

Department Development Planning (DDP) Policy and Procedure

Background

The Departmental Development Plan process was first introduced in 2019-20 as a replacement for the previous Annual Planning Review process. DDP is intended to complement other internal quality assurance processes and mechanisms as a vehicle for identifying actions at departmental level against College-wide challenges or systemic issues.

During the implementation year of the DDP process in 2019-20, industrial action and Covid-19 caused significant disruption across the College. Whilst not all departments completed their DDP, those which were received provided an incredibly positive start to the new DDP process. It was encouraging to see the amount of positive activity and innovative developments that were taking place in departments across the College to enhance the student experience.

Given the disruption to the process, Academic Board approved that the DDP process should run in 2020-21 along the same parameters as 2019-20 rather than to make substantive changes to it. In the light of this, the focus of the DDPs will continue to be on undergraduate provision only, with the full scope of DDP (to incorporate PGT provision) operating from 2021-22 onwards. It continues to be the case that some actions included in DDPs in 2020-21 will positively impact all students within the department, not just undergraduates.

The focus of DDPs in 2020-21 will continue to be on:

- Retention
- Degree attainment, specifically the BAME attainment gap
- Graduate outcomes
- Student satisfaction (as articulated in the NSS¹)

Student Access, Participation and Outcomes Sub-Committee (SAPOSC) is now operational so will receive all plans to recommend them to Learning, Teaching and Student Experience

¹ In 2020-21 alongside consideration of NSS data and actions within DDPs, the College is taking forward an NSS Improvement Strategy. This will see activity focussed on a period of reflection and discussion (in Autumn Term 2020) on key themes arising from the NSS 2020 followed by a period of informed action planning (contained within the DDP process in Spring Term 2020).

Committee (LTSEC) accordingly. SAPOSC will also oversee progress against DDPs and report on it to LTSEC.

LTSEC continues to be the body who will formally approve plans and confirm sufficient progress against them.

Further to departmental feedback on the process, this year's DDP will commence with a round of supported discussions with departments prior to the development and submission of plans. This will allow the opportunity for departments to reflect further on their data, to raise questions about further data/information it has identified it would need to develop its plans and to receive information about actions/initiatives that have had impact elsewhere (both at Goldsmiths and elsewhere).

Department Development Planning Process

In order to achieve Goldsmiths' institutional level key indicators for improved performance, the setting of departmental priorities and targets in a range of measures during the Annual Planning round takes place. The setting of sensible ambitions for individual departments in the areas and measures where they can have impact is key.

The Annual Planning round has several components: the agreement of student numbers; finance and recovery; resource requests; and discussing performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Access and Participation Plan (APP) targets.

DDP takes place following the Annual Planning process by taking forward specific agreed priorities relating to KPI and APP targets, and supporting departments in translating them into specific, focussed, measurable and impactful action. DDP provides support to academic departments in the revision and development of action plans to achieve their agreed priorities. This includes support for further discussion of departmental data and identification of actions, designing plans, based on a range of evidence and knowledge of what has worked elsewhere (both at Goldsmiths and externally), and putting in place the means to evaluate impact throughout a plan. Actions might relate to a specific programme or programmes, or might relate to a department as a whole as required in each instance.

In 2020-21, the Planning Round and DDP will continue to be complementary activities. The DDP process will begin with a workshop of key staff from the academic department, professional service departments and the Head of School. The dedicated workshop for each department would focus on the College's four key priorities areas: student retention; student attainment; NSS dissatisfaction; and graduate outcomes.

Aims

The primary aims of the Department Development Planning process are to:

- Support academic departments in developing and revising action plans to achieve agreed priorities as they relate to key areas in the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. These will be specific to each department and based on what is identified through the Annual Planning process.
- Ensure academic departments are best supported to understand the key areas for improvement at department level (including specific programme level action as appropriate) and are equipped to focus effort on activities which will have the greatest impact to bring about those changes.
- Ensure that any concerns or areas for improvement arising for each academic department and/or particular programme(s) are identified and supported by actions that will bring about change in a systematic way.
- Build a repository of action taken and methods adopted in order to understand specific activity which had the greatest impact on outcomes, and to share this across the College.

Scope

Department Development Planning applies to all academic departments or centres with taught undergraduate and/or postgraduate programmes. Departments which are not 'home' to any taught programme are not currently required to complete this process. Each department has a single DDP, which maps out department level priorities and planned action. Where appropriate, action will be broken down to programme level, to aid understanding and focus efforts. The Head of Department is responsible for maintaining oversight of the DDP for their department.

Procedure

Whilst the DDP process will begin with a workshop, it is recommended that departments continue to review and analyse data available to them in advance of the workshop, to develop a better understanding of contributing factors to the challenges experienced within their department. This should include a student forum to better understand the range of factors that might be contributing to the issues identified in the data and to avoid assumptions being made as to what 'solutions' might be needed to address the problem identified. The DDP workshop can then utilise this understanding and develop SMART

actions. The Planning team will also be available during the Autumn term to assist with understanding and utilising the data provided, which will be common to DDP and the Planning Round.

