

University of Warwick
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
Discipline Audit Trail: Self-Evaluation Document
QAA Institutional Audit (March 2004)

1. Background to the Department of Sociology

Sociology at Warwick provides a dynamic and progressive learning, teaching and research environment for its students and staff. The strength of Sociology at Warwick has been confirmed by a series of external and internal reviews, including: the 1996 TQA, in which we were awarded a maximum 24; the 2001 RAE, in which we were awarded a 5 rating; and by an internal university Periodic Review in 2000-2001, which both commended the Department for *'meeting its academic aims and objectives'* and praised it for being a *'successful and forward-looking department, the work of which was underpinned by a research-led curriculum'*. Successive external examiners' reports and positive results and feedback on the part of students have confirmed these evaluations.

Since the last Periodic Review the Department has expanded via the incorporation of nine members of academic staff from Social Policy, the Centre for the Study of Women and Gender and Continuing Education. We now have 28 permanent and 5 fixed-term academic staff, 6 researchers, 6 administrative/support staff, 5 Warwick Postgraduate Research Fellows and a substantial number of Sessional Teachers drawn from our doctoral student body. There are strong thematic strands within our teaching and research (notably in the areas of social theory, gender, social policy, health, ethnicity and labour), in addition to which we accommodate a wide range of sociological sub-fields and styles reflecting the research expertise of our academic staff. Much of the Department's research and teaching is also interdisciplinary in character. Our postgraduate provision has expanded considerably since the last Review and now constitutes a major part of our department's teaching. We pride

ourselves on combining teaching and research of the highest quality, our care ethic in relation to all our students, the diversity of research interests we bring to our teaching, and the administrative efficiency with which we organise our academic practices.

We offer three undergraduate degrees of our own, collaborate with other departments in Arts and Social Studies in offering five joint degrees, and make a major contribution to teaching within the Part-Time and 2+2 programmes (Appendix A). Our taught postgraduate provision centres on an MA in Social Research with a variety of sub-disciplinary Specialisms, and a number of other freestanding MAs, including MA Sociology and MA Social and Political Thought. We contribute substantially to MAs hosted by English, Philosophy and the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations. The Department has a substantial number of doctoral students, currently numbering about 80, many of whom are drawn from our own MA programmes.

2. Educational aims of the provision

Undergraduate aims

As can be seen from the accompanying Course Specifications, the broad aims of our undergraduate curricula are to enable students to theorise and research in substantive areas of sociological interest; understand major axes in the structuring of social relations, especially those of gender, class, nation and ethnicity; develop historical, comparative and international perspectives; and develop social awareness, intellectual independence and writing and communication skills. We offer our students research-based learning environment that provides a strong and effective grounding for further study and subsequent careers.

Postgraduate aims

Sociology is a key research-training provider within the University. Due to a steady increase in postgraduate recruitment and to changes in ESRC funding and recognition arrangements, we have developed our research-training programme over the last three years. Its core modules are now taken by most of our MA students, many of our doctoral students, and students from a range of other departments within the Faculty

of Social Studies. All our research training provision has ESRC recognition, as do a range of our specialist MA courses. Recognition is presently pending on four additional courses. New courses and modules have been approved at University level in line with the University's quality procedures and the QAA Code of Practice (Precept 6 of Section 7). Our Masters programmes provide an excellent learning environment in which students can develop knowledge, understanding, skills and ethical awareness in social research in line with ESRC and British Sociological Association guidelines and protocols, acquire a broad range of other transferable skills in the context of team-working environments and through independent study, and advance their scholarship through a range of sociological sub-fields and inter-disciplinary connections.

3. Learning outcomes

Our educational aims have recently been formalised with reference to course-level learning outcomes (see the attached course specifications, recently made available to students). It is Department policy for module-level learning outcomes to be specified in the module outlines provided to students. These learning outcomes cover the range of skills and abilities specified by the descriptors for qualifications at the H and M levels as documented in the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), and take account of the Sociology Subject Benchmark. The course-level learning outcomes require students to develop a reflective approach to studying society and to understand its diversity, divisions and inequalities. They highlight the expectation that students learn to generate and collate evidence effectively, use such evidence to ground reasoned arguments, and deliver their arguments in a professional and persuasive way.

