

July 2023 Education Bulletin for Faculty of Science PGT Programme Leaders

Ongoing activities for 2022/23

1. **Faculty of Science Teaching Awards (FoSTAs) 2023:** The award ceremony for our SMT-endorsed winners took place on 1/3/23 and Sarah Latham, JMSU's Head of Student Engagement, provided closing remarks. The total number of winners per School over the last two years shows is comparable:

	2022	2023	Total
BES	4	9	13
PBS	5	9	14
SPS	11	3	14
SCS	20	21	41

2. **LJMU Teaching Excellence Awards:** Our nomination procedure was tweaked this year to reflect new University Guidance. In summary, recipients of Faculty of Science Teaching Awards (FoSTAs) were invited to an in-person meeting to discuss a potential LJMU Award application and I met with twelve staff covering all schools.

Ten colleagues submitted condensed nominations prior to shortlisting, the Faculty Education and Student Experience Committee (FESEC) then selecting one nomination in each category. There is now only one award per category, being around a third of the total available in previous years. In another change, candidates now prepare their own nomination given that winners may apply for ring-fenced funding to undertake a teaching-related project.

Our 2023 nominees were successful in Category 1 (Rising Star) and Category 3 (Excellence in Digital Education). Our nominee for Category 4 (Academic Leadership) was commended. Results will be published in due course.

3. **JMSU Student Experience Awards:** We were successful in two categories ring-fenced to the Faculty of Science: Outstanding Teacher was won by Laura Buck (BES) and Outstanding Student Rep was won by Taiga McFarlane (BES). Results have been [published](#).
4. **Walkabout Week:** This took place in Semester 1 Week 8 this year. Thanks to the following tutors for offering sessions for casual observation by colleagues:
 - a. Jonathan Davies in 6000IMPHAR for a hospital simulation event using ALEX manikins (twice).
 - b. Fatima Perez de Heredia in 4202NATSCI for a Communicating Science workshop.

As usual, feedback was positive, "I now have a better understanding on how some of the sessions work which our students often ask me about. I now finally feel I can answer some of their questions."

5. **SATH Conference registration social and staff development event:** Twenty one staff attended this session on 11/5/23 and presentations were given by Sarah Dalrymple, BES; James Downing, PBS; Emma Ball, SPS; and Lindsay Butterworth, McGraw-Hill. Discussions before and over lunch focussed on themes around sustainability, peer mentoring and online learning resources. An opportunity was provided for staff to sign up for the Students at the Heart Conference and registration by Science was at a healthy level (22% of registered staff).
6. **Access and Participation Plan:** Our degree-awarding gap is now lower, at around 20%, and arises from two phenomena: average module marks are around 60% and there is a module-mark-awarding gap of around 4%. Acknowledging the importance of role models, [EDipedia](#) was developed.
7. **LTA website:** Includes bimonthly online newsletter (Abstract). 2023/24 [Faculty protocols](#) submitted to Faculty Education and Student Experience Committee (FESEC) 14/6/23.
8. **Faculty Software:** Licences for our three Faculty-supported programs have been renewed for 2022/23.

- a. **LearnSci** The most recent usage data for Semester 1 2022/23 shows that there were 4350 unique interactions with these laboratory simulations, video and guides. I have advised June Open Day presenters about their potential use in outreach work. A hybrid development event on 3/3/23 was attended by over 20 colleagues in person and online.
- b. **Labster** We exceeded our 400 seat licence by 12 student but this was within the permitted tolerance. 95% of over 1700 quick-survey responses found 95% of users agreed that they had gained relevant knowledge during the simulation."
- c. **BioRender** FMT agreed an increase in our licence from 20 to 25 seats and we currently have one vacancy but one expression of interest from a new staff member. Licence holders were invited to BioRender Webinars on 8/11/22 and 23/5/23.

I have explored alternative funding for our student-facing programs and am hopeful that licences for LearnSci and Labster will be subsidised by Libraries from 2024/25 onward.

