

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Academic Standards Committee - Friday 27 May 2011

Periodic Subject Review: Report of the Review of Central and East European Studies

Mrs Catherine H Omand, Clerk to the Review Panel

Review Panel

Professor Graham Caie	Clerk of Senate and Vice Principal and Professor of English Language [Convener]
Professor David Moon	External Subject specialist, Durham University
Ms Jenny Court	Students' Representative Council member
Dr Alexander Marshall	Lecturer in History, Cognate member
Professor Adrienne Scullion	Dean (Research) in the College of Arts, Senate Assessor on Court
Dr Mary McCulloch	University Teacher, Academic Development Unit, Learning and Teaching Centre
Mrs Catherine Omand	Senate Office [Clerk]

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Central and East European Studies (CEES) is a multidisciplinary subject group within the newly established School of Social and Political Sciences, College of Social Sciences.
- 1.2 From 1999-2010 it had been the Department of Central and East European Studies, founded on the basis of the former Institute of Soviet and East European Studies, in existence since 1949.
- 1.3 This was the Subject's second review: the Department of Central and East European Studies was previously reviewed in February 2005. Since that review, the Alec Nove Chair in Russian and East European Studies was filled in 2006 and the academic staff has grown from 7 to 13 in 2010. It currently consists of 5 professors, 3 senior lecturers (one 0.8 FTE) and 5 lecturers (three 0.3 FTE). Two of the lecturer posts were funded primarily by the Estonian and Hungarian governments. For Session 2010-11, there was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow funded under the EU Commission Marie Curie Outgoing Fellowship Scheme.
- 1.4 Since the last review, a single honours degree, a new International Masters double degree in Russian, Central and East European Studies have been introduced and the existing MSc and MRes degree programmes have been restructured.
- 1.5 Since 2006, CEES has been the hub of the Centre for Russian, Central and East European Studies (CRCEES), an inter-institutional Centre of Excellence, bringing together colleagues from 6 Scottish, 2 English and 5 overseas' institutions. CRCEES was created as part of the UK Government Language-based Area Studies initiative,

which identified Russia and Eastern European as a region of key strategic importance to the UK. The remit of CRCEES was to build capacity in this area through the training of a new cohort of experts with relevant language skills.

- 1.6 The Self Evaluation Report (SER) had been prepared by the Head of Subject, Professor David Smith, following consultation with 5 members of staff. It had been revised and amended following feedback from staff, undergraduate and taught postgraduate students.
- 1.7 The Review Panel met with the Dean for Learning and Teaching, Professor Tom Guthrie, the Head of School, Professor Mike French and the Head of the Subject, Professor David Smith. The Review Panel also met with 13 members of staff, 1 probationary member of staff, 3 Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), 5 postgraduate students and 18 undergraduate students, representing all levels of provision. Undergraduate students were split into two groups of similar composition and each group met with half the Review Panel. One member of the Review Panel met with the probationary member of staff whilst the remainder of the Review Panel met simultaneously with the GTAs.

1.8 Background Information

1.8.1 CEES has 18 staff, 13 of which were academic staff (8.4 FTE).

1.8.2 Student numbers for 2009-10 were as follows:

Students	Headcount	FTE
Level 1	93	31
Level 2	47	16
Level 3	16	12
Level 4	14	9
Undergraduate Total	170	68
Postgraduate Taught	15	15
Postgraduate Research*	22	

*(for information only - research is not covered by the Review)

The Review Panel considered the following range of provision offered by the Subject

- MA Single Honours in Central and East European Studies
- One-year MSc degree in Russian, Central and East European Studies
- Eighteen-month International Masters in Russian, Central and East European Studies (IMRCEES), currently in conjunction with 6 overseas partner institutions (Baku, Budapest, Krakow, Almaty, Tartu and Turku)

CEES contributes to the following *joint* degree programmes offered with other Subjects and Schools:

- Combined Honours in Central and East European Studies and another subject offered from a range of subjects within the Colleges of Social Sciences, Arts and Science and Engineering. (In the last 3 years, these have included Geography, History, Politics, Russian, Slavonic Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics and English Literature)

CEES also contributes to the following degree programmes offered by other Schools or Colleges