4. Curricula and assessment

Undergraduate

The curriculum of each degree programme supports the achievement of learning outcomes and is consistent with the Sociology Subject Benchmark. It is designed to provide a strong foundation on which students can build their sociological knowledge, and to allow students considerable optionality in finding their own paths through their particular degrees. Our emphasis on independent learning and the high level of optionality we permit are consistent with the recent published report of the University's Undergraduate Curriculum Review Group. The incorporation of new staff has further enhanced module choice. The curriculum and Benchmark have been reviewed in Department meetings and Teaching Forums and the curriculum is now under review by our Undergraduate Studies Committee as part of an ongoing process within the department to maintain the integrity of our degree programmes. Given the recent enlargement of the Department, this review is also a chance to reconsider the total array of our modules and provide staff and students with a renewed sense of ownership of the curriculum.

The first year module *Sociological Imagination and Investigation* incorporates a *Professional Skills Programme* to help students develop a range of skills and capabilities in studying, research, writing, oral presentation and discussion. In their second year students have to take at least one of three modules relating to sociological theory, quantitative methods and qualitative methods (the last two of which are in part project-based). A key feature of the final year is the 10,000-word dissertation, which is compulsory for single honours students and an option for other students. The dissertation encourages and supports the students' own independent learning and research abilities. Some modules are run in the evening for the benefit of part-time students.

The Department's teaching and learning methods include lectures, seminars, computing sessions, research-based project work, library-based work, group discussions and independent study, the value of which is highlighted by the Benchmark. Departmental Teaching Forums have been held on issues such as student

evaluation and methods of assessment as well as curriculum review. They draw where appropriate on input from beyond the Department, especially the Centre for Academic Practice.

Summative assessment takes the form of unseen examinations, assessed essays, research projects and a dissertation. We believe this range provides a well-balanced approach. In terms of formative assessment, each student is required to produce a variety of class work for their modules, for which they receive quantitative and qualitative feedback through a standardised assessment mark sheet designed to cover the range of skills and abilities outlined in the Benchmark, as well as covering non-subject specific transferable skills.

All assessed essay and unseen examination questions are reviewed by the Department prior to further review by external examiners. The relationship between the course content and level of academic award (as laid out in the FHEQ) is encapsulated within the marking criteria published in the Student Handbook. The quality of marking in all Honours modules is assured by anonymous, blind double marking by members of the Department. Samples of examined work from each module, chosen according to specified criteria, are sent to an external examiner for scrutiny. First-year assessed work, from which no final degree credit accrues, is marked by a single marker with a sample moderated by the module convenor. External examiners have commended our assessment practices and the care with which Examination Boards treat individual cases. The general level of achievement of our students is high. A significant number attain First Class honours and a clear majority achieve Upper Seconds, while there are few Thirds or Pass degrees and a very low failure rate.

Postgraduate

All taught postgraduate provision is structured around a mix of core modules and options. In accordance with ESRC recognition requirements, the MA in Social Research and its Specialisms have an extensive set of core components. Assessment is structured in line with University regulations and ESRC conventions (Endnote 4A). First year PhD students take the compulsory *Research Process and Research Design* (RPRD) module, successful completion of which contributes to the upgrade from

MPhil to PhD registration (as part of the monitoring of PhD progression in line with University requirements). A number of postgraduate modules are run in the late afternoon or early evening to accommodate the needs of part-time students. The Department provides Sessional Teaching and in-service training for many doctoral students, including a three-weekly voluntary module for post-first year PhD students and Sessional Teachers entitled *Professional Development*, and supports postdoctoral activities.

