary	17
2. Do students know what is expected of them in order to be successful?	18
2.1 Study Materials.....	18
2.3 Marking Schemes	22
2.4 Assessment and Feedback.....	23
2.5 Add-On Services	24
2.6 Summary	24
3. What is the student experience as a learner like?	26
3.1 Administration.....	26
3.2 Academic Contact/Support	27
3.2.1 Postgraduate Students	27
3.2.2 Undergraduate Students	27
3.3 Additional Support- Local Independent Teaching Institutions	28
3.4 International Programmes e-Campus	30
3.5 Special Needs Considerations.....	35
3.6 Assessment and Feedback.....	35
3.7 Post-Graduation Options.....	35

3.8 Summary35

4. Do students have a voice in the Institution and is it listened to? 37

4.1 Institutional Level Activity37

4.2 Programme Level Activity.....41

4.3 Summary42

Key Findings and Areas For Possible Exploration 43

Appendix A: ULU SWS Survey



FOREWORD

This Student Written Submission for the Quality Assurance Agency institutional audit of the University of London International Programmes aims to reflect the student experiences of the International Programmes. Its landmark authorship by the University of London Union (ULU) sees students views being independently conveyed for the first time. ULU strives to represent the student population fairly and we are keen to examine the areas in need of development. ULU recognises the importance of the student voice at the International Programmes and so acknowledges the opportunity and symbolism of this report being authored in an independent fashion. We hope this will be the norm henceforth. It should be noted that at every stage of student consultation, students were extremely thankful and happy for the opportunity to holistically speak to the union about their learner experience.

ULU is thankful to the University of London International Academy for helping with the funding necessary to complete this submission. ULU welcomes the opportunity to submit the opinions of students studying through the International Programmes and we look forward to working with the QAA in the upcoming months.

Our motivation underpinning this submission is to give a fair and objective overview of the student experience with the International Programmes in order to continue a constructive dialogue with the institution on behalf of a most unique student body.

University of London Union

INTRODUCTION

WHAT...

This is a unique document and unlike any other Student Written Submission (SWS) the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) will have received to date. This is an attempt to describe the learner experience of an average student of the world's oldest distance- learning model, that of the University of London International Programmes (henceforth referred to as the International Programmes).

Providing Higher Education access globally for over 150 years, the International Programmes currently has 52,000 students in over 180 countries, studying approximately 110 programmes through academic collaboration with 12 Lead Colleges of the University of London.

SO WHAT DOES THE AVERAGE STUDENT LOOKS LIKE?

- ✓ *There is a 49% likelihood of the student being female*
- ✓ *There is a 21% likelihood of the student being enrolled on a Postgraduate programme*
- ✓ *There is an 80% likelihood of an Undergraduate student acquiring supplementary tuition from a local independent teaching institution*
- ✓ *There is a 41% likelihood of the student being resident in the Asia Pacific region*

As is apparent, the student body is diverse, resulting in varying learner experiences. This document aims to capture the academic experience of this disparate student group (see 'How' section) and to comment on the ability of the International Programmes to offer them a continually improving experience.

The submission serves a dual purpose to not only inform the QAA Audit Team of the student perspective but to also inform the International Programmes student body of the institutional development of their student voice by making this document actively available post- submission.

WHO...

Authorship of the SWS is conventionally taken up by a students' union, which is able to independently represent the views of a defined student demographic. No clear representative demarcation exists within the International Programmes however, creating a general challenge of augmenting the student voice and a specific one of authorship in the context of this document.

A solution to this authorship challenge was the closer collaboration of the International Programmes with the University of London Students' Union (ULU), which resulted in the creation of the ULU International Programmes Liaison Manager to independently author this document. This position was formalised on the 1st of October 2010 for an interim period. The first and current holder of that post and author of this report is Nizam Uddin.

WHY AM I QUALIFIED?

For the academic year 2009/10 I was the elected President of the University of London Students' Union (ULU), representing the interests of 120, 000 internal students of the University of London (UoL). For the two years prior to this, I was the elected Co- President Welfare and Education and Co-President Finance & Communications at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Students' Union.

My year as ULU President saw the Union campaigning for better representation of International Programmes students, a key pledge made during campaigning. As an ex-officio student member of the then External System Academic Board, I was able to engage with the Programmes at all levels more so than any of my predecessors. During the course of my tenure and since, I have been able to visit students in Singapore, Malaysia, Trinidad & Tobago, Mauritius and here in London to grasp first-hand what factors and issues impact on their student experience. For the past four months, I have been filling any knowledge gaps of the organisational elements of the International Programmes through fact-finding missions both at the International Academy level and at the Lead College level.

Even taking note of my interactions above, the diversity of students in the Programmes makes the criteria for 'qualification' most difficult. It for this reason that I now believe that the political unionisation of such an entity which I was campaigning for last year seems extremely difficult to implement. The priority should be to ensure the student voice is continually heard and engaged with. It should be to ensure students are having the best experience possible, with any concerns raised addressed for further improvement, and it is for these reasons I adopt this envoy role of independent author for this report. The scope of the SWS will be broad, bringing to the attention of the QAA key matters of interest and concerns for the International Programmes student body.

HOW...

This report will focus on the four areas advised by the Quality Assurance Agency in the 'Handbook for Institutional Audit: England and Northern Ireland':

- How accurate is the information that the institution publishes about itself?
- Do students know what is expected of them in order to be successful?
- What is the student experience as a learner like?
- Do students have a voice in the institution and is it listened to?

Whilst difficult to demarcate the International Programmes student body, patterns of study behavior and the programmes students undertake can help loosely group elements of their study experience, and allow further analysis. Such groupings can be seen as:

- ***Undergraduate students acquiring further support through tuition at local independent teaching institutions*** (henceforth referred to as teaching institutions). This is approximated

to be 80% of the Undergraduate student population. Significant numbers of students from the following programmes fall into this category: EMFSS, Undergraduate Laws and Computing & Information Systems.

- ***Undergraduate students pursuing UoL degrees through self-study and in relative isolation.*** This is the default mode of study through the International Programmes.
- ***Postgraduate students receiving increased tutor- support, primarily through online mechanisms, from the programme level.*** This is the norm across Postgraduate offerings through the International Programmes.
- ***Postgraduate students pursuing UoL degree through self-study and in relative isolation with limited support.*** Significant numbers of students from the Postgraduate Laws programme fall into this category.

INFORMATION GATHERING

A number of methods were adopted to collate the necessary information and knowledge required to put this document together. These can be broken down into primary and secondary routes.

Primary Routes:

- ***Direct contact with students incorporating both formal and informal meetings.***
This took the form of arranged meetings, such as meeting alumni at the 2010 London graduation ceremony; meeting the Student Representative Council (SRC) and other students at the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM); meeting current and prospective students at Institutional marketing events in Trinidad; holding drop-in sessions and visiting a teaching institution (Centre for Legal and Business Studies) on the Island of Mauritius; and visiting the Maritime Greenwich College in London to meet current students. Elements of a serendipitous nature allowed visits to a number of teaching institutions in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia where consultation with students were also held.

A report highlighting the student experience of students following visits to Singapore, Malaysia and Trinidad was authored by the ULU President 2009/10 and used as a research source. It was discussed and noted at various committees of the International Academy including the Academic Committee¹.

- ***Direct contact with Student Members of International Academy Committees.***
Individual meetings with all current student members were conducted and were a rich focus for discussion. Consultations with this group were not limited to audit- focused meetings,

¹ Agenda Item 1/8, International Programmes Academic Committee, Friday, 22 October 2010
http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/quality/comte_zone/esac/uliaac1/documents/ac_1_agenda.pdf

with interaction also taking place at committee and subsequent working group levels on a range of other issues concerning the student experience.

Student representatives at the Lead Colleges were also identified, and a meeting held with the Heythrop representative to discuss topics relating to audit.

- ***Online interaction with students.***

An online targeted survey was conducted entitled the 'ULU SWS Survey', where students from six targeted programmes at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate level were invited via email and through Virtual Learning Environment-led publicity to give feedback and comment on QAA-themed questions. This elicited a response from 520 students. The six programmes had been highlighted as good examples to reflect a spectrum of student experiences. This included at the Undergraduate level: EMFSS, Computing & Information Systems (CIS) and Theology, and at the Postgraduate level: Educational and Social Research (MRes), PG Laws (LLM) and Veterinary Epidemiology & Public Health. A detailed breakdown of the ULU SWS Survey results can be found in Appendix A.

Publicity was also put up on the Student Portal, ULU website and Facebook encouraging direct feedback from students, with particular focus on the themes highlighted by the QAA. This saw a response rate of 63 students. Students were also encouraged to engage in direct informal conversations via Skype, which 13 students participated in.

Other routes of primary information collation.

The International Programmes currently has 91 alumni acting as International Programmes ambassadors in 26 countries across the world. Their details are published on the International Programmes website², with prospective students regularly contacting them for advice and information relating to studying through the Programmes. All ambassadors were contacted asking for feedback on a QAA-themed template similar to the ULU SWS Survey, and particularly encouraged for first-hand experience if they were recent graduates. 11 ambassadors provided their feedback into this process.

Non-student feedback was collated to capture important anecdotal evidence and to help bridge gaps of knowledge both at institutional and programme levels. Meetings were held with a number of Programme Directors, Programme Managers and members of administrative staff involved directly with students at different stages of their student lifecycle.

A number of meetings were also held with other Students' Unions to draw on best practice and to gauge issues facing students on other distance-learning programmes.