- Level 3 options to the non-Honours designated degree programme within the College of Social Sciences
- A range of Honours degree options available to other degree programmes across the Colleges of Social Sciences and Arts

2. Overall aims of the Subject provision and how it supports the University Strategic Plan

As stated in the SER, the Subject's overall aims were well linked to the University's Strategic Plan and Learning and Teaching Strategy, in particular, internationalisation and the multi- and interdisciplinary approach in both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

3. An Evaluation of the Student Learning Experience

3.1 Aims

The aims of the Subject's undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes were clearly laid out in programme specifications. The programme specifications mapped out clear progression from undergraduate study to a variety of taught postgraduate pathways, although there was a possible issue of progression within the undergraduate programme between Level 2 and Honours (see 3.4.4 and 3.6.1). The aims of all programmes took account of relevant QAAHE benchmarks and other external reference points, such as ESRC and AHRC.

3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

The Review Panel was pleased to note that ILOs were clearly stated at all levels and for all programmes in the course handbooks. University procedures had been followed and mechanisms were in place to ensure students studying at partner institutions attained the ILOs.

3.3 Assessment, Feedback and Achievement

3.3.1 The Review Panel **commends** the wide variety of assessment appropriate to the subject, in particular, the reflective diary. It was evident that the Subject was open to introducing new forms of assessment, but only introduced them after careful thought and consultation, including with external examiners and students, and carefully monitored the operation of new forms of assessment. These were all **examples of good practice**.

3.3.2 At the meeting with staff, it was confirmed that, although there were no plans to amend the summative assessment at Levels 1 and 2, this would be kept under review to ensure that students were prepared for the range of assessment types available at Honours level.

3.3.3 During discussion with staff, it was confirmed that the assessment criteria were given to students in advance; enabling students to know what basis they would be assessed on. This had also been acknowledged at the meeting with the students, although some

misunderstanding had been highlighted in the student feedback questionnaires. The Panel **recommends** that assessment criteria be made available directly to students periodically throughout the year.

- 3.3.4 From the SER, it was evident that the Subject had a clearly defined approach to double-marking of all Honours and postgraduate work. However, the Review Panel suggests that a judicious moderation process could be just as robust and should be considered by the Subject.
- 3.3.5 The Review Panel invited the Head of Subject to comment on how the Subject would monitor the new 3-week feedback turnaround. The Review Panel noted that initially this would be monitored informally, due to the relatively small class sizes.
- 3.3.6 At the meeting with both the UG and the PGT students, students valued the range of assessment and confirmed that they received good and constructive feedback from staff, both formally and informally. Most UG students found the use of reflective diaries useful and engaging.
- 3.3.7 The Review Panel **commends** the staged assessment at Masters' level. At the meeting with the PGT students, they acknowledged that workload was more intensive and independent as compared to UG level, but that this met their expectations and was valued.

3.4 *Curriculum Design, Development and Content*

- 3.4.1 The Review Panel **commends** the range of provision with strong linkage between research and teaching. The Review Panel also **commends** the Subject's commitment to regular review of the undergraduate curriculum, taking into account the expertise of new staff, developments in the subject, while maintaining a clear and coherent structure to ensure student progression.
- 3.4.2 The Review Panel **commends** the range of opportunities available for students to visit, take part in exchanges and engage in fieldwork in the region of study. These were **examples of good practice**.
- 3.4.3 During discussion with the Head of Subject, more information was sought on the new 20-credit format, how this would affect the undergraduate curriculum, and how it created opportunities for students. The Head of Subject confirmed the move to 20-credit courses from 30-credit enabled the Subject be in line with the rest of the School, therefore increasing accessibility and allowing for easier movement of students between Subjects. In addition, Joint Honours students had previously had to take unnecessary additional credits and that this was now resolved with the introduction of 20-credit courses. The revised course structure would also enhance the internationalisation strategy by encouraging students to study as part of ERASMUS for one semester, rather than one year, which appeared more appealing to students.
- 3.4.4 At the meeting with the UG students and with the GTAs, the student perception of overlap and repetition in Level 2 was discussed. The students clarified that Level 1 courses focused on historical content whilst Level 2 focused on the transitional post-communism identities. The students' considered Course 2B to contain overlap from Level 1 and it was perceived to be not as popular as Course 2A. The GTAs confirmed that Course 2B was more challenging to teach as students appeared less engaged with the course material which was predominantly economic transition, which was very important, but contrasted with the broader range of subjects in 2A. The GTAs also reflected that the seminars did not directly relate to the lectures. The Review Panel questioned whether this had influenced the limited progression rate between Levels 2 and Honours (see 3.6.1). The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject reviews the content of CEES Level 2 Course 2B to ensure that it appropriately enhances students' learning opportunities, while maintaining its coverage of the key issues.