5. Teaching and learning

Undergraduate

The Department encourages independent learning in a supportive teaching environment. Undergraduate workloads are based on two or more hours of student-tutor contact time per week in each of four modules, reading for seminars, extra-seminar study groups, writing individual presentations for some seminars, researching for and writing essays, undertaking project work for research methods modules, skills-exercises within some modules, and doing empirical and/or library-based research for the dissertation (Endnote 5A). We encourage peer learning in the preparation and conduct of seminars; students are sometimes required to discuss specified readings in a group situation or lead seminar-discussions as part of a team. The Department has developed and supports additional learning opportunities to complement more conventional teaching and learning. These include: week-long or ten day international study visits (in Moscow and St Petersburg, Krakow, Belfast, New York, Lisbon, Gothenburg and Florence); a supplement to the Sociology of Crime and Deviance module in which students work with young offenders on a community education project; and educational visits such as the 'Gender and London' visit for Gender degree students, 'The Power of London' visit for Political Sociology students, and the Southall workhouse trip for Social Policy students. Five students are now engaged in research, jointly managed by Sociology and the Centre for Academic Practice, within a C-SAP funded project on research-based teaching and learning. Undergraduate students are encouraged to participate in seminars and lectures organised by Research Centres.

Postgraduate

In accordance with ESRC recognition requirements, we have adopted new methods of postgraduate teaching and course delivery. Research methods modules are delivered on a team-teaching basis (approximately three to six staff) with lecture and seminar tutors working closely together to facilitate coursework assessment arrangements. Optional and core substantive modules remain largely the domain of sub-disciplinary specialists. In postgraduate modules written feedback is provided as standard on assessed student coursework. The Department's involvement in University Research Centres (Endnote 5B) contributes significantly to the learning experience of students, for example, through guest seminars, lectures and conferences in which postgraduate students participate in a variety of ways, including the organisation of events and hosting of speakers. Students are afforded the opportunity for in-depth discussions with leading sociologists, such as Jürgen Habermas and Zygmunt Bauman.

6. Student admission and progression

Undergraduates

Applications and Admissions

The Department encourages applications for its undergraduate courses from as wide a pool as possible. To widen participation, the 'typical offers' for the three degrees wholly owned by the Department are kept low relative to typical offers for similar courses at comparable institutions. Actual A/AS-level scores of undergraduate entrants are substantially higher than the 'typical offers' and conversion rates from offers to acceptances have risen. Applications through the University's AWARDS scheme are encouraged and where appropriate these students receive lower offers. For the academic year 2002-03 two students entered the Department under this scheme. It is Department custom to encourage admissions tutors to make offers based upon a full portfolio assessment of UCAS forms and, where possible, to consider achieved or predicted examination grades in the context of data on aggregate school/college academic performance. Applications for undergraduate degrees involving Sociology are generally buoyant (Endnote 6A).

Widening participation

The Department is active in a range of practical measures aimed at widening participation in line with the University's Mission Statement. We provide 'taster' sessions for the University's Aiming for College Education (ACE) week and the HEFCE Widening Participation Summer School, and we are involved in 'A' level conferences. Outreach work geared towards the promotion of the *idea* of university study as much as towards direct recruitment, is undertaken with the Coventry and Warwickshire Probation Service and through participation in the New Deal for Communities and Coventry Partnership. One outcome is the development of a Community Research Course for residents in seven priority areas of Coventry, linked to the Department and the University's Open Studies programme. Recent developments relevant to the widening of participation include the creation of a Departmental 'ask a student' email service and a Newsletter aimed at prospective students. The Department has a long history of active involvement in the University's '2+2' and Part-Time degree programmes, both of which offer an important route into higher education for educationally disadvantaged students. Endnote 6B discusses the composition and diversity of our students.

Induction and Welfare

Our programme for the induction of new students includes a substantial Student Handbook and Study Skills Programme, a meeting of all new students with the chair and other members of staff on the first day of the academic year, a meeting of all new students with their personal tutors, introductory talks on all the first year modules by the convenors, and a party to welcome new students. An additional participatory session for incoming students was successfully introduced in 2003/4. This year's induction programme was evaluated by students and viewed favourably.

