

The University of Edinburgh

**Senate Education Committee  
Wednesday 12 May 2021, 2.30pm  
Conducted via Microsoft Teams**

**A G E N D A**

- 1. Welcome and Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of Meeting held on 3 March 2021** SEC 20/21 5 A
- 3. Matters Arising from Meeting held on 3 March 2021**
- 4. Convener's Communications**
  - 4.1 Update on Planning for Academic Year 2021/22 Verbal Update
- 5. For Discussion**
  - 5.1 Curriculum Transformation Presentation
  - 5.2 Standalone Courses Task Group: Interim Report SEC 20/21 5 B
  - 5.3 Edinburgh Futures Institute Undergraduate Curriculum SEC 20/21 5 C
  - 5.4 Data Skills Workforce Development and Upskilling Training SEC 20/21 5 D  
CLOSED
  - 5.5 Distance Learning at Scale Lessons Learned and Recommendations SEC 20/21 5 E  
CLOSED
  - 5.6 Doctoral College Operations Group Report SEC 20/21 5 F
  - 5.7 Exam Diet 2021/22 – Practical Implementation SEC 20/21 5 G
  - 5.8 Academic and Pastoral Support Policy SEC 20/21 5 H
  - 5.9 Committee Administration:
    - 5.9.1 Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees SEC 20/21 5 I

- 5.9.2 Senate Education Committee Membership 2021/22 SEC 20/21 5 J
- 5.9.3 Draft Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees  
(Including Provisional Identification of Committee Priorities  
for Academic Year 2021/22) SEC 20/21 5 K
- 5.9.4 Senate Presentation and Discussion Themes for 2021/22  
Meetings SEC 20/21 5 L

**6. For Information**

- 6.1 Learn Foundations Project SEC 20/21 5 M

**7. Any Other Business**

**Minutes of the Meeting of Senate Education Committee  
held via Microsoft Teams at 2.00pm on Wednesday 3 March 2021**

### 1. Attendance

<b>Present</b>	<b>Position</b>
Colm Harmon	Vice-Principal Students (Convener) – Ex Officio
Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Vice-Convener) – Ex Officio
Sabine Rolle	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Lisa Kendall	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Stephen Bowd	Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate Research)
Judy Hardy	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Michael Seery	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Antony Maciocia	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)
Neil Turner	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, UG)
Sarah Henderson	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)
Mike Shipston	Head of Deanery, CMVM
Richard Andrews	Head of School, CAHSS
Iain Gordon	Head of School, CSE
Stuart Lamont	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Permanent Staff Member
Fizzy Abou Jawad	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Vice President Education
Sue MacGregor	Director of Academic Services – Ex Officio
Velda McCune	Representing Director of Institute for Academic Development – Ex Officio
Shelagh Green	Director for Careers & Employability – Ex Officio
Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division of Information Services – Ex Officio
Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions – Ex Officio
Sian Bayne	Assistant Principal Digital Education
Philippa Ward	Academic Services (Secretary)
<b>Apologies</b>	
Paddy Hadoke	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)
Paula Webster	Head of Student Data and Surveys
<b>In Attendance</b>	
Hazel Christie	Institute for Academic Development
Tim Drysdale	School of Engineering
Euan Murray	Learning Teaching and Web Services

### 2. Minutes of Meeting held on 27 January 2021

The following amendment was made to the minutes of the 27 January 2021 meeting of Education Committee:

### Item 3.1 Expectations Around 2021/22 Teaching

The final paragraph was amended to read:

*In light of its discussion, the Committee agreed that the University should be planning for students to be on-campus in 2021/22 (whilst recognising that provision will still need to be in place for students who find themselves unable to travel or needing to self-isolate). Members discussed a number of issues and challenges linked to 2m physical distancing, and noted that it might be beneficial to consider prioritising particular cohorts of students, such as Honours-level and PGT, for access to in person teaching. The Committee agreed that the University should retain flexibility to allow it to pivot at short notice if required.*

The text of the associated edition of the Senate Committees' Newsletter was also amended.

## 3. Convener's Communications

### 3.1 Update on Academic Year 2021/22 Planning

The Convener advised members that the key planning issue at this stage was the estate capacity assumption. Further guidance was required from the Scottish Government in order to progress with planning. The University's Planning Group was meeting weekly, and decisions around timetabling and other key issues would need to be taken in the coming weeks.

## 4. For Discussion

### 4.1 Update on the Operation and Impact of the University's CPD Framework for Learning and Teaching

The paper provided an update on the operation and impact of the University's CPD Framework for Learning and Teaching. Members were advised that the story was largely a positive one, with all three pathways (IntroAP, PGCAP and EdTA) running very well. All programmes had been moved online in 2020. This had proved successful and was likely to lead to more digital delivery going forwards.

It was noted that there was some spare capacity on the PGCAP, and members were asked to encourage their constituents to enrol on this programme where appropriate.

The main barriers to further increases in participation were academic staff workloads and workload models. COVID-19 had increased pressures on staff and completion numbers were likely to be slightly lower than expected in 2020/21, and possibly in 2021/22, as a result.

Looking ahead, those involved in the development and running of the Framework were keen to support the Curriculum Transformation agenda. It was also noted that the University was working towards reaccreditation of the Framework in 2023: reaccredited had been due in 2021, but due to COVID, the accreditation period had been extended by two years.

Education Committee discussed the following in relation to the Framework:

- The way in which the Framework might align with Curriculum Transformation. It would be important to undertake work to identify and understand the additional skills and capabilities colleagues would need to equip them for Curriculum Transformation. There may also be the potential to involve those enrolled on CPD programmes in driving forward the transformation agenda, for example, by involving them in the development of new graduate attributes.
- The benefits of making CPD as relevant as possible by focussing on the local context and equipping staff with the skills to drive change in their particular Schools or areas.
- The impact of workloads on participation in CPD – it was recognised that this was an issue that the Committee would need to return to when the Curriculum Transformation agenda had been progressed.
- The impressive upskilling of staff that had occurred over the past year in the context of the pandemic.
- The potential benefits of making the PGCAP even more flexible to make it more accessible to staff. Members were advised that there were plans to look at this in advance of the 2023 reaccreditation.
- The benefits of doing more to promote teaching sabbaticals.
- The broader context of continuing to undertake work to ensure parity of esteem for teaching and research.

## 4.2 The Hybrid Classroom

Members considered a paper and presentation provided by the Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services, and discussed a hybrid classroom pilot undertaken in the School of Engineering by Professor Drysdale.

The hybrid classroom facilitates synchronous physical and virtual teaching using video and audio collaboration technology. The Committee noted that the equipping of teaching spaces with a higher level of technology would require a commitment of resource by Information Services Group (ISG), Colleges and Schools. The cost of equipping teaching spaces with four different levels of technology (ranging from room microphones working through a fixed PC to Intelligent Audio) had been assessed. The pilot undertaken in the School of Engineering had used level 3 equipment. No teaching spaces were currently equipped at level 4, although it was anticipated that this level would be required for Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) programmes.

There was an appetite to invest in equipping teaching rooms at a higher level. However, it was recognised that any roll-out would take several years, and that in addition to providing equipment, there would need to be substantial investment in training and support to ensure that staff and students were able to take full advantage of the technology.

Members noted that while Collaborate currently offers integration with the Learn VLE, the same functionality does not currently exist for Teams and Zoom. However, work is being undertaken by ISG to provide Learn integration for these platforms, with the aim of having some level of integration in place for Semester 1 2021/22.