² <http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/alumni/ambassadors/index.shtml>

Secondary Routes:

- ***Undergraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/09 and the Postgraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/09³.***

Three census-based, self selecting External System Student Experience Surveys were launched from 21 December 2009 and closed on 7 February 2010. Three questionnaires had been developed that targeted

- a) students who have completed their first year of registration
- b) students who have been registered for more than one year
- c) students who are near to completing their studies.

Whilst eliciting 24% Undergraduate and 29% Postgraduate response rates, it should be noted that of the UG respondents 88% of students were either on the EMFSS or LLB programmes. A large number of UG respondents were primarily from one geographical area, namely Singapore and over 60% were studying at local teaching institutions at the time. Furthermore, some sections of the survey will have seen actions implemented to address such issues. This primarily includes areas affected by technology, with the 'MyLondon' Portal since being launched and the wider use of programme-VLEs.

- ***2005 QAA External System Institutional Audit and the 2008 Mid- Cycle Follow- Up to Institutional Audit***
- ***Annual Programme Reports from the Annual Programme and Planning Review (APPR) Process for the academic years 2008/09 and 2009/10.***
- ***Programme Periodic Reviews***
- ***Institutions Periodic Reviews***
- ***Committee Papers***
 - ***International Academy Academic Committee (Formerly External System Academic Committee)***
 - ***Learning, Teaching and Assessment Sub- Committee***
 - ***Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Sub- Committee (QASL)***

3

http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/quality/comte_zone/qa_sub/qasl11/documents/QASL11_4_final_student_experience_survey_Results.pdf


- ***Published Materials including the General Prospectus 2009-10/2010-11 and the Guidelines for Examinations were also used for this purpose***
- ***University of London International Academy Social Media Updates***
- ***Other routes of information secondary information collation.***
Virtual Learning Environment access was been made available for the majority of programmes on offer for SWS purposes, but this was not possible with two- Bloomsbury Learning Environment (BLE)- based Postgraduate Programmes (LSHTM, SOAS).

Sources of secondary information have provided a critical overview of recurring issues faced by students of the International Programmes, and more importantly the actions taken by the International Academy and Lead College alike to address these. Furthermore, the use of anecdotal evidence in the process of authoring this submission has proven to be an extremely useful tool for gathering knowledge. With such a diverse student body with commensurately diverse factors influencing their student experience, formal mechanisms of feedback are not always guaranteed to pick these up. In instances where they do, the traditional survey imbalance in favour of the negative has been recognized and factored in. It is acknowledged that the reliability of anecdotal information is prone to further scrutiny, but throughout this process, where possible triangulation has taken place with primary and secondary sources of information.

LIMITATIONS

The limited window of ULU's SWS involvement combined with the rolling out of the 2010 Student Experience Survey for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students affected the ability of the Union to extensively conduct research. This was particularly problematic considering the historical absence of entrenched union involvement within the International Programmes. Resulting knowledge gaps were filled using a plethora of information sources, including some reliance on anecdotal evidence. Furthermore, it should be noted Postgraduate responses to the ULU SWS Survey saw a weighting in favour of the Postgraduate Laws programme, due to low response rates from students on the Educational and Social Research (MRes) and Veterinary Epidemiology & Public Health programmes.

The disparate demography of the International Programmes student body made it difficult to meet with students directly and hold thematic focus groups, a tool used conventionally by students' unions, resulting in an emphasis on secondary sources for elements of in-depth analysis. As a consequence, there was minimal direct contact with Postgraduate students, which was compounded by their lack of attendance at local teaching institutions. There was also difficulty in further exploring the impact of regional factors impacting the learner experience.



1. HOW ACCURATE IS THE INFORMATION THAT THE INSTITUTION PUBLISHES ABOUT ITSELF?

The International Programmes publishes a myriad of information for students to access, either as prospective or as current students. The need to provide accurate information is vital, to allow informed decisions to be made on how and what to study, and to ensure expectations are as clear as possible. The institution generally seems to be doing a good job in this regard, with almost 90% of respondents to the ULU SWS Survey saying they were satisfied with this aspect of their experience. However open survey text suggests further access to elaborated information would be welcome in some quarters, as students often make assumptions about their study experiences which are consequently not met. This can result in lower levels of satisfaction and a detached sense of belonging to the institution.

“I would wish for more details. What was there was accurate, but could have been more elaborate.”

Postgraduate Student, Educational and Social Research

1.1 PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Potential students receive information through various sources, influenced generally by geographical location and the type of study behavior they are looking to adopt. Publicity often comes in the form of word-of-mouth referrals; direct marketing from the International Programmes through its website, published marketing materials and open days often held in strategic student markets; local independent teaching institutions advertising for students in domestic markets, frequently using International Programmes branding; and ad hoc publicity including students celebrating graduation via notifications in the local newspaper, a common practice in some regions.

1.1.1 STUDENT AMBASSADORS

An element of good practice identified by students in overseas student consultation was the use of student ambassadors. Whilst available in limited countries (refer to ‘Information Gathering’ section), they were seen to provide good first-hand experience of studying with the International Programmes. Their knowledge was restricted however, with students sometimes erroneously forwarding detailed academic queries to them. The lack of localised access to information was highlighted by students as an area they sought to improve.

1.1.2 WEBSITE/PROSPECTUS

Results from the Student Experience Survey(s) show the website to be a regular and important source of information for prospective students. Direct interaction with students raised comments praising the good structure of the website, and the good availability of key online documents required to making informed study choices. The use of testimonials from current students and alumni was cited as being useful. Students sought more summarised and centralised information outlining key dates and payments, which was difficult to locate for some. The Undergraduate Laws

programme was positively highlighted by students for its 'e-induction course' and the pre-course exercises that were available as 'tasters' of the programme, allowing students to further make informed decisions.

1.1.3 CURRENCY OF LITERATURE

The majority of materials available to potential students appear to be updated, current and fit for purpose. Open survey feedback did suggest some programme modules were publicised but consequently unavailable at the point of entry. This was a particular concern raised by students on the Postgraduate Laws programmes.

"It appears that you can specialise in Tax Law but in reality they do not have enough Tax units to do this. There are a lot of units in their list that are not available - I think that is misleading. Even if all the tax units were available there would still not be enough units for Masters specialisation."

Postgraduate Student, LLM

1.1.4 LOCAL INDEPENDENT TEACHING INSTITUTIONS/INSTITUTIONS POLICY FRAMEWORK

Local teaching institutions play a significant role in publicising the International Programmes and provide valuable information to prospective students. The Institutions Policy Framework (IPF) acts as a market indicator of 'recognised' teaching institutions, allowing students to make informed decisions about where to acquire further support. Overseas student consultation however illustrated confusion of this tiered system of recognition, and the level of interaction that it signified with the University of London, with some expecting lectures by UoL academics. An aspect of the IPF students were happy with was further delegated administrative responsibilities, which helped expedite their applications.

Whilst the IPF 'aims to ensure clear information is available to students about local tuition support'⁴, direct student consultation suggested this varied particularly with smaller teaching institutions. An example of this included a group of students in Mauritius who were under the impression if they stopped attending the local teaching institution, their registration with the International Programmes would also cease. Students also highlighted the lack of module choice on offer for some degree pathways as such institutions, whilst it was not uncommon for advertised modules to be scrapped due to lecturer/tutor shortages.

⁴ Institutions Quality Assurance Framework (IQAF): Information for Candidate Institutions and Recognised Centres

1.2 CURRENT STUDENTS

The introduction of the 'MyLondon' Portal has seen VLE access universally extended to the student body, with the subsequent availability of online study materials and centralisation of key information. This level of access and exposure has increased the opportunity for scrutiny, a welcome sign for students. Whilst there is little evidence to suggest the accuracy of such information is in doubt, some students though open survey text raised concerns about the perceived lack of consultation over issues like the pure 'digitisation' of study materials at some programmes levels, whilst other students highlighted confusion about published information pertaining to continuance and examination fees.

1.2.1 STUDY MATERIALS

The ULU President's Report and Student Experience Survey Results highlight the time lag that currently exists between application, acceptance and the delivery of study materials. For some students materials takes longer than the published three weeks to arrive, sometimes even months. This was particularly the case for new students, who completed a paper- based registration process. Further scrutiny of feedback suggests this sporadically affected self-study students' across Postgraduate/Undergraduate programmes but was most severe for those at local teaching institutions. As a result of this delay, a small number of affected students felt ill- prepared by the shortened time frames they had to prepare for exams, with some in extreme circumstances postponing their exams.

Students at local teaching institutions were able to compensate by photocopying past study materials or, in the case of Undergraduate Laws, the availability of the first four module chapters through the VLE. It is hoped the imminent introduction of online registration and despatch through the Strategic Information Technology Services (SITS) system will have a positive impact in expediting this process.

A small number of student raised concerns about the currency of some study materials, an issue addressed in section 2.1.2.

1.2.2 LOCAL INDEPENDENT TEACHING INSTITUTIONS

Overseas consultation coupled with open survey feedback suggests students at local teaching institutions generally go to local administrators for information, including for International Programmes queries. This is both a consequence of convenience and an indicator of where some students place their sense of belonging. Whilst broadly satisfying, variances can exist at the level of correct information such students receive, with the lack of formal contact between teaching institution administrators and the International Programmes cited as a possible reason.

“Even that I am satisfied with the services provided, I would like to encourage more to the UOL to give and share more information to the local school or the staffs who do provide your programme as I experienced once in my local school that I was asking about the Continuous Registration Fees which I am not familiar with it. I asked the local school staffs that what I should do or reply as I received an email regarding to this CRF and then the replied that I get from them is 'just neglect the email'.”