9. **PowerPoint controllers and USB microphones:** I continue to provide these devices on request, microphones been used as back-up devices for Panopto recording. I contact new starters to advise them of this service, our Faculty software, and that ITS can provide PC peripherals via [helpdesk](#).
10. **Science Teaching Interest Group (STIG):** Founded in 2021, colleagues gather to discuss matters of contemporary interest relating to teaching, learning and assessment. This group sits outside deliberative structures and, although there are no terms of reference, outcomes feed into decision-making by FESEC and FMT. There is no quorum requirement or expectation of attendance. The group is purposefully large to ensure opportunities for meaningful discussions even if % attendance is low. The group will bring together colleagues with an established interest in teaching and membership is initially drawn from:
 - PGCert/CAP Observers
 - Academic LJMU Teaching Award Winners
 - NSS Champions
 - National Teaching Fellows
 - School LTA Coordinators

Any member of SCS staff can join the group through contacting SCSADE@ljmu.ac.uk.

STIG met for the third time on 6/3/23 to discuss the Education and Student Experience Plan 2023-2030.

11. **Talking about Teaching:** This scheme fulfils our LJMU Peer Review obligations and recorded its highest participation in 2023/24.

School	No of staff	Participated	%
BES	70	62	89
PBS	81	56	69
SPS	84	62	74
SCS	235	180	77

This scheme is focussed on development, sharing practice and informing Faculty priorities. The parallel LJMU Teaching Observation Scheme, focussed on teaching performance, is overseen by the teaching and Learning Academy and is currently in hibernation.

12. **PTES Prize draw:** As in the previous years, we offered six £50 Amazon vouchers through a GDPR-compliant prize draw, in association with the Teaching and Learning Academy. Our PTES 2022 response rate (38%), was the highest at LJMU and 11% above the LJMU mean. With one month 'til survey closure, our interim PTES 2023 response rate was 28%, 14% above the LJMU mean.

New Activities for 2022/23

13. **Policy and practice relating to personal circumstances:** This event took place on 10/11/23 and we thank Liz Whitfield and Drew Li (Assistant Academic Registrars) for clarifying our current practices with Academic Staff. Thirty four staff attended the event and a copy of the recording of the session was included in Abstract.
14. **Meeting between Programme Leaders and JMSU Student Representation Team:** This event took place 7/9/22 and was an opportunity for a face-to-face discussion around JMSU refreshing their approach to Course Rep training. JMSU also wanted to explore ways to improve the engagement of Reps with their role throughout the institution.
15. **Need-a-room-now tool:** I am meeting with the Timetabling Manager to explore the possibility of an app that can offer instant and contemporary room availability information and booking. It would be used by staff, e.g. hard drive failure in a classroom, or by students, e.g. need for a quiet space.
16. **3i's practical training:** The LJMU 3i's programme is for PGRs with a small teaching portfolio. I am developing resources for a laboratory teaching session, including an observation of practical work.
17. **Attendance project:** In cooperation with Jim Turner, we are proposing to analyse our historic attendance data to identify programmes that have maintained good on-site participation.
18. **Photos in Outlook:** This was proposed at Learning Environment Panel (for student photos only) and was introduced in September 2023 (for student and staff photos).
19. **AI and the student experience event:** An informal discussion took place between the Teaching and Learning academy and Science student course reps on 29/3/23.
20. **Student Minds Charter:** The university is applying for this accreditation and it aligns with our focus on curriculum for wellbeing. We will most likely make our main contribution within the 'learn' domain <https://universitymentalhealthcharter.org.uk/theme/learning-teaching-and-assessment/>
21. **Name coach:** A reminder that this allows students and staff to audio record the pronunciation of their name. It is recommended that students are alerted to this feature during induction and invited to use it.

Phil Denton, Associate Dean (Education and Student Experience) 11/7/23