The Committee was advised that next steps in the move towards developing hybrid classrooms were:

- requesting funding;
- returning to campus;
- establishing governance for the roll-out of equipment;
- developing training;
- continuing with School pilots of the technology;
- undertaking research into practice elsewhere;
- and reviewing learning design for hybrid teaching.

In relation to the School of Engineering pilot, Professor Drysdale advised members that:

- the pilot had used approaches also used to manage the lecture recording roll-out, for example having student helpers available in teaching rooms;
- level 3 equipment, including intelligent microphones, had been used, resulting in substantial improvements in the overall experience;
- students had been very positive about the experience;
- the experience had been particularly beneficial for widening participation.

Members discussed:

- the value of sharing more widely some of the insights from the School of Engineering pilot and other pilots being undertaken within the University. Sharing some demonstration videos might be helpful in this respect.
- the potential for IAD to use the technology being described when teaching the University's academic staff, with a view to academic staff then copying these teaching practices.
- the potential value of this technology to activities other than teaching, for example to research and public engagement activities, and therefore the value of equipping more than just teaching spaces with the required technology.
- the desirability of doing long-term, strategic thinking about this matter, and not rushing to equip rooms with technology that later proved to be of limited use. Although equipping rooms at level 3 would be costly, it may represent much better value for money overall.

## 5. For Approval

### 5.1 Proposed Amendments to Academic and Pastoral Support Policy (Senior Tutor Role Description)

The Committee approved the proposed amendments to the Academic and Pastoral Support Policy, noting that it described the way in which the role was intended to operate and formalised what, in a number of areas, was already current practice.

However, members also noted that:

- there had not been broad consultation on the proposed changes;

- the changes raised significant workload issues (within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences in particular. These would be discussed with the Head of College.)
- for a Senior Tutor to fulfil the duties of the role as described, an excellent, underpinning student support structure was required. The recommendations of the Personal Tutor and Student Support Review had not yet been implemented, and at present, the resource required to implement the recommendations was not available. The Wellbeing Advisor roles recommended by the Review were considered critical to effective student support, and the Committee endorsed investment in these roles.

## 6. Any Other Business

### 6.1 Curriculum Transformation

Members considered for information a paper taken to the 23 February 2021 meeting of University Executive, which provided a brief update on the work of the Curriculum Transformation Programme and the draft Board's membership and Terms of Reference. It was noted that Executive had approved the membership and Terms of Reference, taking into account comments around the size of the Board; competing workload pressures on staff; and the importance of inclusivity.

Education Committee:

- welcomed the level of seniority associated with the membership, but noted that there would be benefit in considering whether the membership was sufficiently diverse, particularly in the context of decolonising the curriculum.
- noted that there was currently no College-level involvement in the Board, only central and School-level involvement. The Committee agreed that Colleges should be represented on the Board.
- asked about governance arrangements and where the Board sat in relation to Education Committee and other University governance structures. It was agreed that clarification was required on this point.
- noted that there was no reference to PGR within the paper. The PGR representative for the College of Science and Engineering confirmed that PGR would be included in the scope of the Curriculum Transformation project, and more definition would be brought to this in due course.
- highlighted the importance of ensuring that all University staff members were provided with opportunities to contribute to discussions around Curriculum Transformation in meaningful ways.

The Convener would bring a further update and discussion paper on Curriculum Transformation to the May meeting of the Committee.

Philippa Ward  
Academic Services  
10 March 2021

**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Standalone Courses Task Group:  
Interim Report**

**Description of paper**

- 1 In Semester Two, 2020-21, the Committee established a task group on Standalone Courses. While the group's progress has been relatively slow due to the circumstances associated with Covid-19, it has now met twice. This paper updates the Committee on the group's discussions
- 2 The growth of micro-credentials in higher education raises some quite fundamental issues. The Committee had set up the group to focus on credit-bearing stand-alone courses. However, following its initial phases of work, the group has concluded that it would be more appropriate to look at 'standalone' credit-bearing courses as part of the broader range of micro-credentials. The group suggests that the Committee should start with a strategic discussion about what types of micro-credentials the University wants to offer, and which of them it should consider high priority, before considering detailed recommendations.
- 3 We would be happy for the task group to play a role in this broader task. However, given that various other groups are thinking about the same range of issues, and that opening up this broader strategic discussion would take the group beyond its original remit, we suggest that, as a next step, the Committee clarifies the group's remit and focus.

**Action requested / recommendation**

- 4 The paper invites the committee to clarify the remit and focus of the task group.

**Background and context**

- 5 In March 2020 Senate Education Committee discussed the significant growth within the University in the creation and student uptake of credit-bearing standalone courses, i.e. courses that do not contribute towards the award of a degree or other type of award from the University. The Committee broadly welcomed the development of standalone courses noting the flexibility and scope they allowed in many disciplines to cultivate new and innovative provision. The Committee agreed that academic governance arrangements, quality assurance frameworks, and associated systems should be aligned to support an increase in such provision in a consistent, robust and systemic way. The Committee established a small task group to consider options for addressing those governance, quality assurance and systems issues.
- 6 The membership of the task group is as follows:



- Tom Ward (Convener), Head of Education Administration and Change Management, Edinburgh Futures Institute;
- Gill Aitken, Senior Lecturer and Programme Director for the MSc Clinical Education, Medical School;
- Victoria Bennett, Academic Administrator, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine;
- Jenny Britton, Head of Executive Development, Business School;
- Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services;
- Lisa Dawson, Director of Student Systems and Administration;
- Michelle Evans, Talent lead for Health and Social Care Sector, Usher Institute;
- Shelagh Green, Director of Careers Service;
- Sarah Henderson, Programme Director, Deanery of Clinical Sciences;
- Jenny Hoy, Head of Centre for Open Learning;
- Teresa Ironside, Director of Education, Bayes Centre / Head of Online Learning Development, College of Science and Engineering,
- Stuart Nichol, Head of Educational Design and Engagement;
- Paul Norris, Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; and
- Heather Tracey, Deputy Head of Academic Affairs, College of Science and Engineering.

- 7 The group has met on two occasions: for an initial discussion the strategic and operational issues in relation to standalone courses at the University (15 December 2020) and then to discuss the interim report for the Committee (28 April 2021).

### **Discussion**

- 8 The Senate Education Committee set up this group to look specifically at 'standalone' credit-bearing courses, and to consider options for academic governance arrangements, quality assurance frameworks, and associated systems, to support an increase in these activities in a consistent, robust and systematic way.
- 9 The group has met twice and made progress on this specific task – considering a range of issues (and identifying potential recommendations), in relation to:
- Curriculum structures and certification frameworks
  - Curriculum approval processes
  - Tuition fee models
  - Access to services
  - Marketing
  - Admissions systems and processes
  - Digital learning environments
  - Academic regulations and quality assurance
  - Student support

- Certification / transcripts

10 However, it has become clear that it is not helpful to look at ‘standalone’ credit-bearing courses in isolation from other types of microcredentials. Prospective students / learners may not make this distinction - indeed, one of the consequences of the rise of microcredentials is to weaken the binary distinction between credit- and non-credit forms. It is also clear that many of the actions that would support the growth in standalone credit-bearing courses would also support the growth of other forms of microcredentials, and that the University would obtain much more value from thinking about the requirements for microcredentials in the round. For example, one of the key issues for standalone credit-bearing courses is that the University has a fragmented web presence for marketing these activities, making it difficult for prospective students to discover what the University is offering. The appropriate solution is unlikely to be a new web publication for standalone credit-bearing courses, but, instead, a web presence that promotes a wider range of the University’s micro-credentials portfolio.