Undergraduate Student, EMFSS

1.2.3 ASSESSMENT

The Student Experience Survey(s) reveal administrative elements of assessment to be good, with students broadly content. Both Undergraduate and Postgraduate students understand the procedures for exams and were satisfied with exam venues. However, Undergraduate students showed slightly lower satisfaction levels for the convenience of exam locations. Students were again generally happy with the published timeline for exams, but some felt the confirmation of exam dates from provisional notice were too late, with the lack of notice possibly impacting their daily work lives.

The recent development of students receiving notification of exam entry registration was a welcome development, with students' also encouraging more frequent communication of exam registration deadlines. The length of time exam results currently take to reach students was cited a concern by a number of students at local teaching institutions during direct consultation.

“The programme has improved with respect to notification of application for exams. I use to worry until I got my admission notice, to know for sure that the university got my application. Great improvement!”

Postgraduate Student, LLM

“I have noticed that the University has been trying to publish the exam schedules earlier, which is a good thing. I would suggest that the main news page per subject could include a reminder to students that the exam registration deadline is approaching - I almost missed it this year!”

Postgraduate Student, Organizational Psychology

1.2.4 FEES AND COSTS

Primary and secondary feedback points to a general student satisfaction in understanding cost implication when embarking on International Programmes pathways. Open survey feedback does suggest some confusion over the incremental nature of fees, particularly continuation fees. It was felt this could be better publicised, with students at local teaching institutions particularly affected. The consequence of such rises was also raised by a small number of students, particularly when local exchange rates are factored in. Direct student consultation has further raised the issue of some local examination centers charging excessive examinations fees, as well as some not publicising important dates thoroughly enough.

“I would like to ask the UOL to look at the increment of fees every year. It may be a small increment for the resident students but because of the fluctuating exchange rates it’s expensive for the international students.”

Undergraduate Student, LLB

1.2.5 PROGRAMME CLOSURE/MODULE DISCONTINUATION

Direct student feedback raised concerns about the consequent impact of students already enrolled on the programme who are sometimes unable to pursue modules they had intended to at the point of registration. Furthermore students on the Postgraduate International Primary Health Care programme highlighted their frustration at the recently announced closure of a much-valued and interactive programme.

“Did not know that certain modules would be discontinued, as those particular modules were what attracted me to the course in the first place.”

Undergraduate Student, English

1.3 EXPECTATIONS

Whilst students seem highly satisfied the institution publishes accurate information about itself, primary and secondary research illustrates the wide range of expectations currently in existence across the International Programmes student body. The ranges of these permeate most sections addressed in this submission, and seem to be augmented at programme and regional levels. Several avenues of student consultation cite the lack of localised information centers, technological advancements, competitor offerings, and cultural customs as some of the influences to varied students' expectations. The feedback across programmes and study behaviours points to fluctuating student expectations based on current learner opportunities and learner resources. Such offerings are discussed further in sections 3.3.2 and 3.4.3.

"Lectures should be made available on line for all subjects. It is a also good idea to hold a welcome reception prior to the commencement of the weekend classes each year."

Undergraduate Student, LLB

"It is amazing that in the age of social networking, Youtube and the like the university does not offer video lectures and online modules which are moderated by lecturers."

Postgraduate Student, LLM

1.3.1 STUDENT CHARTER

The formal introduction of the International Programmes student charter in early 2011 is a positive institutional development and will help address many of the issues raised regarding the management of students' expectations. A clear understanding of what is expected of the student as well as of the University-irrespective of study behavior, programme enrolled in and regional location-will go a long way in setting minimum expectations and improving student satisfaction.

1.4 SUMMARY

The website and prospectuses seem to provide students with accurate information about the institution, programmes on offer, cost implications and nature of study. A significant number of undergraduate students study through local independent teaching institutions, which is often the dominant source of local information for prospective students. Smaller teaching institutions have varied in the accuracy of some information published. Students sought enhanced information, particularly at the local level.

Whilst acknowledging its recent introduction, the Institutions Policy Framework (IPF) is not fully understood by students, often leading to rising expectations of the International Programmes. The introduction of the Student Charter intends to address issues of variable expectations that have been identified across programmes. Examination centre fees are too high in some countries, with students unprepared for this.

AREAS FOR POSSIBLE EXPLORATION

- **Clarity of the Institutions Policy Framework (IPF)** – More information, advice and guidance could be provided for students acquiring additional support from local independent teaching institutions. Publishing ‘recognised’ teaching institutions pass rates, availability of learning resources, numbers of enrolled students and the offerings of UoL pathway modules will enable students to make more informed choices, as well as increase students use and understanding of the IPF.
- **Access to local information** – Students raised a general point of seeking access to more information. The International Academy could explore the possibility of setting up regional information centers where large cohorts of International Programmes students exist, allowing easier local access to information.
- **Minimum Expectations** – Students currently possess fluctuating expectations across programmes, based on currently learner opportunities. The implementation of the Student Charter is a recent development, and the International Academy should continue its good work standardising minimum expectations across the programmes.
- **Examination Centre Fees** – The International Academy has recently investigated the disparity levels of examination centre fees, and should inform the student body of any actions taken to address students concerns.

2. DO STUDENTS KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM IN ORDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

With worldwide access at the core of the International Programmes mission, students enrol on University of London degrees for a multitude of reasons ranging from academic ambition, to professional development, to local political circumstance. The ability to satisfy entrance requirements at programme level without competing for places creates a wide spectrum of students varying in both ability and prior attainment. As such there is added importance to students knowing what is expected of them in order to do well.

Equipped with accurate information about the nature of distance-learning study from the application process, students seem generally aware of the requirements expected of them to be successful; 74.6% of respondents to the ULU SWS Survey stated they were satisfied to this end. Easier and earlier access to study materials and the academic regulations online has helped this process further in recent years. However, the variables involved in shaping such expectations, including the currency and quality of study materials, general support for students, tutor-access and assessment feedback vary between programmes and study behavior.

“Yes, you do everything yourself using the study guides and maybe also using extra assistance locally. It's clear what is required from a student - to know your texts well and be able to answer the exam questions competently. There is no feedback from the university unless you opt for extra services like essay marking which is quite expensive.”

Undergraduate Student, English

2.1 STUDY MATERIALS

Upon registration and the completion of payment, students are sent study materials which usually comprise a student handbook, subject guides, past exam papers, examiners report/commentaries (henceforth referred to as examiners commentaries) and updated regulations. For self-study students, such materials have historically embodied the nature of their experience with the International Programmes, and continue to be their primary source of study guidance. Satisfaction with study materials is generally very high at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels (see table 2.1), with examiner's commentaries (addressed in section 2.1.4) and online study materials (addressed in section 2.1.1) yielding lower satisfaction rates.

It has also become common good practice among most programmes at Undergraduate and Postgraduate level to incorporate 'Study Skills' guides or their equivalent within the Study Materials, which whilst received well by students is sometimes underused, particularly by those acquiring further tuition through local teaching institutions.

Table 2.1 below illustrates the Undergraduate and Postgraduate student satisfaction rates in relation to study materials they receive.

Undergraduate	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total satisfaction</i>
Subject guides	2666 (40.8%)	3221 (49.3%)	520 (8.0%)	124 (1.9%)	90.1%
Student Handbook	2616 (40.2%)	3544 (54.5%)	298 (4.6%)	43 (0.7%)	94.7%
Programme Regulations	2611 (40.2%)	3532 (54.4%)	293 (4.5%)	56 (0.9%)	94.6%
Examiner's Reports or Commentaries	1981 (30.7%)	3180 (49.3%)	997 (15.5%)	288 (4.5%)	80.0%
Online study material in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)	1418 (22.8%)	3419 (54.9%)	1118 (17.9%)	276 (4.4%)	77.7%

(Undergraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

Postgraduate	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total satisfaction</i>
Subject guides	617 (46.9%)	594 (45.1%)	84 (6.4%)	21 (1.6%)	92.0%
Student Handbook	691 (52.1%)	570 (43.0%)	54 (4.1%)	11 (0.8%)	95.1%
Programme Regulations	643 (49.0%)	594 (45.2%)	65 (5.0%)	11 (0.8%)	94.2%
Examiner's Reports or Commentaries	345 (26.7%)	637 (49.2%)	231 (17.9%)	81 (6.3%)	75.9%
Online study material in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)	274 (21.8%)	604 (48.1%)	279 (22.2%)	98 (7.8%)	69.9%

(Postgraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

2.1.1 ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCES

The process of digitising study materials has generally been welcomed by students, increasing both accessibility and the flexibility of study. Over the last few years, the fast-pace of technological change has ensured the majority of programmes now place their study materials online through designated VLEs. This has helped reduce the impact of study materials waiting times (see section

1.2.1), with students now instantly able to access materials online.

"The decision since last year to make all materials available online is very helpful, particularly for those students who need to travel."

Postgraduate student, Human Resources Management

"I am glad that we can reach study guides and other materials online and do not have to wait three months for paper versions to be delivered."

Undergraduate Student, EMFSS

Direct feedback from some students did however flag up concerns of the 'pure digitisation' of study materials. This was significant as the costs of printing had been passed on to the student, raising overall studying fees-an impact not effectively communicated. There were also concerns raised about the access needs of those students with poor technological infrastructure when 'hard copies' were no longer available.

"Study materials were available in hard copy and electronic format. However, I am very upset that the hard copies are no longer sent. It has cost me a significant amount of money this year to print out the extensive material, with no reduction in the study fee."