All undergraduate students are allocated a personal tutor on their arrival in the Department and annually thereafter, and the Department follows the University's guidelines on personal tutoring (Endnote 6C). Where students have disabilities or

health problems that impact on their studies, the Department responds in line with the QAA Code of Practice (Precepts 13, 14 and 18 of Section 3), e.g. by making special examination arrangements. We address special learning needs according to University guidelines, e.g. through pre-sessional and sessional language courses run by CELTE for students for whom English is a second language.

Student progress

Students' progress is monitored in each year of their degree programme. A process based on the written comments of seminar tutors and meetings of departmental teaching staff is designed to identify difficulties and initiate corrective measures early in the Spring Term. Formative assessments, attendance and seminar performance (with specific reference to non-subject specific transferable skills) contribute to tutors' comments. Computerisation of the progress reporting system is underway. First year students proceed on a pass/fail basis via the end of year assessment. The number of dropouts is small and is usually due to medical or personal circumstances. The failure rate is low, reflecting the success of the first year as a foundation. Students are provided with options booklets and option talks during the Summer Terms of their first and second years so that they can select their optional modules for the following year in an informed way.

Careers

The Department is strengthening its links with the Careers Service and especially with the member of the service responsible for provision specific to the Department. A number of meetings are arranged between our students and this Careers person in which the various career services are highlighted and their use by students is encouraged. After graduation, the majority of our graduates directly enter employment (for 2002 approximately three out of five), with a substantial further proportion (between a quarter and a third) going on to further study. The unemployment figure for our graduates is relatively low (approximately one in twenty-five).

Postgraduates

The current cohort of taught postgraduates consists of more than fifty students (including a substantial number of overseas students, which is also the case for our research students). The typical entry requirement is a first degree (2.1 or above) in sociology or a related disciplinary area. Candidates who have professional qualifications in sub-disciplinary fields may also be considered. All students are linked on arrival to a course convenor, who acts as their personal tutor throughout the academic year. There is a developing pattern of student progression to the taught Masters courses from within the Department's undergraduate programme, encouraged by individual staff members and by a general meeting of undergraduates interested in postgraduate study convened by the Director of Graduate Studies. The Department has a strong track record of attracting funding for home students (in terms of both 1+3 and +3 ESRC studentships) and for those seeking ORS support or Warwick Postgraduate Research Fellowships (WPRF). Supervisory procedures at PhD level meet University Regulations and close monitoring and tracking procedures are in place, including a newly instituted PhD progress meeting that is beginning in January 2004.

7. Learning resources

Facilities, Activities and Information

The Department is located in the Ramphal Building. In addition to individual academic offices for all permanent members of staff, it has a locally timetabled Seminar Room and a Common Room jointly used by staff and students, which as a consequence of SSLC requests contains a PC for students to check their e-mail accounts and a low-cost photocopier. The Department's research culture emphasises participation from within the postgraduate student community. Students play a central role in organising special educational events such as guest seminars, external speakers and conferences, as well as social gatherings.

Specific work-room/IT facilities and resources are provided for research students alongside various forms of in-house funding, including a fieldwork expenses and conference budget. The Department has invested a substantial proportion of its equipment budget in postgraduate IT provision in 2002/03. Some postgraduate teaching utilises audio-visual/data projection facilities within lecture rooms centrally timetabled by the University. Most of the Department's postgraduate teaching and much of its undergraduate teaching takes place in the Ramphal or Social Studies buildings.

Heavy demand for key items from the Library is a perennial phenomenon. In addition to liaising with the relevant subject Librarian, the Department addresses this by making extensive use of photocopies located in the 'short loan' section of the Library and by a growing trend towards the provision of subsidised module-specific 'course packs'. These responses appear to have been popular with students. E-resources, such as JSTOR, are becoming of greater relevance and more frequently used.