- 3.4.5 During discussion with the UG students, the Review Panel was advised that students appreciated the multidisciplinary nature of the Subject. The smaller Honours classes were also popular as, although they were considered more intensive and demanding than Level 1 and 2, they were more inclusive allowing the students to identify more closely with the Subject.
- 3.4.6 The UG students considered the Subject to be highly relevant and offered students good opportunities for employment, particularly within the European Union. They also highlighted that they appreciated being taught by staff with highly relevant expertise.
- 3.4.7 The Review Panel **highly commends** the design of the postgraduate curriculum, in terms of its content, coherence, flexibility and intellectual rigour. The Review Panel **commends** the extensive range of provision of language training at postgraduate level. At the meeting with the Head of Subject, the Review Panel queried why the relevant foreign language instruction was optional and not mandatory at undergraduate level. The Head of Subject advised that, following discussion with the External Examiner, it was considered counter-productive to make the study of a language compulsory at undergraduate level, as it could adversely affect recruitment. At the meeting with the UG students, they confirmed that the language aspect complemented study but that it should remain optional.
- 3.4.8 The Review Panel met with 5 postgraduate students and was **most impressed** by their quality and enthusiasm for their chosen programmes of study. They confirmed that the international emphasis and range and depth of available languages had attracted them to study at Glasgow. All five students were international students who had chosen Glasgow for the quality of the programme.

3.5 *Student Recruitment*

- 3.5.1 The Head of Subject clarified that CEES sought to increase recruitment into all programmes by increasing the number of students entering the University directly, via conversion rates and by encouraging greater transferability of Honours options across subjects within a new integrated School context. CEES participated in Open Days, school visits and used social sites to improve recruitment onto the programme. At the meeting with the staff, there were possible opportunities to make links with Modern Studies departments in schools, which the Review Panel considered as an important initiative. It was recognised that, since CEES was not taught at school, much undergraduate recruitment occurred during Level 1 where students on other programmes within the College took it as a third option and transferred. It was therefore anticipated that recruitment onto courses would improve following the introduction of the new 20-credit format (see 3.4.3).
- 3.5.2 At the meeting with the UG students, it was evident that a large majority of students came across the subject more by accident than design, taking the course as a third option in other programmes but found it so interesting that they transferred. The students proposed that it would be beneficial to advertise the nature and diversity of the courses available within the School and College. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School appropriately advertises and promotes the Subject within the School and College.
- 3.5.3 From discussion with the UG students, it was evident that the students were extremely enthusiastic regarding their study and that they would happily promote the Subject. The Review Panel **recommends** engaging students with recruitment processes such as open days, school visits and with induction programmes.
- 3.5.4 At the meeting with the PGT students, they suggested that the language component, the opportunity to study abroad, and the possibility to apply throughout the year should be highlighted when marketing the Masters' programmes.

3.5.5 The Head of Subject drew attention to the Student Lifecycle Project (SLP) and the new Undergraduate Student Advisory System and confirmed that the Subject was anxious that this could have a detrimental effect on recruitment. CEES required to be actively promoted, since the Subject was less familiar to students as it was not taught within Schools. The Review Panel suggested that the new School structure should benefit the Subject but also **recommends** raising any concerns with SLP and the Student Advisory System regarding clarity of advice given to the students on course selection with the Chief Adviser of Studies for the College of Social Sciences, in order for these to be addressed in the training delivered to Advisers of Studies.