Postgraduate Student, Organizational Psychology

2.1.2 SUBJECT GUIDES

The importance placed upon subject guides by students is critical, particularly self-studiers. Students found the vast majority of such materials sent, to be of excellent quality and immensely satisfying. A small number of students raised some concerns about outdated guides, while concerns were also sporadically raised across the Programmes about the visual quality of some module subject guides, which had been poorly photocopied and put together. Direct student consultation saw requests for more succinct summaries on the major issues, as some modular guides are perceived to be too dense.

"I love the Subject Guides. They are so important for my programme because I don't go to an external college or have a private tutor. The Subject Guides are everything - and they are very well written."

Undergraduate Student, Spanish and Latin American Studies

2.1.3 ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS

The majority of Undergraduate students are notified in the General Prospectus to budget for additional textbooks, but the difficulty of attaining these core reading materials was a concern for some. Geographical location prevented many from locally accessing books necessary to succeed in their exams (as outlined in some examiner commentaries), whilst some of the costs associated with

importing books was problematic for others. This can, and has, caused particular frustration for students with mobility access needs.

"I live in Serbia and most of the books I need for my studies I cannot find. BA English is a special kind of studies, where there are no textbooks and a student has to read a substantial number of books for each unit. Not only those books are missing in the libraries, but ordering them through Amazon or other providers is to some extent impossible and extremely expensive (due to customs policies)."

Undergraduate Student, English

"I don't think the primary texts required for the course are necessarily realistic. It's very difficult to get these books in India."

Undergraduate Student, Spanish and Latin American Studies

2.1.4 EXAMINER COMMENTARIES

The use of examiner commentaries is seen as a crucial bridge between students and the examiner, an integral relationship to understanding where students have gone right or wrong, so that they may do well in the future. The existence of such commentaries is extremely well received across the breadth of the International Programmes, and ensures a basic level of exam understanding is available to all students irrespective of study behaviour.

Open survey feedback did however suggest variation in the level of feedback provided by examiners across programmes, with many students seeking full model-answers to the previous year's questions. Whilst elements of this request stem from a cultural reliance on rote-learning from some parts of the world, programmes with a combination of no assessment feedback, no tutor support and limited examiner feedback sees students potentially greatly disadvantaged; students from the Postgraduate Laws programmes raised concerns about some modules to this regard.

" The examiners reports can be excellent although there is not a similar standard to all reports: some are quite thin whilst others (most!) give substantive comments which are very useful for the distance student studying primarily on their own."

Undergraduate Student, Divinity

"Examiners Reports are crucial for me as an independent student - and the lack of them is crippling! As I have no assignments or tutorials during the year to guide me I rely heavily on the comments provided from past papers. A comprehensive Examiner's Report for each course should be obligatory on the Examiner and the University."

Postgraduate Student, LLM

2.1.5 INDUCTIONS

Students on Postgraduate courses with tutor- support can expect to go through a process of induction, helping outline the requisites to do well. Induction and orientation periods also usually exist at local teaching institutions. An element of good practice is the annual Undergraduate Laws induction day in London which helps the process of understanding study skills and examination requirements for both new and current students.

2.3 MARKING SCHEMES

A student’s ability to understand the marking schemes is essential if they are expected to do well. Such criteria can be found in the academic regulations sent to all students as part of their study materials. Whilst broadly positive (see table 2.1), students demonstrated some dissatisfaction with their level of understanding of marking criteria (see table 2.3). Postgraduate students have a slightly better understanding of the marking criteria over Undergraduate students, with direct feedback from students suggesting this trend seems to have held since the survey was conducted.

The study behavior of International Programmes students can be seen to influence how well criteria for marking are understood. Students at local teaching institutions will have further assistance from academics employed locally. The majority of Postgraduate students will be able to seek further clarification directly from their tutors. Self- study students, either via email or through online discussion forums, will by and large have access to academics based on their programme of study should they wish to pursue further queries.

Open survey feedback outlines some student confusion over the distinctions between different grade classifications, and highlights a need for more clarity with marking schemes in some programmes. It is apparent this then causes confusion over marks awarded to students, and a resulting frustration at their inability to contest the academic judgment of the examiner. This problem is inherently perpetuated for students when combined with a lack of individual feedback from assessment.

Table 2.3 below illustrates the Undergraduate and Postgraduate student satisfaction rates in relation to their understanding of marking criteria.

<i>Undergraduate</i>	<i>Definitely agree</i>	<i>Mostly agree</i>	<i>Mostly disagree</i>	<i>Definitely disagree</i>	Total agreement
I understood the criteria used in marking	796 (14.9%)	2957 (55.5%)	1257 (23.6%)	319 (6.0%)	70.4%

(Undergraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

Postgraduate	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Total agreement
I understood the criteria used in marking	255 (23.4%)	560 (51.4%)	213 (19.5%)	62 (5.7%)	74.8%

(Postgraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

“There is relatively little information on marking schemes and it is not possible to obtain any feedback whatsoever on examination performance. This can be extremely prejudicial on the external programme as the only mode of performance assessment is through a very brief written examination.”

Postgraduate Student, LLM

2.4 ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Unseen written exams are an important facet of the University of London degree, which combined with the marking of scripts in London, maintains integrity and confidence in the award. Students acknowledge and take pride in such a fact, and are aware Undergraduate students can expect this as the norm, with more flexibility at the Postgraduate level in the use of a broader range of assessment vehicles. However, the lack of personalised feedback resulting from such summative assessment is an issue for students, with many expecting such a process in light of their distance-learning. The innovation of the examiner commentaries has helped partially address this problem, but a combination of variation in the commentaries and students’ contrasting expectations continues to see this issue raised.

“Individual marking comments after exam result, it will be helpful to rectify one’s weakness in future written exams.”

Undergraduate Student, Business Administration

The absence of formative assessment in the majority of Undergraduate Programmes also causes consternation for many students, particularly the lack of feedback that results from it. Even in programmes with formative assessment, such as Computer and Information Systems, no feedback has historically been given with students receiving their marks concurrently with their exam results—an issue currently being addressed. Direct student consultation suggests the lack of personalised progress reporting has proven to be a barrier to understanding success. This is particularly the case for self-study students, as those attending local teaching institutions can usually expect local assessment feedback (see section 3.3.2). Development and innovation continues to take place at the Undergraduate level, where some programmes are piloting general academic feedback forums on the Virtual Learning Environment.

Postgraduate students are most likely to experience alternative forms of assessment, including coursework, dissertations and project reports, with feedback mechanisms usually included. Survey results and direct feedback from students suggests this is an aspect of their learning experience they very much value and are generally satisfied with.

2.5 ADD-ON SERVICES

A number of 'add-on' services have emerged from different Programmes since the 2005 audit, primarily at the Undergraduate level, which are helping students further understand what is required of them to do well. Some of these are offered for an additional fee. Both the Divinity programme based at Heythrop and the English programme at Goldsmiths have introduced an essay submission service, where students are able to submit a limited number of essays and receive formative feedback over the course of an academic year. The English Programme had also set up an optional summer school for students, which has since been transformed into e-seminars for students. The EMFSS programme includes the annual LSE Study Weekend as well as visits by academics to large teaching institutions to run revision classes. In a similar vein, the Undergraduate Laws programme runs regional revision classes in many regions with a high student population, as well as weekend courses in London.

Whilst students subscribing to these services greatly appreciate the opportunity for additional support, advice and guidance, some suggested it was too expensive for them and not accessible. It was also suggested global developments in online educational tools could be further utilised by the programmes to provide such support.

"I really enjoyed the summer school held at Goldsmiths College in 2007, and I found all the tutors, especially the programme administrator very inspiring and helpful not just as a teacher, but as a person who gives encouragement very naturally."

Undergraduate Student, English

"I think the Study Weekend or the Summer school could be a little bit more convenient. The price is too high."

Undergraduate Student, EMFSS

"Very grateful for the essay marking service and feedback on marked essays."

Undergraduate Student, Divinity

2.6 SUMMARY

Students are generally provided with the information they require in order for them to be successful. Postgraduate students tend to value the quality of information academic tutors provide, with Undergraduate students also generally happy at local teaching institution level. Through the Virtual Learning Environment, all students have better and easier access to study materials. The inaccessibility of additional reading materials was raised as a problem for students in some parts of the world.

The examiner commentary is a useful and valued mechanism in providing students examination feedback, aiding their understanding of the success requisites in this prevalent form of assessment.

There was however some disparity in the detail of feedback received from examiners across different programmes and modules. Most postgraduate students receive formative assessment, as do undergraduate students at local teaching institutions. Undergraduate students seek more personalised progress reporting, with programmes responding through add-on services and the development of learner resources through the VLE.

Students at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate level had low levels of satisfaction for understanding the criteria used in marking.

2.6.1 AREAS FOR POSSIBLE EXPLORATION

- **Examiner Commentaries** – Examiner Commentaries are valued immensely by students across the International Programmes. The International Programmes could ensure consistency of examiner commentaries across modules and programmes by producing a model template for examiners to follow. This could then be made available to students to further manage expectations.
- **Marking Criteria** – It is important students understand the marking criteria appropriate to their programme of study, so they are aware of the requisites for success. Further areas need to be explored to address this issue. One such idea might be the wider use of e-inductions in compulsory modules.
- **Assessment Feedback**- Feedback suggests students are continually seeking assessment feedback and progress reporting. The International Academy and Lead Colleges, where appropriate, should investigate avenues of incorporating a more varied assessment mix without compromising academic standards.
- **Learner Resources** – Students greatly value the depth of resources currently on offer to them. Development should continue at the programme VLE-level, with the exploration of more online educational tools to deliver services currently on offer through ‘Add-On’ services, thus further widening access.
- **Additional Reading Materials**- The availability of additional reading materials via the Online Library could be investigated. The International Programmes might also look into other options of facilitating exchange between students so that they may buy and sell old books.