The Department website was re-launched in December 2002 and provides an increasingly used resource for students (Endnote 7A). Technical support is made available by the Department to facilitate the development of web pages by teaching staff. A number of members of staff are active users of online learning techniques, working with learning technologists in the Centre for Academic Practice.

Extensive and regularly updated undergraduate and postgraduate Student Handbooks are supplied to new students. The undergraduate handbook has been radically redesigned for this year. The contents includes the roles of the SSLC and module evaluations as mechanisms for the expression of views, marking criteria/descriptors as adopted by the Faculty of Social Studies, and degree classification conventions. This complies with Precepts 7 and 10 within Section 6 of the QAA Code of Practice.

Those undergraduates who have the opportunity to take an outside option in their first year can choose to take a language module. We have worked with the Language Centre in developing provision at all levels of proficiency for our students to acquire, develop or perfect skills in other languages.

Staff

Our central resource is the Department's body of research-active teaching staff, which benefits from a substantial degree of continuity and stability and has now been enhanced by high quality additions. We aim to transfer to students our enthusiasm for the discipline of Sociology by providing students with direct access to our leading scholars and researchers via their teaching at all levels of the curriculum (e.g. Professors Fuller and Archer have been the last two convenors of our core first year module); and by encouraging tutors to share their research interests with students and engage students in the department's research culture. Many of our modules draw upon research undertaken by their tutors and tutors often test out ideas for research and publications in modules. The University policy of one-term study leave every seven terms plays a major role in maintaining this relation between research and teaching. All teaching staff have at least two hours per week designated as 'office hours' when they are available to students. Additional support and advice to students is provided by the Department's administrative staff, including the Departmental Secretary, Postgraduate Secretaries and Undergraduate Secretaries.

There has been some devolution of seminar teaching, especially in the first undergraduate year, to doctoral or postdoctoral Sessional Teachers. This provides valuable teaching experience and material resources for doctoral students and ensures that an appropriately high level of contact hours is maintained. Sessional Teachers are provided with induction and training both by the Department and the Centre for Academic Practice; they are mentored by module convenors; and their effectiveness is monitored via meetings between team members within the first year modules and via the student evaluation process.

In line with ESRC expectations, the Department's taught postgraduate courses are delivered by staff who have significant expertise as social scientists and practising researchers. Where appropriate, Sessional Teachers are occasionally employed. Team-teaching with University library staff is integrated within the introductory research methods module. This includes whole class lecture/seminar teaching, tutorial support and bespoke group sessions on specific aspects of data gathering and web-based learning.

With regard to staff development, the Department has in accordance with University policy a nominated Co-ordinator and a written policy. The Co-ordinator convenes the annual departmental induction session for new teaching staff, liaises with the University regarding staff development and the Warwick Teaching Certificate (including Sessional Teacher training), and monitors staff development activities (Endnote 7B). We offer strong and where necessary financial support to all members of the department, including administrative support staff, who need or wish to expand their skills and knowledge. Our Director of Undergraduate Studies has been seconded for two days a week to the Learning and Teaching Subject Network, C-SAP. Our aim is to be responsive to staff development needs, whether identified via the appraisal system or otherwise expressed.

Probationary staff are allocated mentors from among senior members of staff and take the Warwick Teaching Certificate. Other teaching staff nominate mentors, mainly for research purposes. Staff workload is carefully monitored with reference to a public and transparent points system that includes all teaching and departmental administration obligations, and includes appropriate adjustments for probationary staff.

8. Maintenance and enhancement of standards and quality

Structures and Practices

The Department's established framework of quality assurance and enhancement includes module reviews for all modules, course reviews for all courses, Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs), a comprehensive range of external examiners to suit specific sub/disciplinary areas, and the student evaluation process. In addition, we are subject to review by the University through Periodic Reviews. Quality assurance in the Department is monitored by the Quality Assurance Officer (Endnote 8A). The last Periodic Review of the Department was carried out in 2000 and its findings were fully acted upon (Endnote 8B).