3.6 *Student Progression, Retention and Support*

3.6.1 The Review Panel noted the limited progression rate between Levels 2 and 3 (ie Honours). At the meeting with both the Head of Subject and staff, the rationale to change Honours entry to a 'B' pass in 40-credits at Level 1 was sought. The Head of Subject advised that this was in line with School practice and the flexible design of the curriculum enabled students to study Level 1 courses at Level 2. The amendment therefore gave students who took Level 1 courses in Second Year the opportunity to enter Honours. Due to the complexity of the Subject, the Review Panel questioned whether such students would be well enough prepared for Honours' level. However, at the meeting with staff, it was confirmed that students would not gain automatic entry to Honours and students would have to meet established criteria. The Review Panel noted that, although only a small number of students would enter Honours via this route, nonetheless it **recommends** that CEES monitors the implication of the change to Honours entry to a 'B' pass in 40-credits at Level 1 and modify Level 1 courses to accommodate students wishing to enter Honours from Level 1, if deemed necessary.

3.6.2 The limited access to statistics on progression rates was discussed at the meeting with the Head of School and Dean. Professor Guthrie confirmed that due to the design of the degree programme, it was difficult to identify progression rates between First and Second Year at Subject level.

3.6.3 At both the meeting with the staff and undergraduate students, the Review Panel was advised that the varied and multi-disciplinary background of the students was of real benefit to the teaching of the subject and enhanced student engagement; with students who approached the subject differently evidently learning from each other.

3.6.4 From analysis of the student feedback questionnaires, the amount of reading expected for each class appeared to be substantial and not entirely realistic. The Head of Subject confirmed that the reading lists were indicative and it was not expected for students to read all of the recommended reading. The Review Panel suggested that the Subject should clarify what was expected to be read (essential for the class) and what was additional reading material (supplementary for the topic).

3.6.5 At the meeting with the UG students, it was confirmed that students found staff to be approachable and often received feedback via more informal means.

3.6.6 At both the meetings with the UG and PGT students, it was confirmed that the students considered the induction sessions given by the University and Subject as satisfactory. Those PGT students undertaking the internship had felt well prepared and had received information from both the Subject and from the employer.

3.6.7 The Review Panel sought reassurance on how PGT internships with non-academic partners would be evaluated. The Head of Subject advised the Review Panel that the 6 proposed projects had been thoroughly developed under the supervision of Professor Kay, who had closely collaborated with partner institutions on the role of the student and student/employer expectations. A programme of training events had been developed to brief partners on the aims and objectives of project work and benchmarks

had been developed in partnership. The Review Panel was advised that once the dissertation had been written, the student would work on an agreed 1-month project which had mutual benefit to both employer and student, since the student gained valuable employability skills. At the meeting with staff, Professor Kay confirmed that rigorous risk assessment had been undertaken, although advised that it was a pilot scheme and therefore processes were still developing in collaboration with partnerships. Students had access to a named contact within each organisation and contact with the dissertation supervisor continued throughout the placement. It was noted that Careers Service had also had some input with regard to the one-month work experience.

- 3.6.8 During discussion with the UG students and with staff, the importance of the role of Subject Administrator in enhancing the student experience was highlighted. The Review Panel was informed that the current post holder was considered pivotal to the infrastructure of the Subject due to her accessibility to both staff and students. Students considered the consultation process on restructuring to have been limited as they were not fully aware of the impact on individual Subjects. The Review Panel reminded the students of the role of the Student Representative Council (SRC) and that there was opportunity to provide direct feedback via it. The Review Panel advised the Head of School of the strong sentiment expressed by both staff and students regarding retaining the Subject administrator. Professor French highlighted that, under restructuring, support staff across Schools had been centralised to improve efficiency but acknowledged that Subjects were concerned regarding this aspect. He agreed to discuss the possibility of satellite support provision, especially since the location of the School central support base was not conveniently located for CEES.
- 3.6.9 From the feedback forms and from staff-student committee minutes, concern had been raised regarding the clarity and amount of information given on plagiarism. However, at the meeting with the UG students, no issues were raised. The students acknowledged that they were aware of the introduction of Turnitin software in Session 2011-12.
- 3.6.10 It was noted in the SER that a dedicated induction meeting for PGT students was given, in addition to the School induction. From feedback received in the first semester of 2010-11, the international PGT students had requested more information on how universities in Scotland and the UK operated and CEES would include this in the 2011-12 induction process. The Review Panel supported this proposal but suggested that this should be addressed at University level. Consequently, the Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject discusses information made available for international students with the International Student Support section of RIO.
- 3.6.11 The PGT students who undertook study abroad confirmed that assessment and feedback was not as good as that at the University of Glasgow but mechanisms were in place for students to report back to the University. However, studying abroad was considered valuable as it significantly enhanced students' language skills.
- 3.6.12 At the meeting with the GTAs, it was apparent that they were well supported by the Subject and welcomed the teaching experience. New GTAs were given the opportunity to shadow those with more experience and training was provided on essay marking. The Subject also provided an in-house training course for GTAs; an opportunity to comment on the courses, reflect on teaching practice and provide an opportunity to raise concerns and share ideas. The Review Panel **commends** the GTA in-house training and was **an example of good practice**.
- 3.6.13 The Review Panel noted that there was no disability access to the accommodation within 8-9 Lilybank Gardens. The Head of Subject confirmed that, due to the age of the building, possible modification was limited. However, where a registered student had mobility issues, classes were always scheduled to take place in a building with disabled access.