11 These are some of the main categories of micro-credentials:

<b>Credit</b>	<b>Non-credit</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Standalone’ credit-bearing courses (that is, courses that do not also form part of programmes of study)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit-bearing courses that students have the option to take on a standalone basis, but which also form part of programmes of study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-credit CPD (certified or non-certified, on-line or on-campus)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modular approaches to aggregating up individual credit-bearing CPD activities into awards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bespoke non-credit CPD (online or on-campus)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro-masters</li> </ul>	

12 An initial review suggests that various academic areas across the University have active interest in expanding activities across a range of different micro-credentials, for example:

- The SFC Workforce Development Fund is supporting a portfolio of non-credit and credit-bearing standalone training courses offered by academic units across the University, and continued SFC funding would allow the University to grow this portfolio in 2021/22.
- The University is participating in the UNA Europa project (an alliance of eight research-intensive universities), which includes a strand of work on

micro-credentials targeting postgraduate students and professionals. These plans include credit-bearing activities.

- The Centre for Open Learning offers a range of short credit- and non-credit courses, along with bespoke CPD provision and associated activities (a total of c. 12,000 enrolments per year). It has undergone a full-scale academic and professional services restructure in the last few years and has clarified its vision / mission.
- The Bayes Centre manages the MSc in Data, Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), which offers some 26 credit-bearing courses on a standalone basis. Bayes is playing a leading role in developing a broader range of data driven innovation microcredential activities.
- The Edinburgh Futures Institute is developing a new suite of executive education / CPD provision (largely on a non-credit basis), including courses funded by the SFC Workforce Development Fund, and also plans to allow student to study on a standalone basis a large number of the credit-bearing PGT courses that will form its new interdisciplinary PGT programmes.
- The College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine plans to build on its current micro-credentials offered both on campus and online (and both credit- and non-credit). Key areas for development include:
  - Micro-credentials that are directly aligned to the mandatory continuous professional development activities required of health and veterinary care professionals (activities anticipated to range from on campus, clinically led workshops and seminars through academically facilitated, short, standalone courses to fully automated, auto-facilitated/pre-recorded/auto-marked short courses that participants can work through at their own pace as circumstances permit). For example, Medicine is reviewing faculty development offered to clinical teaching, with a view to moving it online and exploring ways to offer it more widely than SE Scotland (for example, as part of a partnership with one Singaporean University).
  - Increasing the offering of credit-bearing micro-credentials that could be used as RPL for the College's our own Masters degrees, for fulfilment of credit at other universities (either the UK or abroad), or with professional bodies.
  - exploring the usage of technology to teach traditionally clinical subjects in an online space.
  - Exploring models that could allow students to build up lifelong learning over a sustained period.
- As part of the broader MVM plans, the Usher Institute is developing a Health and Social Care data-driven innovation CPD programmes. This will develop tailored CPD learning pathways and bespoke content to meet the needs of users, craft and co-create teaching content to fit the needs of employers and professionals working in the Health and Social Care

arena, and foster productive collaborations with regional colleges, stakeholders and partners. The programme will include a mixture of credit-bearing activities (eg standalone course, courses that students can take on a standalone basis but which also form parts of programmes of study, and Student-Led Individually Created Courses) and non-credit (eg MOOCs, Microlearning, Bootcampus and open badges).

- As part of the Distance Learning at Scale (DLAS) project, the Business School launched a 30-credit MicroMasters in Predictive Analytics Using Python in 2019-20, offered through EdX. The Business School is currently piloting a non-credit professional certificate in [Digital Marketing Fundamentals](#), offered through EdX.

- 13 The group advises that the Committee should start with a strategic discussion about what types of micro-credentials the University wants to offer, and which of them it should consider high priority. That strategic perspective would assist the Committee, and the wider University, to assess which strands of implementation activities to support micro-credentials it should prioritise – before initiating work to establish the best ways to support them.
- 14 We had planned to submit a paper to open up this strategic discussion. However, it is clear that various other groups are thinking about the same range of issues – and that one other paper on the agenda for this Committee meeting would be framing at least some of these strategic questions. We are also conscious that opening up this broader strategic discussion would take the group beyond its original remit. Therefore, we suggest that, as a next step, the Committee clarifies the remit and focus of the task group.

### **Resource implications**

- 15 The task group has identified potential recommendations that would have resource implications. However, this report is not inviting the Committee to approve any specific recommendations.

### **Risk management**

- 16 Developing a strategic position and implementation plan on microcredentials would assist the University to mitigate any risks associated with the growth of micro-credentials.

### **Equality & diversity**

- 17 This interim report does not seek approval for any changes to policies and practices, and therefore does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

- 18 No communication actions required at this stage.

#### **Author**

**Tom Ward** (Head of Education Administration and Change Management, Edinburgh Futures Institute),

#### **Presenter**

**Tom Ward** (Head of Education Administration and Change

SEC: 12.05.21  
H/02/42/02

**SEC 20/21 5 B**

**Brian Connolly** (Academic Services)

Management, Edinburgh Futures  
Institute),

30 April 2021

**Freedom of Information**  
Open

**Senate Education Committee**

**Wednesday 12 May 2021**

**Edinburgh Futures Institute Undergraduate Curriculum**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper brings the Committee up to date with progress in the development of the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI)'s undergraduate curriculum. This paper does not cover the administrative, financial and operational dimensions of EFI which were discussed in the December 2019 SEC meeting.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. The Committee is asked to note the paper for information, to comment on alignment with university priorities including curriculum transformation.

**Background and context**

3. The EFI Education portfolio is built around a set of strong principles for teaching which address the futures of higher education, work, scholarship and society. Key features include:
  - A move away from monodisciplinarity to help students connect disciplines, forge new ways of knowing and build careers in growth areas
  - Offering students the skills and knowledge they need to be confident citizens in a highly technologised and rapidly-changing world: data skills, creative methods, inquiry skills and critical scholarship
  - Offering students a way to focus their studies on complex challenges and global issues, using a project-led approach which works closely with external partners
  - Helping deliver on City Region Deal objectives by teaching data skills within a critical context which foregrounds the ethical and social implications of data-driven technologies
4. Our aim is that EFI courses and programmes are characterised by the kind of originality that comes when disciplines spark off each other, that the design of our teaching offers students a new kind of autonomy and connection with the university, and that we have an eye to the future as we build a kind of education which is critical, research-informed and agile both in its form and curriculum.

**Discussion**

**Courses**

5. EFI launched its inaugural undergraduate elective course, 'Currents: Understanding and addressing global challenges', this year. The course was taken by 39 students from all three Colleges during the first semester and was a great success, with students describing the course as "amazing and brilliant!" and 85% of respondents to the course questionnaire strongly agreeing that they

would recommend the course to a friend. We will repeat the course in semester one 2021/22, with the course team continuing to explore the COVID-19 pandemic and also turning their attention to green recovery.