DDP workshops will normally be scheduled per department for 90 minutes and include the following:

- Department Management Team (including DLTC Chair and TEF Coordinator)
- Head of School
- Director of Student Experience and Academic Registrar
- Dean of Students
- Head of Quality
- Head of Management Information and Analysis
- School Administrator
- A member of the Quality Office
- A member of Strategic Planning and Projects

Following the DDP Workshop, the Quality Office will continue to provide support to academic departments in the development and revision of their DDP. Support provided will include pointing academic departments to other areas of the College for support as appropriate.

Departments prepare their DDP and are responsible for monitoring progress against agreed action throughout the year. DDPs should be considered and monitored by Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees (DLTC) each term. The Student Access, Participation and Outcomes Sub-Committee (SAPOSC), a new sub-committee of LTSEC introduced in 2019-20, will have an active role in maintaining regular monitoring of progress against action taken and its impact, using the latest metrics and indicators available in-year. Centrally, the College's Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (LTSEC) is responsible for approving plans and monitoring progress against them.

DDPs should not be static documents but seen as 'live' plans which support an iterative process of planned improvement. DDPs therefore feed into the next year's Planning Round and DDP process, and should continue being revised and developed following completion of that cycle.

Whilst the Head of Department manages the DDP for the department, each department has a TEF Coordinator and/or Chair of the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee (DLTC). It is suggested that this person is responsible for maintaining oversight of the process. Wider departmental staff should also be engaged in shaping and progressing Plans and School Administrators play a critical role in the ongoing conversations and exploring opportunities for cross-department plans. Greater engagement with all student voice mechanisms is also critical and to ensure deeper student involvement with the DDP process itself.

Timeline

November

DDP workshops held to discuss and agree revisions to departmental priorities and targets – this can build on DDPs submitted in 2019/20 (where submitted and where Annual Planning targets remain largely the same).

November/December

Academic departments draft and update Department Development Plan in line with revised priorities and targets, liaising with the Quality Office as required.

15 January 2020

DDP submission deadline

February

2 February 2020 – SAPOSC considers draft DDPs and formally reports to LTSEC with recommendations included.

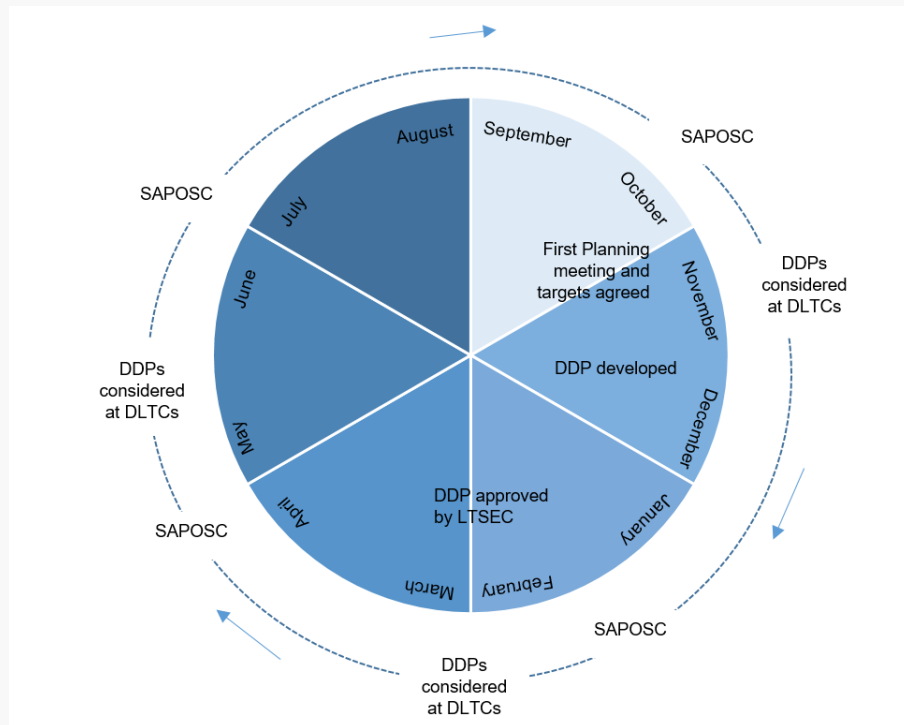
24 February 2020 – LTSEC receive, consider and approve DDPs and report on to Academic Board as required.

Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees – Autumn/Spring/Summer

Current DDPs and updates on progress considered at DLTCs each term.

Student Access, Participation and Outcomes Sub-Committee

Current DDPs and updates on progress monitored by SAPOSC regularly throughout the year, reporting to LTSEC as required.



Review

The Department Development Planning process will be reviewed towards the end of the 2020-21 academic year, to ensure the effective delivery of the process going forward. This will include seeking feedback from departments who have participated in the process.