3.7 The Quality of Learning Opportunities

- 3.7.1 The Review Panel **commends** the Subject on the linkage between teaching and research interests which appeared to be reviewed continuously in order to reflect ongoing processes of change within the area of study.
- 3.7.2 The opportunities to visit and take part in exchanges, engaging in fieldwork in the region of study.
- 3.7.3 The Review Panel **commends** the development of postgraduate internships with institutional partners; emphasising internationalisation and employability (see 3.6.6).
- 3.7.4 The expansion and range of language provision currently available which was unique within the UK.
- 3.7.5 The interdisciplinary nature of both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes which appeared to enhance the student experience.

3.8 Resources for Learning and Teaching (Staffing)

- 3.8.1 The Review Panel noted that the Subject employed 13 highly qualified academic staff with an impressive range of specialism, the majority of who were research active. The staff team had grown significantly since the previous DPTLA, including as the result of 2 (1.3 FTE) colleagues supported by external funding. An issue for the Subject was whether any or all of this external funding would continue. Looking forward, the SER drew attention to CEES anticipating a more 'Eurasian' focus, with a bid for a post in Caucasian/Caspian energy security made. The Review Panel questioned the Head of Subject whether CEES wished to retain its current mixture of specialism and if it had planned a future marketing strategy for itself. The Head of Subject advised that it was difficult to predict, especially as the University was considering which languages would remain in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures which could possibly have a major impact on provision. The Review Panel noted that the range of language provision currently available was unique within the UK. The Head of Subject confirmed that additional funding for CRCEES during 2011-16 would not include support for language teaching posts.
- 3.8.2 One member of the Review Panel met with the current Probationary Lecturer to discuss their experiences of the Subject and of the University. The post holder advised that they had a total of 6 to 7 years teaching experience and undertook a full teaching load. Since the post holder had significant teaching experience, the New Lectureship Programme had less significance, although it was considered satisfactory. Mentors had been helpful and the post holder felt well supported by CEES. The Review Panel noted that the post holder's PhD was still to be submitted and as a consequence, the period of probation had been extended. The Review Panel **recommends** that mentors assist the Probationary Lecturer set achievable targets for PhD submission.

3.9 Resources for Learning and Teaching (Other)

- 3.9.1 The Subject was satisfied with its teaching accommodation at 8 Lilybank Gardens for smaller classes. (Please see 3.6.10 regarding disabled access) Larger classes were held in nearby University buildings such as Adam Smith or Boyd Orr, all of which were appropriately equipped.
- 3.9.2 The Review Panel noted, from the SER, that a bid to Faculty (as was) to install a dedicated video conferencing facility at a cost of £10-20K had not been approved.
- 3.9.3 The Subject has an excellent library facility, considered one of the best in the UK and internationally, although funding had been cut in 2010-11. At the meetings with the UG and PGT students, they confirmed that these resources were excellent with most relevant periodicals in a variety of languages of the region being available. Students

also had access to on-line resources such as e-journals. However, the Review Panel noted that the Subject Librarian retired in November 2010 and had not been replaced therefore there was no dedicated member of staff to assist students.