6. We have been developing a number of new courses that have recently been approved by EFI's Curriculum Oversight Board. Led by Dr David Overend (MHSES), 'Creating Edinburgh: The Interdisciplinary City' sets out from the seminar room to explore the city of Edinburgh, on foot and online. It offers students a unique opportunity to engage with the contemporary city as a site for new ideas, designs and methods. The course responds creatively to Edinburgh's various sites and routes, bringing together students from across the university to work together in interdisciplinary teams. This course will run in semester one 2021/22.
7. The story of data helps us better understand the growing power of data in today's world. Led by Professor Shannon Vallor (PPLS), 'Ethics and Politics of Data' asks the question 'what are data, and how do they come to be?' Working collaboratively, students from across the disciplines will uncover the moral and political values that shape human practices of counting, measuring, and labelling reality, in the process developing the foundational skills of critical and responsible data practice. This course will run in semester two 2021/22.
8. Led by Dr Sabine Rolle (LLC), 'Students as Change Agents' will allow students to use their learning to make a difference. Working in collaboration with students from different disciplines, students will tackle 'real life' complex challenges as they are faced by local communities. This is an experiential learning course where students will receive support and training to develop their skills in areas such as problem solving and critical data analysis, and use these skills together with their understanding of academic theories and methods to propose a solution to the challenge. The Students as Change Agents programme led by the Careers Service has offered students the opportunity to experiment with learning in this way outside the curriculum, either not for credit or by gaining additional credit via a Student-Led Individually Created Course (SLICC). This course builds on the success of the programme and allows students to gain credits towards their degrees for the first time. This course will run in semester two 2021/22.
9. All of EFI's undergraduate elective courses are 20 credits at Level 8, open to students from across the University with no pre- or co-requisites. Schools have been invited to add EFI's course schedule (Schedule Y) to their Degree Programme Tables where space allows to offer all four courses to students in 2021/22.

### **Programme**

10. In addition to our work building a portfolio of pre-honours electives, we are also making progress on the development of our undergraduate programme. This programme, which we plan to launch in 2023/24, will aim to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to face and shape a rapidly changing future. They will learn to tackle complex 'real life' challenges, their learning driven by the passion to make a difference, to apply their skills for the benefit of the planet.

Experiential learning, interdisciplinarity and the ability to critically analyse data from different sources will be at the heart of EFI's programme.

11. The broad shape of the degree is in place. The core element is a course (placeholder name: 'Interdisciplinary practice') where students will work together in groups to tackle real-life challenges set by external partners. They will gain an understanding of the complexity of such problems and how they are linked to local and global challenges, while learning to work in teams and to translate their learning into outputs that are of use to communities outside academia.
12. A co-requisite sister course in theories and methods will provide students with practice in different qualitative and quantitative research methods, the academic tools needed to tackle the challenges. Iterations of these core courses are central to the programme across all years, in increasing complexity. They will provide space for reflection and integration as well as for peer support, and they are a key component also of the student support structure and EFI identity and community building.
13. Whereas the EFI core courses are interdisciplinary in nature, another key component of the programme are courses that students will take in a single discipline of their choice. This will provide them with a more in depth understanding of a subject area, its body of knowledge and methodology, which they can apply in their approach to the interdisciplinary challenges. If sufficient credit has been built up, students may be able to have it acknowledged in their degree title as 'with discipline'.
14. In their third year, we will give students opportunity to work or study away from the University for one semester, to further develop and apply their learning in different contexts (studying abroad or taking up an internship, for example). And at the end of their degree, they will bring together and evidence their learning from across the programme in a capstone project that can again be based on a challenge set by an external partner, to be tackled in interdisciplinary groups and potentially taking the shape of an artefact, an exhibition, a process or a product.
15. The programme proposes taking innovative approaches to assessment. Pre-Honours courses in EFI, including all four courses approved to date, are generally designed and assessed on a pass/fail basis: progression to the next year of study and Honours level will require students to pass all credits. The programme will also take a programme-level view of assessment, rather than assessing at course level. As part of the integration element of the programme, linked to the core courses in interdisciplinary practice and in theories and methods, students will be required to reflect on how they have integrated and applied all parts of their learning during the year.

**Core team**

16. With our recently appointed Fellows seconded from Schools and Deaneries in CAHSS, CSE and CMVM, the core team is now complete and ready to take this broad structure of our new EFI undergraduate degree to the detailed design stage. This team includes:



- Andy Cross (with a background in geosciences, experiential learning and community engagement)
- Sarah Harvey (literature, modern languages and teaching management)
- Eilidh Morrison (sustainability, market insight and teaching administration)
- David Overend (theatre and performance studies)
- Sabine Rolle (history, literature, language studies and higher education governance)
- Gareth Williams (applied chemical physics and photophysics, medical imaging and sensing)

### ***Engagement with stakeholders***

17. The core team is supported by a newly established group of 'Critical Friends' which brings together colleagues from (so far) 10 different Schools and Deaneries, as well as students and colleagues from the Careers Service and Academic Services. In a short series of workshops in February and March, our Critical Friends have already discussed and shaped some key aspects of our programme's structure and student experience. We would like to expand the group further in future and would like to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining it to help us turn our vision into reality.
18. The core programme team is currently consulting widely on the proposed programme, issuing an email briefing to key colleagues during March 2021, and presenting proposals to a number of relevant groups and committees in Colleges and Schools over the coming months.
19. Early market research has involved consultation with colleagues in Communications and Marketing, Student Recruitment and Admissions, the Careers Service, student groups and benchmarking with the wider sector. Market Insight indicate that there is a strong and growing market interested in interdisciplinary and challenge-led programmes, and SRA suggest that they expect demand for interdisciplinary programmes such as ours to rise/trend in the coming years. A further phase of detailed market testing is currently underway, with market pulse surveys and student focus groups planned to further test market demand and responses to the proposed programme.

### **Resource implications**

20. The Edinburgh City Region Deal is providing Data Driven Innovation (DDI) funding to support the development of the portfolio (for example, funding academic staff secondments and buy-outs for curriculum design). EFI and CAHSS have worked with other stakeholders to develop an innovative operating model to support the delivery of this cross-School portfolio – we presented an overview of this to the Senate Education Committee on 11 December 2019. We are working with CAHSS and other stakeholders to refine this model prior to launching the undergraduate programme.

### **Risk management**

21. The paper proposes an innovative approach to programme design and delivery but does not involve substantive change to University policies or practices. In due course some specific aspects of the curriculum and delivery model may not align

entirely with current University regulations: we will return to this Committee and to the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee as needed in future to seek approval for any non-standard features.

**Equality & diversity**

22. The EFI Curriculum Oversight Board will take account of equality and diversity issues when reviewing the specific proposals for programmes. Where our policies and practices diverge significantly from normal University practices, we will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

**Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

23. Comments from the Committee will be taken into account as we prepare for formal curriculum approval from the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board, and in updates to our business and implementation planning.

**Author**

*Sabine Rolle and Sarah Harvey  
30<sup>th</sup> April 2021*

**Presenter**

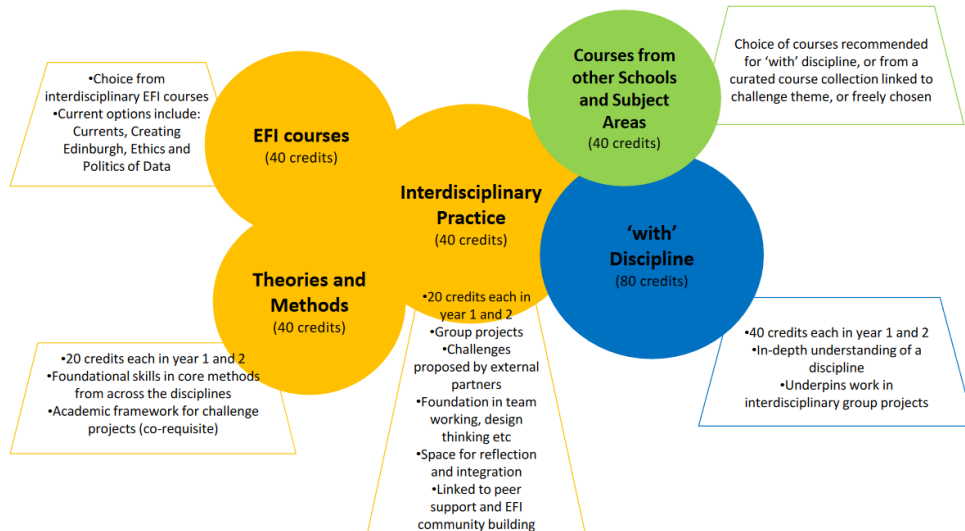
*Sabine Rolle, CAHSS Dean of Undergraduate Education and Undergraduate Lead, EFI and Sarah Harvey, EFI Education Administration and Change Manager*