The delivery of individual modules is regularly monitored via the student evaluation process, which follows University guidelines on anonymity. Its procedures, outcomes and effects are reported through module and course review reports. Course convenors have responsibility for producing Annual Course Review reports, which are considered by the relevant sub-committees of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies. Module convenors have responsibility for producing annual module review reports, which are monitored by the Department through the Quality Assurance officer and Course Convenors. Other forms of review are conducted by the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committees, which report back to Department Meetings. The department is currently considering how to make Annual Course Review and Module Review Reports available to our students, e.g. via its web pages.

The Department experimented with a standardised system of module evaluation in 2001/2, but subsequently re-adopted a more flexible, tutor-specific approach to increase the response rate and usefulness of the responses (Endnote 8C). In addition, the Department is currently leading a G-SAP funded, student-based evaluation of learning and teaching in the department. Peer observation is encouraged by the Department as a way of enhancing teaching practice and occurs more specifically in relation to appraisal for teaching staff and Sessional Teacher development.

Notes for Academic Staff (previously circulated as a Handbook and now on the Web) underpins staff knowledge of policies and procedures. Its contents include the Department's policies on the Personal Tutor system, notes on good practice in teaching and the Department's staff development policy. The amalgamation of Sociology with the Centre for the Study of Women and Gender, with their different procedures, has led to further reflection on and adoption of good practice, for instance, in monitoring the progress of research students.

SSLCs

The Department adheres to the University's requirements regarding the operation of SSLCs and the documentation of their operation and values the contribution they make to the success of the Department (Endnote 8D). The strategy the Department takes with respect to SSLCs is inclusive, with attendance stretching beyond elected

course representatives. Undergraduate and postgraduate SSLCs are entitled to and make use of student representation at Department Meetings, where SSLC business constitutes an established item of discussion at each meeting. SSLCs submit annual returns to the University summarising their activities.

9. Student submission

The following submission from the Department's students was generated via meetings of the Department's SSLCs, with feedback being solicited from the wider student body by the circulation of a request by e-mail.

Report from the Undergraduate Students

The Sociology Department provides students with a consistently high level of teaching. Lectures are well structured, and are delivered clearly and expressively, helped by the fact that lecturers are very knowledgeable. Seminar classes are well received; although sometimes class size may be larger than anticipated, they are well attended, enjoyed and relevant. Essays are marked promptly and feedback through coversheets is very useful to students, providing focused, constructive criticism. Students who require further assistance find all the Department's staff are friendly and approachable. The personal tutor system does help students when they choose to use it, and despite limited office hours, communication is maintained through email. Help is also available outside Sociology: Advice and Welfare Services and the Careers Centre are both useful and accessible.

Module choice within Sociology is good and variety increases as degree courses progress. Although the core modules receive some complaints about content, they are understood to be the vital foundation of further learning, which enables more specialist selections.

The Department's use of IT is very good. Lecture notes are often available on the web, and links to other useful sites are provided. The standard of WebPages does,

though, vary from excellent to difficult to navigate. Emails are used to notify students of any changes or events the Department is holding.

The consensus on learning materials available in the library is that there are not enough books, especially core books and shortages when essays are due are common. It is recognised that this is a library issue and not directly related to the Department. Reading packs and other material have been made available by some courses and are highly praised.

The Sociology Department has been extremely encouraging towards its students in writing this report. This is typical of the good relationship between staff and students and is helped by the Department's promotion of an open, all-inclusive environment. All staff are willing to take on board students' criticisms and comments, with a view to modifying and monitoring Departmental procedures. This is an ongoing process, of which this report is just a part.

Report from the Postgraduate Students

The department has a large and cosmopolitan cohort of graduate students. This creates a lively and friendly community; it is a great environment for a debate rich in perspectives; and enhances students' personal and intellectual development.