3. WHAT IS THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AS A LEARNER LIKE?

The flexible nature of the International Programmes allows students to tailor their study programmes to their needs, an attribute commended and cited by many students to be a decisive factor in their choice of institution. At the base level there exists an atypical learner, whose study experience-ranging from access to learning facilities to academic support received-is broadly shaped by patterns of study behavior and the programme within which they are enrolled, as outlined in the introduction. Such factors also conspire to impact a student's sense of belonging to the institution, an important aspect to their learner experience.

The Undergraduate Student Experience Survey (USES), the Postgraduate Student Experience Survey (PGES) and the ULU SWS Survey all show that students are generally satisfied with their University of London International Programmes experience, with Undergraduate students showing slightly higher levels of satisfaction.

“The UOL International Programmes is overall satisfactory and gives great flexibility in choice of modules. Also, it is generally effective in administrative matters – payment issues, providing essential study materials in a timely and organised manner. Online resources are effective in assisting students in course of study.”

Undergraduate Student, EMFSS

3.1 ADMINISTRATION

The basic level of contact all students have with the International Programmes is through its administration of their lifecycle, from the point of payment and registration through to requesting degree transcripts. Students seem generally content with the level of administrative help they receive from the International Academy; with over 80% of total respondents to the ULU SWS saying they were satisfied with this aspect of their experience. Staff were on the whole found to be 'convenient, reliable and helpful'.

Open survey feedback did however suggest waiting times for some forms of communication, particularly via email are too long and staff can sometimes come across as impersonal. This is particularly the case, but not limited to, the busiest times. The common use of generic email addresses was found to augment students' sense of detachment with the institution. There was also confusion from some students as to when they should contact the Programmes team administrative staff and when to contact the International Academy administrative staff. This confusion resulted in some queries getting lost in the void.

“When contacted by phone the staff are quite helpful and friendly and normally respond to emails promptly but usually after phoning. If an email is sent in general to a department it takes quite a long time but if sent to one of the staff then it is answered quite promptly. So that's very good”.

Undergraduate student, LLB

3.2 ACADEMIC CONTACT/SUPPORT

3.2.1 POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

The contact students have with academics varies across the International Programmes. Postgraduate programmes, with the exception of the LLM, offer online tutorial support to students, enabling direct academic assistance and guidance. The level of such contact depends upon particular programmes, with most offering tutor-supported discussions online and some assigning a personal tutor to students (e.g. Human Resource Management).

Direct feedback from students suggests contact with academics, particularly at the modular level, is invaluable and broadly good but there exists some variation in the quality of service provided by tutors. Particular examples given include the contrasting levels of interaction in some online discussions, the tones of which are usually set by the tutor, and the varying levels of quality supervisory time some students received for their dissertations. Some students through open survey feedback also raised concerns about the increasing size of their online classes, which was seen to be affecting levels of interaction further. The contrasting use of technology to facilitate tutor-support is also apparent, and discussed further in section 3.4.4.

"On a positive note the tutors guiding us through the modules so far have been excellent. Thank you."

Postgraduate Student, Advanced Educational Leadership and Management

"It has been made clear that academic staff cannot 'enter into any correspondence relating to or arising from the (Study) Guide" - basically there is no academic staff that seem to run my courses or have introduced themselves by email or who I can go to from academic assistance".

Postgraduate Student, LLM

3.2.2 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Undergraduate students generally do not receive academic support from the programme level, with access to programme-based academics also varying. Analysis of various feedback sources suggests those students enrolled on programmes with relatively smaller numbers (e.g. Divinity, English) are able to access their programme directors more easily than might be the norm in programmes with larger student numbers (e.g. EMFSS, LLB). These students are particularly happy with such contact as they are less likely to acquire supplementary tuition from local teaching institutions. Students acquiring further tuition will experience increased contact time with local academics, as detailed in section 3.3.2.

The use of technology, particularly through the VLE, has seen developments across Undergraduate programmes to provide better and more advanced learning resources for students, including video tutorials, podcasts and essay submission services to name but a few. This has helped placate the

demand for direct academic support, particularly within the larger programmes. The technological development of learning resources is discussed further in section 3.4.3.

3.3 ADDITIONAL SUPPORT - LOCAL INDEPENDENT TEACHING INSTITUTIONS

Approximately 80% of undergraduate students currently supplement their International Programmes experience through the acquisition of additional tuition. Whilst attendance at local teaching institutions is required of those pursuing certain Diplomas from the CIS, EMFSS and Laws programmes⁵, other students choose to attend institutions for many reasons. This is done on both a part- time and full- time basis. The learner experiences of students attending local teaching institutions differs significantly to self-studiers, with students having direct access to academics; further access to learning resources including libraries and IT support; formative feedback through local assignments and mock exams; interaction with fellow students and in some cases, a full campus- based environment with extra-curricular activities.

Survey results show students to be very satisfied with their experiences in local teaching institutions, with open survey feedback highlighting some variances at the level and quality of support received. Regional cultural factors also seem to play a role in impacting the student learner experience and students' general expectations.

"It provides me the benefit of learning in a class room environment, which is systematic, opportunity to interact with others taking the same course and understand different perspectives, fulfills my need for socialization and to become an even better team player. Timely assessments motivate me to compete for grades and know where I stand before the finals."

Undergraduate Student, EMFSS

⁵ http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/study_ep/local_support/index.shtml

Table 3.3 below illustrates the satisfaction rates of students receiving additional support whilst studying through the International Programmes.

Undergraduate Student	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	Total satisfaction
<i>Yes, I attend a local teaching institution FULL-TIME</i>	238 (20.1%)	860 (72.5%)	73 (6.2%)	15 (1.3%)	92.6%
<i>Yes, I attend a local teaching institution PART-TIME</i>	213 (23.5%)	615 (67.8%)	66 (7.3%)	13 (1.4%)	91.3%
<i>Not currently, I stopped attending a local teaching institution</i>	119 (23.7%)	292 (58.2%)	76 (15.1%)	15 (3.0%)	81.9%
<i>Yes, I use a private tutor</i>	20 (21.5%)	62 (66.7%)	10 (10.8%)	1 (1.1%)	88.2%

(Undergraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

3.3.1 ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Each local teaching institution delivers academic support differently, but students can generally expect lectures and tutorials, alongside local formative assessment and feedback. Whilst such provision seems to be generally good, the ULU President's Report and further direct feedback highlights some contrasting satisfaction with the lecturers/tutors performing these roles. The lack of UoL-syllabus awareness was cited as being particularly problematic, as was the high turnover of teaching staff that existed in mainly smaller teaching institutions.

The general teaching styles of lecturers and tutors also varied regionally. Students in South East Asia (Singapore, Malaysia) provided feedback about passive lectures with minimal interaction, a possible consequence of cultural schooling styles, whilst students in Trinidad commented on the high level of interaction generally experienced in their teaching institutions.

"Extremely satisfied with lecturers teaching at my teaching institution."

Undergraduate Student, Computer and Information Systems

"In general, the local institution I am studying is able to explain the topics fairly well. However most of lessons were not interactive in nature and some of the notes provided by the local lecturers were quite similar to the subject guide."

Undergraduate Students, EMFSS

3.3.3 OUTCOME - BASED LEARNING

An aspect of the learner experience rooted in, but not limited to, the Asia Pacific Region is that of outcome- based learning. With annual examinations the primary source of assessment in Undergraduate programmes, many teaching institutions focus on preparing their students for exams success. Direct student feedback suggests the culture of spoon- feeding and rote- learning is then entrenched within the delivery of some modules. With some large teaching institutions visited by academics from Lead Colleges to hold revision lectures, students commented on the contrast between local learning approaches and those advocated by University of London academics.

“Teaching tends towards preparation for exams rather than real engagement with the subjects taught. Development of independent thinking is not emphasised at my local institution. I normally enjoy the revision lectures by the UOL lecturers more. It would be great in the future if external students can have access to web casts of lectures by UOL lecturers. That way students can learn the subjects as they are intended to be taught.”

Undergraduate Students, EMFSS

3.3.4 LEARNING RESOURCES

The availability of learning resources at local teaching institutions usually takes the form of libraries and IT support. Overseas student consultation and direct feedback suggests good general satisfaction in this regard, but questions were raised about the adequacy of some teaching institutions to ensure parity of learner resource as students progressed. The reference to facilities in the Institutions Quality Assurance Framework is a positive development in ensuring a fairer level of parity in and across teaching institutions.

“There are adequate library facilities for the first year students. However as the students progressing to second and third years, the usefulness of these library facilities would decline drastically.”

Undergraduate Students, EMFSS

3.4 INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES E-CAMPUS

The development of the ‘eCampus’, as noted in the 2005 QAA Audit, has seen the launch of the ‘MyLondon’ portal, a centralised single log-in platform which all International Programmes Students have access to. As well as receiving a personalised email address, logging onto the Portal allows a student access to their programme Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), the Online Library, social networking opportunities and a central resources section.

3.4.1 THE VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE)

The VLE is a highly valuable resource for students, and one they are increasingly satisfied with. The historical use and development of VLEs to enhance student learning opportunities has differed between programmes but the introduction of the Portal has ensured parity of VLE access for all remaining students. Analysis of open survey feedback demonstrates a spectrum of VLE-mobilised support and interactivity across programmes. This ranges from a basic online repository for learning resources through to full tutor-led support, resulting in contrasting learner experiences at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels.