**Freedom of Information**

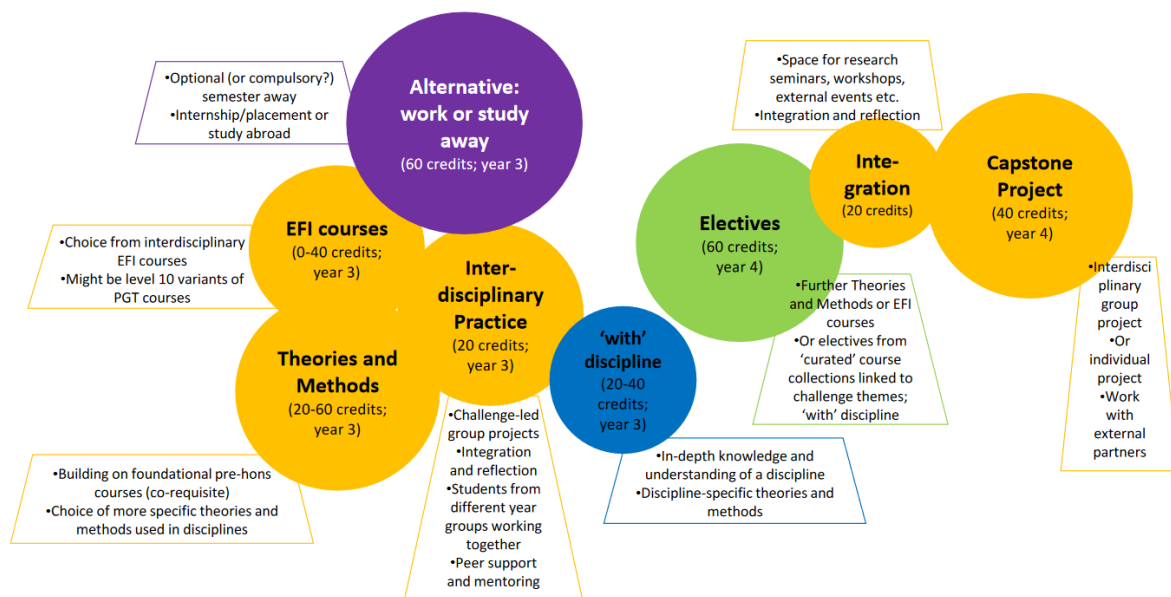
Open

**Appendix: Proposed outline of the MA (Hons) Transformative Civic Practice with [discipline] (working title)**

**MA (Hons) Transformative Civic Practice – pre-honours**



**MA (Hons) Transformative Civic Practice – honours**



**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Doctoral College Operations Group Report**

**Description of paper**

1. Brief report for Senate and update for SEC from the DC Operations Group/Steering Group for 2020/21.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For noting.

**Background and context**

3. The Doctoral College was set up in January 2020 and one of its key governance groups reports to SEC. This is a brief report on activity over the previous 12 months.

**Discussion**

4. There are lessons to learn from the way that the Doctoral College operates as a lightweight entity providing holistic coverage of a transverse part of this institution. We have brought together key individuals to form the core of the Doctoral College. This connects together everyone involved directly in postgraduate research matters and helps to encourage and foster change.
5. The Doctoral College now consists of around 225 staff across all Schools, Deaneries, Colleges and key services. The Microsoft Teams pages are very active allowing staff to share ideas and problems quickly and get back solutions from the services. It has allowed us to react quickly to current events (especially around the pandemic) as well as to greatly enhance change management in all aspects of research student support and training. We run a regular Forum for the team which is well attended and gives us space to air views and test ideas.
6. The new Doctoral College Operational Group is running, carrying over the business of the former Steering Group. There is also a Management Group set up under the auspices of Research Policy Group (soon to be Research Strategy Group) and functionality has been divided between them. There is a common core membership.
7. Over the last year the Operational/Steering Group has overseen the creation of our themed plan with seven key themes each led by one of the Deans: Administration, Wellbeing, Communities, Research Strategy, Recruitment and Finance, and Governance and Planning. These have sub-themes also with a lead. Below these we are developing workstreams to action task, again with designated responsible staff.
8. We have set up two substantial working groups looking at Scholarships and Diversity in Recruitment. Both report formally to SRFSG but are overseen by the

Doctoral College operational group. The Scholarships group has proposed (and it has been accepted) that PCDS<sup>1</sup> and EGRS<sup>2</sup> be stopped and put in place a replacement scheme called the Edinburgh Doctoral College Scholarship. It is also aiming to include a baseline of conditions for such Scholarships which it aims to roll out to all UoE scholarships and beyond. This will include sick pay, family leave and mandatory training in EDI and ethical research. The Recruitment group has just completed its report with recommendations building on good practice in our DTCs<sup>3</sup> and CDTs<sup>4</sup> across the institution.

9. Looking forward, we are continuing with a number of policy developments as well as creating a defined vision and strategy in consultation with students and staff. We will be reviewing a number of current guidance documents, policies and training modules including supervisor training and MScR regulations and guidance. We are also aiming to provide training for CDT and DTC holders both for application writing as well as for helping to build the CDT when awarded. A key element as we roll out policies around baseline provision for postgraduate researchers will be central training.

10. We have:

- initiated a process to provide training for doctoral degree examiners;
- overseen the implementation of the on-line supervisor training;
- overseen communications to research students;
- overseen the pulse survey and responded to the issues;
- produced web pages and sharepoint pages linking to the local services, Schools etc.
- implemented digital thesis processes;
- reviewed College concession forms;
- updated the policy on remote vivas;
- overseen the move away from programme level APCs<sup>5</sup>;
- run regular for a for the DC team: each of these has three themes including news updates and discussion as well as targeted themes such as Entrepreneurship, Recruitment, Funding;
- provided help to SRA in PG open days;
- overseen the PG peer support project;
- updated the guidance for non-examining chairs;
- implemented the mitigations for work lost during covid;
- reviewed reports from external collaborations;
- overseen collaborative PhDs (in particular, UNA-Europa, European, Glasgow, ACRC<sup>6</sup>);
- overseen the distance PhD pilots;

---

<sup>1</sup> Principal's Career Development Scholarship

<sup>2</sup> Edinburgh Global Research Scholarship

<sup>3</sup> Doctoral Training Centre

<sup>4</sup> Centre of Doctoral Training

<sup>5</sup> Additional Programme Costs

<sup>6</sup> Advanced Care Research Centre

- implemented the UKRI phase 2 funded extension scheme and overseen the use of the SFC funds for UoE extensions and hardship;
- liaised with the ART groups;
- reviewed the regulations and code of practice;
- initiated discussion with almost all support services and recruited representatives to the team;
- provided support to the Development & Alumni teams to attract sponsorship of students;
- initiate liaison with the Curriculum Transformation Project;
- initiate exploration of centrally provided or supported training in EDI and research ethics;

**Resource implications**

11. None

**Risk management**

12. N/A

**Equality & diversity**

13. N/A

**Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

14. N/A

**Author**

*Antony Maciocia*  
*30<sup>th</sup> April 2021*

**Presenter**

*Antony Maciocia*

**Freedom of Information**

OPEN

**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Exam Diet 2021/22 – Practical Implementation**

**Description of paper**

1. Confirmation of the policy and governance approach for the exam diet(s) in 2021/22

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. SEC is asked to APPROVE the overall approach and to DISCUSS & AGREE policy on extra time and late submission (see following recommendations).
3. It is recommended:
  - a. SEC to APPROVE the overall approach for December exams which is that
    - i. Exams are online with standard 2 or 3 hr window (plus adjustments)
    - ii. Start time is 13:00
  - b. SEC to DISCUSS & AGREE whether the +1hr for digital submissions and/or the 10min 'silent window' will be retained and that late penalties will not be applied to online exams (see section 10-12)
  - c. SEC to CONFIRM that students with a Schedule of Adjustments (SOA) will receive their allotted time adjustment over and above blanket +1/silent window
  - d. the whole approach is carried forward for the Summer 2022, subject to lessons which might suggest an alternative
  - e. SEC to set in train the approach to December exams, then oversight will return to APRC given its role in policy and assessment regulation. APRC will monitor the effectiveness of the approach, taking any wider discussion through SEC if changes are recommended in future.