- 3.9.4 The Review Panel acknowledged that the CRCEES based within the Subject was a **great asset** that reflected the UK-wide recognition of the quality of postgraduate teaching and research undertaken within the Subject. In addition, it was good publicity for attracting PGT and PGR students and provided good links with UK and world-wide colleagues. However the commitment to funding was only guaranteed for a limited period of time and the Review Panel suggested to the Dean (Learning and Teaching) that future funding of this exceptional resource be considered by the College business plan for support for new and existing initiatives.
- 3.9.5 The Review Panel strongly endorsed the revised bid for the ERASMUS MUNDUS scheme and the bid for a new appointment in the field of Caucasian/Caspian Energy Security. This would create potential for the Subject to move into new and relevant research areas and increase recruitment potential.
- 3.9.6 At the staff meeting, it was confirmed that the Subjects anticipated that, following discussion with the College, it would be able to continue to provide the current external opportunities for students, such as fieldtrips and in-house training, despite the drastic cut in the non-pay budget. The Review Panel endorsed the decision of the College to support such initiatives, especially since such opportunities reflected the University's strategic aim of internationalisation.
- 3.9.7 The Subject made very effective use of the Moodle online environment and the Review Panel was impressed by both the materials available and the way they were presented. The Review Panel suggested that the Subject continues to find ways to use Moodle further to enhance the student learning experience.
- 3.9.8 From the student feedback questionnaires, the Mahara software had been questioned regarding how effectively it had been utilised in providing feedback. However, at the meeting with the staff, it was confirmed that students received detailed feedback via the reflective diaries.

4. Maintaining the Standards of Awards

- 4.1 It was evident from the SER that the Subject was working hard to ensure standards of awards were maintained at an appropriate level.
- 4.2 At the meeting with staff, the Review Panel were advised that scrutiny and approval of the joint double Masters provision was undertaken by the Joint Collaborative Group that ensured all quality assurance procedures were adhered to and that partnerships were appropriate. It was noted that the partners had very good reputations having previously been involved in international collaboration, and therefore Glasgow would benefit from their breadth of experience. At the end of the programme, a joint meeting would be arranged to review the programme. The Review Panel was confident that appropriate safeguards were in place.
- 4.3 The SER detailed the role of the External Examiners in monitoring the standards of programmes and provided a clear description of the processes in place for internal examination meetings and for Examination Board meetings.
- 4.4 The Review Panel noted that External Examiner reports did not identify any significant problems with the academic standards and indicated that the degree standards match those of comparable institutions.

- 4.5 From the SER, the Panel noted the improved performance rates and the suggestion that the results reflected the changes to the course structure, learning support and assessment practices introduced.

5. Assuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Students' Learning Experience

- 5.1 It was apparent to the Review Panel that the Subject regularly reviewed its programmes and courses in light of developing knowledge within the discipline, adopting appropriate practices to ensure enhancement. Programmes were validated via relevant committees and in consultation with overseas partner institutions, the International Office and Senate Office.
- 5.2 The wide variety of both formative and summative assessment and responsiveness to introducing new forms after careful consideration assured that the student learning experience was enhanced.
- 5.3 The UG students appreciated the CEES Student Society and recognised this as an effective method to enhance the feeling of community and student engagement with the subject.
- 5.4 From the SER, the wide variety of both formal and informal mechanisms in place to assure and enhance the quality of the students learning experience including: annual monitoring; student evaluation and feedback questionnaires; staff-student liaison committee; dedicated staff feedback and discussions sessions during regular staff/subject meetings; regular group and one-to-one discussions with students; Moodle discussion forums; consultation with External Examiners; and regular informal contact with students at seminars, film evenings and other cultural events organised by the Subject.