Members of staff are very supportive both at the personal and intellectual level. They encourage students to voice their views, take these into account and, most importantly, do their best to deal with problems and particular needs as they arise. Members of staff are always available for consultation on different matters.

The Department promotes and develops an independent, critical and pluralistic way of teaching and researching. At the curricular level, the department offers a wide variety of modules and allows students to take modules from other departments. In terms of extra-curricular activities, students are invited to take part in a variety of thematic, methodological and professional development seminars. Moreover, both academic

and social initiatives from students are acknowledged and supported within the department.

Working-space available to postgraduate students within the department has doubled over the last three years; yet, it is felt that it remains insufficient. We are aware that the department is working towards appropriate solutions. We also recognise that library resources are inadequate.

Endnote 4A

All research methods modules are assessed via the submission of a portfolio of coursework, which amounts to 10,000 words (or equivalent) for the introductory module and 5,000 words (or equivalent) for each of the advanced modules. Other modules continue to follow more traditional forms of assessment via 5,000 word essays. Dissertations are either 10,000 or 15,000 words in length depending on the module options chosen. Research methods coursework submissions are first marked by seminar tutors, moderated by the Co-ordinator of MA Programmes and sampled by the designated external examiner. All other coursework and dissertations are blind double-marked internally, of which a sample is reviewed by the appropriate external examiner.

Endnote 5A

Module contact time usually consists of a 50-minute lecture and a 50-minute seminar, although some modules use their contact time in less typical ways. While seminar sizes have grown over the last decade, they maintain their discursive character. In 2003/4 an unexpectedly large influx of students led to some first year seminars being slightly larger than we would have liked (up to 17 students). With regard to writing dissertations, where the main aim is to enhance independent study, general issues are taken up during three dissertation workshops organised at intervals throughout the academic year, while students are briefly supervised on the basis of two hours of face-to-face contact between student and supervisor across the two teaching terms.

Endnote 5B

The Department is host to four University Research Centres: the Social Theory Centre, the Centre for the Study of Women and Gender, the Warwick Centre for the Study of Sport and Society, and the Centre for Comparative Labour Studies. We participate actively in the Centre for the Study of the History of Medicine and in the Institute of Health.

Endnote 6A

A drop in applications for History and Sociology is almost certainly a consequence of its success and the increase in the 'typical offer' for this degree to ABB. There are low applications and/or admissions in French with Sociology and Gender and Cultural Studies, and the Department is keeping these degrees under review in conjunction with the other relevant departments. Decision on the latter is awaiting the appointment of a new Professor of Women and Gender Studies.

Endnote 6B

Among our current cohort of students about four out of five are women (which is not atypical for a Sociology Department in the UK) and of those for whom we have information, over one in ten identifies their ethnic background as black African/Caribbean or South Asian. About one in twenty of the current cohort of students on sociology degrees is aged 21 or over on entry. The presence of mature students within the Department is strengthened by strong demand for our modules among students following the 2+2 and Part-Time degree programmes. On average for 2+2 we take twice as many FTEs as the rest of the faculty put together. A small number of overseas undergraduates is supplemented by visiting students from Europe, North America, etc., within the SOCRATES-ERASMUS and Junior Year Abroad schemes.

Endnote 6C

The procedure for allocating tutors to students in each of the years is based on principles of continuity, equal responsibility across staff and student choice where appropriate, and is supervised by the Director of Undergraduate Studies with the assistance of the Undergraduate Secretary. Personal tutors deal with issues of a personal as well as academic nature. Where personal issues are deemed to be outside the competence of the tutor, students are referred to the University's Senior Tutor's Office, the Students' Union Advice and Welfare Service or the University Health Centre.

Endnote 7A

Via the website students can access information about our courses, modules, staff, research and departmental events, as well as latest news, and can download lecture notes and OHPs for a number of modules. The site includes hyperlinks to other departments and resources within and beyond the university.