**Background and context**

4. There is a need for formal clarity on the format of 2021-22 exams and where governance rests. The Planning Group have endorsed a recommendation for the December 2021 exams to be online with 2/3 hour variant not the 24 hour time window deployed during the current session. At this time, it is right for SEC to formalise that consensus by approving the approach, subject to discussion of related policy issues such as treatment of 'silent window' for submission (see below). Information on the 'what you need to know' [SharePoint](#) page reflects the intended handling of December exams and remains in line with this policy paper.

**Discussion**

5. The intention is that exams are online with standard exam windows of 2 or 3 hours (plus standard and plus individual SOA adjustments) and that the 1300hrs start time is maintained.

**Benefits**

6. The main practical benefit from the re-introduction of standard durations across all disciplines will be effective management of extra-time allowances defined in agreed SOAs. The approach will enable allowances that are consistent (i.e. from an individual student perspective) regardless of the course concerned. In this way, precise duration entries will be reintroduced into student calendars.
7. The current mixed-economy approach to durations has necessitated an equivalent mixed-economy approach to extra-time allowance. The inability of scheduling software to reflect mixed entitlements for individual students has prevented detailed duration information from feeding-through to student calendars, leading to a reliance on effective

messaging to convey entitlements. The current approach has also led to accusations of unfair treatment from some eligible students, with this perceived inequality proving challenging to redress.

8. Although the continuation of the blanket 1hr entitlement for short-form exams would work for scheduling, the 'standard 2/3hr duration model' (rather than the 24hr) would facilitate the reintroduction and representation of more precise entitlement calculations thus demonstrating a fairer and tailored treatment of students with SOAs.

### **Scheduling**

9. Although a change to shorter duration could bring greater scheduling flexibility, there is merit in retaining the single 13:00 start-time session:
  - a. The single daily start-time helps to focus both candidates and support staff and eliminates any confusion that can sometimes emerge with two separate sessions per day.
  - b. With significantly fewer courses assessing through exams, we have already demonstrated that a December exam diet can be successfully scheduled, clash-free, with the single daily start-time.
  - c. The reintroduction of two daily sessions could become more challenging in the event the current +1hr for digital submission is retained.
  - d. Although the University's planning assumption is based on students being on-campus, there is the high likelihood of the majority of students returning home to prepare for revision and exams. Retaining the 13:00 start time will continue to largely mitigate time zone issues, with the clearly stated planning assumptions helping to mitigate any time zone complaints that do emerge.

### **Issues with 24hr duration**

10. The retention of this exam duration would certainly create scheduling issues for the December diet. Whilst there is already evidence to show a clash-free December diet timetable can be delivered, the recent introduction of the additional 3hrs for students with an extra-time allowance would cause a significant number of 'overlaps' in the timetable. There could be a scenario where these 'overlaps' are deemed an acceptable trade-off for the retention of the longer-format exam, but it's important to reiterate that any such retention serves to introduce this scheduling discrepancy and would create an inconsistent environment, given this discrepancy would not exist for May and Resit diets.

### **Time allowance for technical issues (+1 and Silent Window)**

11. An extra hour for all students to allow for technical issues when sitting the exam would reflect our previous approach for the standard exam window. Students must be provided with clear instructions of how to make contact with School/Deanery offices if they experience any issues when they get near to their deadline.
12. In recognition of the line taken previously (as a result of OREA and related discussion groups), a 10 minute "silent" window would allow any students who are experiencing difficulties in uploading assessments an opportunity to contact the relevant Teaching Office for guidance and support.

### **Late Submission**

13. If a student misses their deadline they should be directed to the Special Circumstances process. A system of late penalties (as may be used for coursework) has not been applied to online exams. Any assessment not submitted by the stated deadline (including adjustments and the silent window) and for which there are no valid special circumstances should not be awarded a mark.



**Resource implications**

14. Implementation of policy covered by the existing staff and system resources in Exams & Timetabling, Academic Services and Schools

**Risk management**

15. The recommended approach in this paper would serve as mitigation for risks associated with the exam diet including ironing out difficulties noted in section 8

**Equality & diversity**

16. The recommendations for standard exam window of 2 or 3 hrs are not introducing anything that we have not used previously and will not introduce new implications for equality and diversity. The approach is desirable to enable better management of precise time adjustments for students with SOAs across all disciplines. Maintaining a single start time will also support students across different nations and time zones.

**Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

17. Implementation by Academic Services and Exams & Timetabling. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the actions agreed will be overseen by APRC

**Author**

*Name Sue MacGregor/Scott Rosie  
Date 6 May 2021*

**Presenter**

*Name Sue MacGregor*

**Freedom of Information**

**Open**

**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Academic and Pastoral Support Policy**

**Description of paper**

1. This Policy has been reviewed to ensure that it is current (with broken or redundant links removed) and aligned with the amended descriptor for the Senior Tutor role (as approved by the Committee at the previous meeting).

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. The Committee is asked to discuss possible changes to the Policy set out in his paper.

**Background and context**

3. The Policy had been due for review in 2019/20 but this was delayed due to the Personal Tutor and Student Support (PTSS) Review. As the implementation of the outcomes of the PTSS Review has been delayed due to the pandemic the Academic and Pastoral Support Policy will remain in place for academic year 2021/22.

**Discussion**

4. There are ongoing discussions about timescales for implementing the recommendations of the PTSS Review. While it has been agreed in principle that full implementation will not be possible until start of academic year 2023/24, some areas of the University are keen to move forward faster. What is clear however is that the current Personal Tutor (PT) and student support structures will remain in place in all areas for 2021/22. In addition, following the recent Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR), we have seen a draft recommendation around the University needing to make demonstrable progress next (academic) year in “ensuring parity of experience for students and effective signposting to support services.”

It therefore makes sense to consider what actions the University should take for 2021/22 that are consistent both with the expected ELIR recommendation and with the direction of travel set out in the PTSS review.

The PTSS model envisages four pillars of support

1. More professionalised advice and guidance, including dedicated mental health resources in each school and PT's replaced with professional service advisers
2. Support from teaching teams (as currently)
3. Cohort leadership (by academics, e.g. programme directors)

4. Integrated peer support.

Implementation of the first recommendation is essentially the major work of the project needed to implement the full PTSS review. Some Schools may choose to move forward with one aspect of this – recruiting local mental health advisers – in 2021/22 but there are potentially significant risks in this approach (creating single points of failure, as there is the risk of individuals in these roles being overwhelmed with demand in the absence of the wider student support changes needed.)