"I find the VLE particularly useful because all the learning materials are accessible in one place. I can use the online library to supplement the lecture notes that are provided by the course tutors and if I have any problems/difficulties I can send questions to other students as well as tutors. I think the VLE is relatively easy to navigate round and so far have enjoyed my experience of using it."

Undergraduate Student, Business Administration

The ULU SWS Survey saw 71.5% of Undergraduate and 67.9% of Postgraduate respondents satisfied with the VLE in the context of overall e-learning resources available to them. Closer scrutiny of open survey feedback suggests technical difficulties of access combined with lack of clarity of recourse prevented some students from regularly logging onto the VLE, whilst other students had expectations which were simply not met. The lack of usage by both academics and fellow students was also cited as a reason for some students' lower satisfaction with the VLE (see table 3.4.1).

Table 3.4.1 illustrates satisfaction relating to VLE navigation and the online discussion forums for interaction with staff and students.

Undergraduate	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total satisfaction</i>
User-friendliness and navigation of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)	1333 (21.5%)	3477 (56.1%)	1125 (18.1%)	266 (4.3%)	77.6%
Online discussion forums for interaction with staff and students	840 (13.7%)	3476 (56.5%)	1391 (22.6%)	440 (7.2%)	70.2%

(Undergraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

Postgraduate	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total satisfaction</i>
User-friendliness and navigation of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)	293 (23.3%)	646 (51.4%)	239 (19.0%)	79 (6.3%)	74.7%
Online discussion forums for interaction with staff and students	264 (20.7%)	608 (47.6%)	283 (22.1%)	123 (9.6%)	68.3%

(Postgraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

3.4.2 LOCAL INDEPENDENT TEACHING INSTITUTIONS

Overseas student consultation highlights an under- emphasis by lecturers/tutors on the usage of the VLE at local independent teaching institutions, resulting in an under-usage of some VLEs by students, a factor raised by others for their lack of use. This was particularly the case in regions where students demonstrated a cultural reliance on local lecturers, including Singapore and Malaysia, with access to VLEs usually occurring to download past exam papers and examiner commentaries. Direct feedback from students suggests this might be due to local lecturers’ lack of training and familiarity with the VLE.

3.4.3 LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE VLE

All undergraduate programmes currently utilise the VLE to put their study materials online, with the majority also making use of built-in discussion forums (see section 3.4.4). The development of programme VLEs is implemented at Lead College level, and has seen each programme take differing approaches based on student feedback and pedagogical needs. Analysis of student feedback shows larger Undergraduate programmes (EMFSS, LLM) offer the widest variety of learner resources on their VLEs which includes video tutorials, e-inductions and podcasts to name a few; whilst comparatively smaller programmes (English, Theology) balance the closer contact they are able to have with their students through offering submissions of coursework online as well as hosting e-seminars. Some programmes (Philosophy) maintain a ‘light-tough’ approach to the VLE.

“The VLE was exceptionally good. With online lectures and audio presentations as well as past papers there was nothing a student would miss out on. Once again compared to the local universities in my country, this was definitely a major plus point & resourceful in terms of study that cannot be valued upon.”

Undergraduate Student, LLB

The utilisation of VLEs by Postgraduate programmes has been difficult to compare, with three big programmes using Lead College- based platforms. From student feedback, there seems to be a consistent use of technology facilitating tutor-support and enabling student interaction. The VLE is also used to accommodate core and supplementary study materials. Students highlighted two particular programmes for praise, the Educational & Social Research (MRes) and International Primary Health Care (IPHC) programmes, for their interactivity and student support.

"This a great idea which highly contributes to enhance the learning process while it promotes interaction and exchanging ideas between students."

Postgraduate Student, Educational and Social Research (MRes)

3.4.4 STUDENT-TO-STUDENT INTERACTION

The previous student-to-student network, as mentioned in the 2005 Audit, has since evolved into 'student café' discussion forums on the Virtual Learning Environment. Direct feedback suggests students generally value the ability to interact with one another, but satisfaction levels fluctuate across the programmes. One reason for this was the lack of emphasis of, and presence on such forums by academics, consequently resulting in low usage by fellow students. Furthermore, the varied use of such forums to include non-academic social discussions also received mixed receptions from some students.

"I sometimes use the Student Portal/VLE but it does not seem to be used by many students."

Undergraduate Student, Philosophy

"There are many useful things I have acknowledged and they include: 1. Interaction of the students from various regions and countries of the world both poor and rich as well as with the instructors/tutors at the same time and at the same level is very good. 2. We get to learn a lot from each other as we contribute to the VLE."

Postgraduate Students, International Primary Health Care (IPHC)

"Definitely discussion forums. Feedback is impossible from lecturers, therefore it can be difficult to understand exactly what examiners are looking for in exam papers. Since the VLE opened I have been able to interact with other students who did well in exams. By reading their views I now have a better understanding for my final year exams. I wish the VLE were available earlier as it would have helped me for my second year exams."

Undergraduate Student, EMFSS

Good examples of VLE student-to-student interaction can be found on various modules of the EMFSS programme, which sees students sharing good practice essays and assignments with each other. Most Postgraduate programmes have made regular good use of the VLE for student interaction, with programmes such as MRes going further and utilising 'Elluminate' technology, simulating an e-classroom experience by allowing interactive group discussions between/among students and a tutor.

3.4.5 ONLINE LIBRARY

Direct student consultation suggests access to the Online Library facilities is extremely useful and appreciated by students. Table 3.4.5 shows satisfactions rates higher for Undergraduate students than for Postgraduate students. Open survey feedback suggests reasons for this difference include the unavailability of some required journals and the length of time taken to navigate the website, particularly due to the search functionality.

Table 3.4.5 below illustrates satisfaction levels for online library resources for the purposes of assignments and research.

Undergraduate	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total satisfaction</i>
Resources in the online library for assignments and research	1389 (21.7%)	3551 (55.4%)	1159 (18.1%)	313 (4.9%)	77.1%

(Undergraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

Postgraduate	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly satisfied</i>	<i>Fairly dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total satisfaction</i>
Resources in the online library for assignments and research	261 (20.6%)	608 (48.0%)	281 (22.2%)	116 (9.2%)	68.6%

(Postgraduate Student Experience Survey 2008/2009) (Note: percentages are out of the total respondents per statement)

"I find the study guides and the access to the online library really useful."

Undergraduate Student, Laws

"Having the study material in the VLE enables me to take my studies anywhere. However, trying to access materials on the library page can be very difficult at time, as I feel that the search option is not very practical. It can be very time consuming."

Postgraduate student, Human Resource Management

3.5 SPECIAL NEEDS CONSIDERATIONS

Direct student feedback indicates the initial contact with the institution from a disabled students' point of view is very satisfying. However, the subsequent process of the student being signposted to the appropriate institution liaison is not automatic, and can be frustrating. This is particularly the case if the student has disclosed their disability in their application. There appear to be two main areas of provision at present for disabled students within the International Programmes; consideration of reasonable adjustments to undertake examinations and the disabled student support coordinator for other matters. Once appropriate avenues for support are found, the service was deemed to be excellent.

“As a relatively new student to the Master of Laws programme I found the initial contact and material both professional and informative.”

Denise Maguire, Student Member
Special Needs Sub- Committee

3.6 ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Whilst happy at the general process and rigour of examinations, various student feedback raised the issue of exams inflexibility to be of concern. It was felt having exams only once a year didn't allow the flexibility some students needed, particularly when retakes were needed for progression. Direct consultation also highlighted the various submission processes for assignments, including the manual posting of coursework, which was felt to be 'archaic and costly'.

3.7 POST-GRADUATION OPTIONS

Overseas student consultation and direct student feedback has risen the post-graduation period as a time when students were not clear of the options available to them. Whilst students have access to the University of London Careers service, it caters primarily for internal students of the University, and as such is not applicable to a large concentration of the student body. An area of good practice identified was the posting of relevant jobs and internships onto the BLE of SOAS-led programmes, by academics and administrators alike, who are also able to provide references.

3.8 SUMMARY

Students are broadly happy with their experience as a learner. The administrative experience of the International Programmes is good, but use of generic email addresses adds to a students' sense of isolation. There is direct academic support for most Postgraduate students in the shape of tutor-led online discussions at the programme level, which students are happy with. The LLM programme sees little academic contact with students. Undergraduate students on smaller programmes have a better chance of making contact with programme directors directly, whilst those on larger programmes tend to have a wider variety of learning resources at their disposal through developments within the VLE.

The majority of undergraduates acquire further tuition from local teaching institutions which have high satisfaction rates, but there exists some inconsistency in lecturer/tutor quality. Contrasting lecturer styles and the emphasis on outcome-based learning were also highlighted. Students were broadly content with the availability of learning resources in teaching institutions but there was an under-emphasis by local academics on usage of the VLE.

Introduction of the Portal has allowed VLE-access to all students. There currently exists a spectrum of VLE-mobilised support and interactivity across the Programmes. At the base level, all students have study materials online with student discussion forums. Such student-to-student interaction varies in usage across the Programmes, with larger Undergraduate and Postgraduate forums making more use of them, and being more satisfied. The online library was utilised in a satisfying manner by most students, but there were some problems relating to search functionality and the length of navigation time.