Endnote 7B

Staff members attend in-house events (e.g. a training session on qualitative data analysis software), some of the extensive range of activities organised by the Centre for Academic Practice, and external training sessions; for example, some staff have recently attended language training courses and training in photographic/visual methods.

Endnote 8A

The Quality Assurance officer reports to the Department Meeting, liases with the Chair and Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees, and convenes when appropriate (as in the case of the current Audit) the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee

The report of the recent student-led Academic Satisfaction Review was considered by the Quality Assurance officer, made available to teaching staff for comment, and discussed at two Department meetings with reference to a paper identifying the issues of most relevance to the Department. A summary response was then passed to the University's Director of Student and Ancillary Services. As a result of the report the Department is, among other things, liasing with the Subject Librarian regarding collection development (with particular reference to heavily used items) and awaiting the findings of the University AQSC-initiated review of the effectiveness of the Personal Tutor System.

Endnote 8B

Responses to the 2000 Periodic Review included the reconfiguration of the Common Room, the standardisation of class work feedback forms, publication of further information on the personal tutor system, development of the year-abroad opportunity at the University of Gothenburg, consolidation of changes in the structure of our MA courses, development of induction activities for postgraduate students, development of doctoral progress procedures, increasing opportunities for Sessional Teaching among postgraduates, and development of the website. Where we did not agree with a recommendation of the report, for example, in the provision of written feedback on assessed essays, the reasons were explained and made available to students.

Endnote 8C

The primary role of module evaluations is their use by tutors to monitor and enhance teaching and learning practice, and responses are visible to students in the form of changes within modules. Completed student evaluation forms are treated as confidential to the relevant tutors and convenor, but are shared with the permission of the tutor in the normal course of appraisal and with Promotions Committee. Summaries of student feedback and details of tutors' own responses are contained within annual module review reports, which are submitted to the QA officer. Probationary staff are required by the University's Academic Staff Development and Appraisal Committee to provide material evidence of student evaluation.

Endnote 8D

At undergraduate level there is an SSLC covering all Sociology degrees and open to input from 2+2, part-time and visiting students. There are typically about five or six meetings per year. In addition, there are five SSLCs specific to joint degrees with Gender, Law, History, Politics and French components. The main undergraduate SSLC has two named academic staff and joint degree SSLCs have a staff representative corresponding to both parts of the degrees. Other members of staff attend SSLCs when necessary. The Department has a postgraduate SSLC committee covering both taught MA and research students.

Appendix A: Courses contributed to by the Department

The Department offers undergraduate degrees in

Sociology
Sociology and Gender Studies
Sociology with Social Policy
Gender and Cultural Studies

We collaborate with other Departments in the following undergraduate joint degrees:

History and Sociology
Politics and Sociology
Law and Sociology
French with Sociology

We make a major contribution to teaching on the Part-time and 2+2 programmes, including the degree in *Health and Social Policy* (administered by the Centre for Lifelong Learning).

At the postgraduate level the Department offers the following taught MA programmes:

MA Social Research
MA Social Research with Specialisms in: Sociology of Health, Comparative Labour Studies, Sociology of Education, Social Policy, Social Work, Inter-disciplinary Gender Studies, Race and Ethnic Relations, and Sport, Politics and Society.

These MAs are all validated by the ESRC except for *Sport, Politics and Society*. The Department is currently awaiting ESRC validation for *Sport, Politics and Society* and for the following new Specialisms: *Men and Masculinities, Social and Political Thought* and *Socio-Legal Studies* (with the School of Law)

MA Interdisciplinary Gender Studies
MA Gender and International Development
MA Sociology
MA Social and Political Thought

MA Comparative Labour Studies

MA Sociology of Education

The Department collaborates with other Departments in:

MA Gender, Literature and Modernity

MA Philosophy and Social Theory

MA 'Race' and Ethnic Relations'

In addition we contribute to teaching within the Leicester-Warwick Medical School.

Appendix B: Non-completions analysis

Attached

Appendix C: Course specifications

Attached