The second recommendation is to all intents and purposes “business as usual” for course teams.

There is however potential, subject to further discussion, to advance practice in the areas of cohort leadership and peer support:

- There is no single model of programme leadership across the institution. Where the role of programme director does exist, the job purpose may have nothing to do with building cohort and community amongst students on the programme. There is therefore the potential to consider a standard role and job definition across the University, as there is for (for example) Senior Tutors. Building cohort sense of belonging and community is likely to be even more important in the wake of the covid pandemic and the impact it has had on staff and students. This work would need to encompass joint as well as single honours degrees.
- The PTSS recommendations for Peer schemes were that they should be formally embedded as part of a student’s wider support and development network. For 2021/22 this could include ensuring that all schools have peer learning / mentoring schemes for at least first year students, and to support schools to develop further schemes (including 2<sup>nd</sup> year and also postgraduate taught); also to address the issue of Senior Student Leaders being paid and provided with more consistent management and supervision. Finally, there is the potential to expand the use of peer schemes to support student transitions, integration and sense of belonging, working alongside Programme Directors or similar.

5. The Policy currently outlines: roles; minimum meeting requirements; the requirement for Personal Tutoring Statements; and the requirement for all taught students to have a PT. This could be both updated and expanded to include requirements for Programme Directors (or similar) and the wider use of peer schemes in each school.

6. Following approval of the amended Policy, the Quality Team (Academic Services) will review the School Personal Tutoring Statement template and facilitate the updating and approval of Statements by the Personal Tutoring Oversight Group.

**Resource implications**

7. Schools/Deaneries will be required to allocate resources in line with the requirements of the Policy.

### **Risk management**

8. The Policy commits the University to ensure a minimum parity of experience for students across the PT system.

### **Equality & diversity**

9. As this is a minor change to an existing policy, we do not believe that an update to the EQIA is required.

### **Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

10. A strategic communication should be sent to all staff involved in the PT System to clarify the status of the PT System for 2021/22. Personal Tutoring Statements will provide information to students on how the PT System is being implemented within their School/Deanery.

#### **Author**

**Gavin Douglas** (Deputy Secretary Student Experience), **Nichola Kett** and **Brian Connolly** (Academic Services)  
May 2021

#### **Presenter**

**Gavin Douglas** (Deputy Secretary Student Experience)

### **Freedom of Information**

Open

# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

## Purpose of Policy

The aim of this document is to set out the academic and pastoral support available to students across the University, including the Personal Tutor system.

## Overview

The University is committed to providing its students with effective academic and pastoral support. The aim is to ensure that students have access to a framework of support that builds on best practice, meets the needs of students, and is of a quality and consistency appropriate to a university of high global standing. The framework is designed to provide consistent quality of provision, while also helping students to monitor their progress and performance more systematically and relate these to their longer-term aspirations. It blends a clear set of University-wide requirements, well-understood by all students and staff, with scope for Colleges and Schools to tailor provision to reflect differences.

## Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to all staff in roles where they support students and to all taught students.

**Contact Officer** Brian Connolly Academic Policy Officer b.connolly@ed.ac.uk

## Document control

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Approved:</b> 01.09.16	<b>Starts:</b> 01.09.16	<b>Equality impact assessment:</b> 18.05.16	<b>Amendments:</b> <a href="#">12.05.21</a>	<b>Next Review:</b> <a href="#">202319/240</a>
--------------	------------------------------	----------------------------	--	--	---

**Approving authority** [Learning and Teaching Committee](#) [Senate Education Committee](#)

**Consultation undertaken** Learning and Teaching Committee, Colleges, the Enhancing Student Support Project Board, Human Resources

**Section responsible for policy maintenance & review** Academic Services

**Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations** School Personal Tutoring Statement Template

**UK Quality Code** [Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement](#)

**Policies superseded by this policy** Academic and Pastoral Support at Edinburgh Standards and Guiding Principles  
Roles and Responsibilities within the Personal Tutor System

**Alternative format** If you require this document in an alternative format please email [Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk) or telephone 0131 650 2138.

**Keywords** Student support, academic and pastoral support, personal tutor, support services



# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy

## 1. Introduction

The University operates a framework of academic and pastoral support for students which constitutes a blend of localised provision within Schools and Colleges, the Personal Tutor System and student support services.

See also: [Dignity and Respect Policy](#)

## 2. Accountability and Provision of Support

The way in which academic and pastoral support for students is provided may vary between Schools. Overall responsibility rests with each Head of School to ensure that an appropriate framework of support is in place and working well.

Similarly Colleges, through their Deans of Students and Deans of Learning and Teaching (or equivalent) and their Learning and Teaching Committees (or equivalent), are responsible for overseeing the quality of provision of academic and pastoral support across Schools. Job descriptions and committee remits must reflect this.

Academic and pastoral support within a School or College must provide for all its students. Each School must inform the students taking its courses and programmes about the academic and pastoral support available to them and how to access it (reference: [Programme and Course Handbook Policy](#)). Schools are also expected to identify when and where the need for targeted support may be at its most acute and to concentrate provision accordingly.

Within each School, there must be a readily accessible, student-facing office as the primary point of contact for students seeking advice and information. This office must ensure that students' enquiries or requests are dealt with promptly and courteously and, that where necessary, students are directed to the appropriate member of staff or source of information.

## 3. The Personal Tutor System

### 3.1 Summary

Within Schools and Colleges, the Personal Tutoring (PT) system is a key element of academic and pastoral support to undergraduate and taught postgraduate students. The Personal Tutor (PT) is a key role and every undergraduate and taught postgraduate student must have a PT. This is a member of teaching staff who provides a readily accessible, primary point of contact for academic guidance and pastoral support (signposting to student support services), to help tutees reflect on their academic progress and get the most out of their studies. [He/she/They](#) will help their Tutees to take an active partnership approach to learning.

Each School has a Senior Tutor (ST) to ensure that PTs are adequately supported and to ensure that the PT system is operating effectively and consistently across the School.

Each College has a Dean of Students with responsibility for oversight of student support in the College.

# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

Within each School, support for students, PTs and STs is provided via a Student Support Team (SST), consisting of Student Support Officers (SSOs) or equivalents. The SST provides students with a further first point of contact. SSTs will also provide advice on the wider network of student support services at the University to help students have the best possible experience during their studies.

Each School must publish and maintain a School Personal Tutoring Statement outlining the way in which the PT system operates within that School and meets the University's standards and expectations for the Personal Tutor system.

Further information on each role in the Personal Tutor system and their responsibilities is detailed in Personal Tutor System Roles and Responsibilities (see Appendix).

## 3.2 Meeting Requirements

The minimum requirement for meetings scheduled by the PT/School is:

### *Undergraduate*

- Year 1 – four meetings (at least two of which must be individual meetings between the PT and tutee)
- Year 2 – three meetings (at least one of which must be an individual meeting between the PT and tutee)
- Years 3 & 4 (and 5 where required) – one meeting each year (the form of delivery will be determined by School).

### *Postgraduate Taught*

- Taught part of programme – four meetings (at least two of which must be individual meetings between the PT and tutee – the form of delivery for the other two meetings will be determined by the School)
- Research part of programme – one individual meeting between the PT and tutee

### *Purpose of Scheduled Meetings*

- Students should be actively encouraged to request additional meetings with their Personal Tutor as required throughout their time at the University.
- Meetings with students who are not on campus (e.g. studying abroad for a period, or on placement, or studying an online degree) may take place by telephone, [live internet call, or a web conferencing application or online/digital tool](#). Email exchanges are not considered to be meetings unless they take place within a pre-agreed timeframe to enable a “conversation”.
- The minimum meeting requirements should be adjusted pro rata for part time students and accordingly for non-standard programmes.