6. Summary of Perceived Strengths and Areas for Improvement in Learning and Teaching

The following key strengths were noted:

- Reflective SER and strong leadership. The Review Panel was very impressed with the considered detail of the SER and the leadership provided by Professor David Smith. The staff expressed thanks to Professor Smith, for his considerable work in preparing the self assessment and for his consultation with colleagues during the process. His leadership during the review was greatly appreciated
- The range of provision with research-led and enquiry-based teaching and learning (*Paragraphs 3.4.1 and 3.7.1*)
- The exemplary design of the postgraduate curriculum, in terms of its content, coherence, flexibility, intellectual rigour and international appeal, as well as extensive range and depth of provision of language training (*Paragraph 3.4.7*)
- The Review Panel was particularly impressed with the external partners and international network, linking teaching and learning with wider notions of PDP and employability (*Paragraph 3.7.3*)
- PGT Training – Centre for Excellence and subsequent achievements of CRCEES (*Paragraph 3.9.4*)
- The excellent in-house GTA training (*Paragraph 3.6.12*)

- The quality and enthusiasm of the students (*Paragraphs 3.4.8 & 3.5.3*)
- The wide and innovative variety of assessment (*Paragraph 3.3.1*)
- The opportunities available for students to visit, take part in exchanges and engage in fieldwork in the region of study (*Paragraph 3.4.2*)
- The Subject's commitment to regular review of the undergraduate curriculum to reflect changes within the Subject area (*Paragraph 3.4.1*)

Areas for improvement

- Recruitment – student numbers at both UG and PGT level remain small and the Subject should attempt to address this
- Reliance on short-term external funding and risk of losing key aspects of language provision which could be highly detrimental to the Masters Programmes and international profile

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion

The Review Panel was most impressed by the quality of both staff and students which reflected the high quality of its provision. The group of staff appeared to be a very dedicated, collegiate group, which has maintained a strong identity even with a substantial growth of staff numbers. Central and East European Studies had adopted an exemplary approach to internal review, which provided a platform for reflection and discussion between staff, students, external examiners and partner institutions. The Review Panel commended the Subject for the excellent research-led and enquiry-based teaching and learning, its pro-active development of external linkage with partner institutions and variety of innovative assessment.

The Subject should focus on actively seeking improvements to recruitment, taking full advantage of the new School structure as well as their own enthusiastic and highly motivated students. The Review Panel was very much aware of the significant relationship the Subject had with the School of Modern Languages and Cultures and the detrimental effect closure of this unit would have on their programmes, particularly the postgraduate programmes. In addition, the Review Panel was aware of the uncertainty created by short-term externally funded posts and therefore the Review Panel would encourage the School of Social and Political Sciences to support the Subject, especially taking into consideration, its interdisciplinary and international approach and reputation.

Recommendations

The minor recommendations interspersed in the preceding report are summarised below. The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer.

Recommendation 1

The Review Panel recommends that the Subject reviews the content of CEES Level 2 Course 2B to ensure that it appropriately enhances students' learning opportunities, while maintaining its coverage of the key issues. *(Paragraph 3.4.4)*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

Recommendation 2

The Review Panel recommends that CEES monitors the implication of the change to Honours entry to a 'B' pass in 40-credits at Level 1 and modify Level 1 courses to accommodate students wishing to enter Honours from Level 1, if deemed necessary. *(Paragraph 3.6.1)*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

Recommendation 3

The Review Panel recommends that the School appropriately advertises and promotes the Subject within the School and College. *(Paragraph 3.5.2)*

For the attention of: **Head of School**

Recommendation 4

The Review Panel recommends engaging students with recruitment processes such as open days, school visits and with induction programmes. *(Paragraph 3.5.3)*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

Recommendation 5

The Review Panel recommends raising any concerns with the Student Lifecycle Project and Student Advisory System regarding clarity of advice given to the students on course selection with the Chief Adviser of Studies for the College of Social Sciences, in order for these to be addressed in the training delivered to Advisers of Studies. *(Paragraph 3.5.5)*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject and Chief Adviser of Studies for the College of Social Sciences**

Recommendation 6

The Review Panel recommends that the Subject discusses information made available for international students with the International Student Support section of RIO. *(Paragraph 3.6.9)*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

Recommendation 7

The Review Panel recommends distributing the assessment criteria directly to students periodically throughout the year and not just at the beginning of the year *(Paragraph 3.3.3)*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

Recommendation 8

The Review Panel recommends that the mentors of the member of Probationary staff assist in setting achievable targets for PhD submission. *(Paragraph 3.8.2)*

For the attention of: **Head of Subject**