Students raised the inflexibility of examination periods to also be of concern. There was a strong sense of isolation from the International Programmes across the student body, particularly by those at local teaching institutions. The concerns of students with special needs were adequately met. Students raised the limitations of a singular examination window, and the lack of careers advice currently on offer to them.

3.9.1 AREAS FOR POSSIBLE EXPLORATION

- **Student Experience Strategy** - The International Academy should explore the possibility of a student experience framework, encompassing Lead College strategies for International Programmes students, and leading a cohesive approach to improving the overall student experience.
- **Sharing Best Practice**- The International Academy should facilitate more sharing of best practice across different Programmes to ensure innovation is shared and students are receiving the best possible experience possible across the full spectrum of programmes, particularly in relation to the Virtual Learning Environment.
- **Sense of Belonging** – A common theme across the learner experience is the sense of isolation students feel during their studies. The production of registration cards will help in this regard. The International Academy should continue to take a proactive approach in addressing this, including offering the students to chance to use UoL emails as forwards to their personal accounts which will significantly improve communication.
- **Local Lecturer's Resources** – The International Academy should consider the possibility of better contact with lecturers in local teaching institutions, with the view of sharing good practice. This will help ensure International Programmes students get the best learner experience possible.
- **Careers Advice** – The International Academy should consider avenues of providing International Programmes students more careers advice upon graduation that are suited to their individual needs.

4. DO STUDENTS HAVE A VOICE IN THE INSTITUTION AND IS IT LISTENED TO?

The unique make-up of the International Programmes student body has historically made it difficult to capture the student voice, traditionally being heard informally at Lead College and programme levels. Technological advances and the creation of the Institutions Policy Framework have since made access to students easier and increased the institution's ability to gauge their views. There now exists an assortment of formal and informal mechanisms collating student views, feeding them into various internal processes at both institutional and programme levels. The recent formation of the Student Voice Working Party by the Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle (QASL) Sub-Committee to address issues of improving the student voice is another institutional step in the right direction.

There is nevertheless a long way to go, with the ULU SWS Survey showing only 56.5% of respondents were satisfied to their voice being listened to. Open survey text acknowledged and highlighted the existence of feedback outlets for students, but raised the absence of 'closing such feedback loops' as a clear issue. Students simply are not aware of the changes their voice is bringing about.

"I am satisfied with the responses to personal communication but I would like to see some feedback from the annual student experience surveys."

Undergraduate Student, Business Administration

Survey results also indicated some students conflated the definition of student voice with that of student representation. Representation in the politically elected sense does not exist within the International Programmes, although an exception can be seen as the President of ULU being an ex-officio member of the International Academy Academic Committee which is discussed further below.

4.1 INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL ACTIVITY

The enhancement of the student voice has seen particular development at the institutional level resulting in a number of changes. The introduction of the student charter is one such example, which is addressed further in section 1.3.1. Another significant example is the agreement to produce registration cards for International Programmes students, to help augment their sense of belonging to the institution. With students having varying levels of contact through idiosyncratic study behaviour, survey results has shown an increased detachment to the institution by students, particularly by those acquiring further tuition at local teaching institutions. It should be noted however, student feedback had proposed photographic ID as the ideal outcome address this issue, but this was rejected by the International Academy on logistical issues pertaining to ID security.

4.1.1 STUDENT WRITTEN SUBMISSION (2011)

The value and importance placed on the student voice has become increasingly evident since the 2005 QAA External System Audit, when a sample-based survey eliciting 74 responses was conducted by the institution to gauge the views of students on audit-related themes. The evolution of such a process is encapsulated by the landmark collaboration that has seen ULU independently author this document. The appointment of the ULU International Programmes Liaison Manager has not only helped independently represent student views to the QAA, but has also promoted the value of the student voice amongst academics and administrative staff involved with the International Programmes.

4.1.2 STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEYS

Since the first census-based student experience survey was conducted for Undergraduate students in 2007, the International Academy has since established annual Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student Experience Surveys. Direct student feedback suggests this is broadly a very welcome initiative, but particular consideration should be given to the timing and frequency of such surveys. This was because some students faced 'survey fatigue' with requests spanning the International Academy, the Programme level and even local independent teaching institutions. Further details of the Student Experience Survey(s) methodology can be found in the Introduction.

The most recent (2008-09) student experience surveys saw a 24% Undergraduate response rate (of those sent the survey) and a 29% response rate from Postgraduate students. There have however been problems trying to get students from some Lead Colleges (SOAS, RVC) to participate due to programme-level surveys concurrently being conducted, a problem that has since been raised at committee level. The results of these surveys are then sent to QASL sub-committee where they are discussed with actions suggested, and these are then sent to the International Academy Academic Committee. The results are also broken down to programme level and sent to various planning and quality committees which shall be discussed further.

“Always hard to know whether any concerns are addressed, particularly if one is responding to an anonymous survey, but I am glad to have the opportunity to provide comments.”

Undergraduate Student, LLB

4.1.3 STUDENT MEMBERS

The ULU President is currently an ex-officio member of the Academic Committee, and has been since 2004. The ULU President is able to contribute to general discussions' advocating the student perspective, but their general lack of awareness regarding students' circumstances and the unique International Programmes set-up limits such participation. This is perpetuated by the cyclical nature of sabbatical officer positions, leading to an annual turnover of office holders.

Whilst a student member of the Undergraduate Laws Committee has been in place since 2004, formal student membership of International Academy Sub-Committees was introduced in the Academic Year 2009/10. Excluding the ULU President, there are currently four student members in three sub-committees, with another four student member positions currently being publicised and recruited for at the time of writing this submission. There exists a formal application process which is limited to students based in the UK, with the final decision being taken at committee level. Student members have proven to be valuable members of committees, bringing an insight much valued by their committee peers. Feedback from student members is extremely positive, but limitations of formally communicating with students-collecting and representing views-have been flagged as a concern. Discussions at the International Academy level are currently taking place to address such concerns.

4.1.4 ANNUAL PROGRAMME AND PLANNING REVIEW PROCESS (APPR)

The APPR process annually reflects and plans the business and academic aspects of programme delivery with the final report having a dedicated section to student feedback. This amalgamates various aspects of the student voice including programme-specific student experience survey results; programme-based surveys; informal feedback collected by Programme academics in regular contact with students; and queries from prospective students through feedback collated by the Information Centre.

4.1.5 PROGRAMME PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESS (PPR)

The International Academy currently has three models of Programme Periodic Review (PPR) which enable it to incorporate processes in line with Lead Colleges where necessary. College-Based Programme Reviews and College-Based Reviews generally hear the student voice with panels meeting groups of randomly selected students, with the additional use of survey results and email also common to gauge the student experience. It is hoped these models of PPR process will soon exercise their ability to include student members.

The third model of conducting the PPR process is the CPQ- Centrally Administered Review that takes place for the Laws Consortium Programmes and the EMFSS programme. Whilst similarly adopting student feedback mechanisms as above, the review panels do consist of an International Programmes student representative. This puts the student voice right at the heart of the PPR process. The student feedback from such a process was extremely positive, advocating the arrangement to be recommended for use in other PPRs.

“I was the Student Representative at the Periodic Review of the Postgraduate Laws programme (International Programmes) in December 2010.

This involved a great deal of preliminary reading, plus a very intensive day in London. I found it a thoroughly worthwhile experience, and it impressed on me the care that is taken to ensure the academic quality of ULIA programmes. I considered that my role was to speak up for the interests

of the students if they seemed in danger of being overlooked (though in the event they were not). The move to include students on review teams is a thoroughly positive step and should be welcomed.

In January, I attended a training day arranged by the QAA for student members of Periodic Review teams. This was the first-ever such event, and other training days were to be arranged in other locations. It proved to be invaluable, with a lot of practical tips that could not easily have been picked up any other way.

This is a practice that should definitely be extended to other programmes.”

*Briony Williams, Student Member
Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Committee (QASL)*

4.1.6 INSTITUTIONS PERIODIC REVIEW (IPR)

The Institutions Periodic Review process sees International Programmes panels visit local teaching institutions as part of the Institutional Quality Assurance Framework. The student voice is acknowledged through review panels meeting groups of students and gauging their learner experience. A standardised pro-forma currently exists for review panels recommending questions they could ask students; however current IPR reports demonstrate varying levels of detail from these student meetings.

The ULU President’s Report notes one Singaporean teaching institution (Singapore Institute of Management) to have its own Student Representative Council . Whilst lacking mechanisms to formally communicate with other students, the SRC is charged with enhancing the social aspect of UoL students’ experiences and is acknowledged by senior management as the student partner in education delivery.

4.1.7 SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES

A recent process (as of October 2010) adopted by the Marketing department has been to record trends observed in International Programmes fora across various social media platforms, including Facebook and LinkedIn. Recognised as ‘brand ambassadors’, the department takes the view students with the best possible experiences are most likely to make positive endorsements about the institution.

4.2 PROGRAMME LEVEL ACTIVITY

Prior to the institutional developments mentioned above, when the student voice has been recognised, it has been done so at the programme level. The degree to which the student voice is listened to depends to a large extent on the Programme Director, with some arguably more attentive to students needs than others. It also depends on the resources available at programme level, with a large Undergraduate programme like EMFSS able to hire a full-time administrator to monitor and respond to online discussion forums whilst the smaller Undergraduate English programme will see the Programme Director personally monitoring such activity. An example of change due to feedback at the programme level includes the Computer and Information Systems (CIS) programme trialing feedback on formative assignments. An area of identified good practice is the 'You said, We did' model adopted by the International Primary Health Care programme to close their feedback loop with students.

“Since the feedback they have implemented an easier search engine.”

Undergraduate Student, EMFSS

4.2.1 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student representatives currently exist at the programme level. Postgraduate programmes led by the IoE, RVC and LSHTM, alongside the Undergraduate programme led by Heythrop college, all currently include student representation with lead-college decision making processes. The ability of students to highlight student issues and channel feedback at this level of the programme-delivery is extremely useful for all parties concerned. The methods used to appoint such representatives vary across Programmes, with physical attendance at committees sometimes being substituted through use of communicative technology.

4.2.2 SURVEYS

Some programmes, particularly at the Postgraduate level, currently collect programme-specific feedback where students are invited to comment on aspects of their learner experience. This also takes place sporadically at some larger Undergraduate Programmes (e.g. LLB). The results of such surveys are utilised primarily at the programme- level and are sometimes sent through the APPR process.

4.2.3 INFORMAL ACTIVITY

The collation of informal and anecdotal evidence continues to be a useful tool of gauging the views of such a diverse student body. Acknowledging students will not always formally feedback through organised mechanisms; some academics are very proactive when interacting with students to

understand their study experience. The informal activities facilitating such contact will vary across programme provisioning, much like those mentioned in sections 2.5 and 3.4.3

4.3 SUMMARY

The presence at the institutional level of the student voice has improved significantly over the past few years. Student members now exist across various committees of the International Academy. This Student Written Submission has been authored independently for the first time by ULU. Annual student experience surveys have been established for Postgraduate and Undergraduate students, with sector-comparable response rates. These are further broken down to programme-level, suggesting student issues are proactively being considered. Student surveys suggest there is a communicative problem of not closing the feedback loop.

Students are met during the PPR and IPR processes, and asked directly about their student experience. Student views are also collated through surveys and via email. The International Academy-led PPR process currently includes a student representative on the review panel. There are currently structures of student representation at four Lead Colleges.

AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

- **Closing the Feedback Loop** - There is general student acknowledgement of the existence of current feedback outlets, but little in the way of effectively communicating resulting changes and 'closing the feedback loop'. The International Programmes should look into the possibility of investing more resources in to this important stream of work.
- **Student Involvement in Quality Enhancement** –The International Academy should continue its emphasis on the student voice in quality enhancement processes. The Academy should also encourage Lead Colleges to put the student voice at the core of equivalent processes, particularly when relating to International Programmes students. The International Programmes should also consider the use of students in its APPR Process.
- **Course Representation** - The International Academy should consider the creation of an effective online course representative system, putting the student voice at the heart of its programme delivery, and working closely with lead colleges to implement this. This will aid the closing of the feedback loop and further facilitate students' sense of belonging with the institution.
- **Empowering Student Members** – The International Academy should consider the best approaches in enabling current student members of International Academy committees to bolster their representative capacity, by allowing them to collate and represent the views of their peers.

KEY FINDINGS AND AREAS FOR POSSIBLE EXPLORATION

Students studying with the University of London International Programmes appear to be broadly satisfied with the student experience as a learner. Whilst key areas of exploration have been suggested throughout this submission, four key areas have been identified as recurrent themes continuing to impact the learner experience:

- **Expectations**
Students' expectations vary significantly across the International Programmes, causing varying levels of satisfaction and engagement. The standardisation of minimum expectations, through the initial creation of the Student Charter is hoped will address this issue.
- **Communication**
Communication with students is particularly inconsistent. With numerous stakeholders involved in the delivery of the International Programmes student experience, a sense of confusion can set in with students unsure of who to contact for what. Students are also not always communicated to about aspects of their student experience they would wish for.
- **Sense of Belonging**
Students feel a general sense of detachment with the institution, augmented by differing study behaviours and programmes.
- **Diversity**
Diversity is a prevalent theme running through the International programmes, from the student body to the range of learner resources available to students. The range of learner resources and academic contact available between programmes and study behaviour contrasts significantly and needs to be managed to ensure parity of learner opportunity for the student body.

Three key areas of exploration, amalgamated from the document, have been identified to help address the factors mentioned above that impact the student experience:

- **Course Representation** - The International Academy should consider the creation of an effective online course representative system, putting the student voice at the heart of its programme delivery, and working closely with lead colleges to implement this. This will aid the closing of the feedback loop and further facilitate students' sense of belonging with the institution.
- **Student Experience Strategy** - The International Academy should explore the possibility of a student experience framework, encompassing Lead College strategies for International Programmes students, and leading a cohesive approach to improving the overall student experience.
- **Sharing Best Practice**- The International Academy should facilitate more sharing of best practice across different Programmes to ensure innovation is shared and students are receiving the best possible experience possible across the full spectrum of programmes, particularly in relation to the Virtual Learning Environment.

For all intents and purposes, this submission finds that the student experience of the International Programmes is continually an improving experience, with the International Academy having made significant developments since the 2005 External System Audit. There are nonetheless suggested areas of exploration at the end of the four QAA-themed sections to improve this even further.

Student Profiles		
Programme	UG/PG	Respondents
Computer & Information Systems	UG	67
EMFSS	UG	303
Theology	UG	13
LLM	PG	38
Educational and Social Research (MRes)	PG	9
Veterinary Epidemiology & Public Health	PG	14
Other Programmes		76

A. Q1 |

Are you satisfied with the accuracy of the information the University of London International Programmes publishes about itself? e.g. prospectuses; study guides; programme/module descriptions and options offered; deadlines for administration/exam fees; and for dealing with complaints?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	25.8%	132
Satisfied	62.5%	320
Dissatisfied	6.4%	33
Very Dissatisfied	2.7%	14
Not Sure	2.5%	13
Any Additional Comments?		99
	<i>answered question</i>	512
	<i>skipped question</i>	8

A. Q2 |

Are you satisfied that you know what's expected of you from the University of London International Programmes in order to be successful? e.g. has the marking criteria been made clear to you in advance; do you know the standard of work needed to get a good degree classification; is feedback sufficiently clear, detailed, timely and useful where applicable?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	17.3%	87
Satisfied	57.3%	288
Dissatisfied	15.3%	77
Very Dissatisfied	4.8%	24
Not Sure	5.4%	27
Any Additional Comments?		99
	<i>answered question</i>	503
	<i>skipped question</i>	17

A. Q3 |

If you are supplementing your University of London International Programmes experience through additional tuition from a local teaching institution, are you satisfied with the teaching on your course? e.g. are staff good at explaining things and answering questions; are they easy to understand; is teaching pitched at the right level; are they interactive and engaging in their teaching methods?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	6.2%	31
Satisfied	28.9%	144
Dissatisfied	7.6%	38
Very Dissatisfied	5.4%	27
Not Sure	3.2%	16
I am not at a local teaching institution	48.7%	243
Any Additional Comments?		66
	answered question	499
	<i>skipped question</i>	21

A. Q4 |

Are you satisfied with the availability of academic staff if/when you have needed to contact them? e.g. do staff answer emails within a reasonable number of days if you have had to contact them; do they refer you on if they think you might need support from any other departments?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	18.6%	92
Satisfied	46.1%	228
Dissatisfied	13.3%	66
Very Dissatisfied	4.6%	23
Not Sure	17.4%	86
Any Additional Comments?		99
	answered question	495
	<i>skipped question</i>	25

A. Q5 |

Are you satisfied with the University of London International Programmes Staff and/or Programmes Team admin staff? e.g. are office hours clear, convenient and reliable; are staff friendly and helpful; do they respond to email enquiries promptly?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	23.4%	117
Satisfied	59.6%	298
Dissatisfied	7.4%	37
Very Dissatisfied	2.0%	10
Not Sure	7.6%	38
Any Additional Comments?		63
	answered question	500
	<i>skipped question</i>	20

A. Q6 |

Are you satisfied with the University of London International Programmes online library provision? e.g. are the books and journals you need available in the online library?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	10.3%	51
Satisfied	45.4%	224
Dissatisfied	16.0%	79
Very Dissatisfied	3.0%	15
Not Sure	25.2%	124
Any Additional Comments?		112
	answered question	493
	<i>skipped question</i>	27

A. Q7 |

Are you satisfied with the e-resources available to you? e.g. How is your usage of the portal/VLE? Are you encouraged to use the VLE in your programme?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	17.1%	84
Satisfied	54.2%	266
Dissatisfied	11.8%	58
Very Dissatisfied	2.2%	11
Not Sure	14.7%	72
Any Additional Comments?		104
	answered question	491
	<i>skipped question</i>	29

A. Q8 |

Are you satisfied that the University of London International Programmes listens to you and responds to what you say? e.g. in your feedback on modules; in student experience surveys; or if you raise a complaint?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Satisfied	13.5%	67
Satisfied	43.0%	213
Dissatisfied	8.3%	41
Very Dissatisfied	3.8%	19
Not Sure	31.3%	155
Any Additional Comments?		68
	answered question	495
	<i>skipped question</i>	25

A. Q9 |

From the list below, who would you say you feel the most sense of belonging with?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
University of London International Programmes	52.4%	259
Lead College (Birkbeck, Goldsmiths, Heythrop, IOE, LSE, LSHTM, Queen Mary, Royal Holloway, RVC, SOAS, UCL, Laws Consortium)	21.9%	108
Independent Local Teaching Institution	11.3%	56
None of the above	14.4%	71
Any Additional Comments?		47
	<i>answered question</i>	494
	<i>skipped question</i>	26

A. Q.10

This is your opportunity to make general comments, great or not so great, about your University of London International Programmes experience.	
	Response Count
	293
<i>answered question</i>	293
<i>skipped question</i>	229