## 3.3 Monitoring and Review

Schools must have in place effective mechanisms for the monitoring and review of academic and pastoral support to ensure the adequacy of support arrangements and that appropriate action is taken to address issues raised. Schools must also meet any specific University requirements.



# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy

Monitoring of the quality of provision of academic and pastoral support across Schools must be complemented by the use of staff review procedures (e.g. annual review).

## 3.4 Briefing, Training and Development

An effective framework of support depends on the knowledge and skills of all staff who have responsibility for providing information and guidance. For briefing and training this is a shared responsibility between Schools, Colleges, support services and Edinburgh University Students' Association. Schools and Colleges must therefore ensure that adequate opportunities are in place for briefing, training and development, and that these opportunities are taken. All Schools will offer a training session for Personal Tutors and Student Support Teams at the start of each academic session. Formal training opportunities will be supplemented by informal training and mentorship/ongoing training. It is particularly important that consideration is given to the growing diversity of the University's students and staff.

## 4. Limits of Pastoral Support Responsibilities

While PTs and other academic and administrative staff have a responsibility for supporting students, they are not expected to provide specialist pastoral care and should not attempt to do so.

Consequently, in cases where a student appears to be experiencing severe distress (e.g. serious physical or mental health problems), ~~he or she~~they should be encouraged to seek appropriate professional help. It may occasionally be necessary for School staff to establish explicit boundaries, especially if the student is reluctant to seek professional support or if their behaviour is having a disruptive effect on others. The Head of School (or their delegate) and the relevant College Dean must be consulted in such cases.

### **Confidentiality**

Where a member of staff is concerned about the wellbeing of a student, ~~s/he~~they may want to share personal information about the student with relevant staff whose role is to provide support in such circumstances. Similarly, staff may wish to share personal information about a student with a third party, because of significant concerns regarding the person's wellbeing. Any such actions should be made in accordance with the University's Data Protection policies.

### **Relevant guidance and policies**

- [Helping Distressed Students](#)
- [Support for Study Policy](#)
- Fitness to Practice (request from relevant College Office)
- ~~[Disclosing Student Information](#)~~
- ~~[Recording Notes: Confidentiality Issues](#)~~
- ~~[Recording Notes: Levels of Confidentiality](#)~~
- [Student Support Services](#)

## 5. Student Support Services

A wide range of student support, in academic, pastoral, administrative and domestic areas, is made available to students through student support services, which complement provision in Schools and



# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

Colleges. The effectiveness of these services, and the cohesion between them and the wider academic University community, are fundamental to a high quality student experience.

## ***Expectations and Standards***

Providers of support services to students are expected to make clear, through a range of appropriate channels:

- the services and support they offer
- who can access these services
- an initial point of contact and advice on the best method of communication

Services must:

- Deal with requests and enquiries accurately, promptly and efficiently.
- Maintain and develop effective links with other areas of the University, Edinburgh University Students' Association and external organisations in order to facilitate effective referral and coherent delivery of student support.
- Ensure that all staff delivering the service are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their roles.
- Seek regular feedback from users, and make clear who students must contact with a complaint, compliment or suggestion.
- Monitor, review and seek to enhance their performance regularly, taking on board and acting upon feedback from students and Colleges and other relevant sources.

Services are expected to participate in appropriate quality assurance and enhancement processes within the University and/or within their professional arena.

# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

## Appendix – Personal Tutor (PT) System Roles and Responsibilities

The roles are set out in terms of the Core Purpose (which will be carried out by everyone in this role) and Main Responsibilities (with flexibility to accommodate local contexts and/or pedagogical requirements).

Personal Tutor  
Student Support Team  
Student as a Tutee  
Senior Tutor (School)  
Dean of Students (College)  
Assistant Principal Academic Support

### Personal Tutor (PT)

#### Core Purpose

- assist students in regularly reviewing their academic progress and performance ;
- encourage students to reflect on their learning, both within and beyond the formal curriculum, and how it contributes to their future development and career;
- help students to feel part of a community of learners;
- to provide pastoral support for their tutees consistent with the limits in section 4 and referring students to other staff in the School and support services as appropriate.

#### Main Responsibilities

- welcoming tutees;
- guiding tutees in course choice, confirming course choice and where appropriate enrolling students on courses;
- advising and supporting tutees in their studies including, for example, special circumstances, disciplinary or appeal matters;
- following the progress of tutees;
- to liaise with Student Support Teams and Teaching Organisations;
- to meet with tutees as specified in the School Personal Tutoring Statement;
- to respond promptly to a request for contact or support from a tutee and to provide an alternative point of contact when unavailable;
- to contribute to the appropriate keeping of records;
- to provide references for tutees;
- to undertake training and continuing professional development for the PT role.

### Student Support Team (Student Support Officer or equivalent)

#### Core Purpose

- to provide a point of contact for students;
- to maintain appropriate records and ensure that these are made available to staff;
- to provide administrative student support.



# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy

## Main Responsibilities:

- to assist with and record the allocation of students to PTs;
- to provide information to staff and students;
- to ensure the PT and/or Teaching Organisation is made aware of any student who may be in need of support;
- sharing with other staff in Schools the process of providing pastoral support for students and referring students to support services as appropriate.

## Student as a Tutee

### Core Purpose

- to reflect on their academic progress;
- to record their reflections on how their learning contributes to their longer-term aspirations;
- to engage as a member of a community of learners.

### Main responsibilities

- to attend and participate actively in meetings with their Personal Tutor (this is a University requirement and attendance will be recorded);
- to inform their Personal Tutor and/or Student Support Team promptly of any relevant change in their circumstances and of any problems affecting their studies to enable effective support to be offered;
- to keep a record of activities and reflections on their progress, performance and longer-term aspirations associated with these activities;
- to take due account of advice or information given.

## Senior Tutor

### Core Purpose

- to have strategic overview oversight of student support, including personal tutoring arrangements within the School;
- to lead the escalation of complex student cases which may require a case management approach, working with School Professional Services, College and specialist teams, depending on local arrangements, including but not limited to:
  - School / Deanery Student Support teams, Teaching Office / Graduate School Managers, local wellbeing roles (where such roles exist)
  - College Deans of Students, College Heads of Academic Administration
  - Colleagues in Student Experience Services, in particular Student Wellbeing
- to ensure that new PTs are well-briefed about the role, covering both academic and pastoral matters, and complete the required training;
- to help all PTs in the School to keep up-to-date with developments in provision;
- to advise PTs regarding unusual or complex issues;
- to liaise where needed between Student Support colleagues, PTs and the Dean of Students;
- ~~to liaise between the School and student support services;~~
- to ensure that the effectiveness of student support and personal tutoring within the School is regularly and systematically monitored.



# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy

## Main Responsibilities:

- to report directly to the Head of School or Director of Teaching (as appropriate locally)
- to lead the escalation of complex student cases involving students whose support needs are causing concern:
  - working with senior student support colleagues in Professional Services
    - e.g. for interruptions of study, support for study, and complex wellbeing issues
- to contribute as required to local case management committees handling ongoing complex cases
- to advise PTs, Student Support Teams and the Teaching Organisation when they are seeking advice on local student-support issues;
- to deal promptly and effectively with concerns raised by PTs and tutees;
- to seek regular interactions with student representatives in partnership with the Director of Teaching and Professional Services colleagues (as above), as appropriate
- to contribute to leadership and best practice activities, discussions, feedback events and network meetings at College / University level, as appropriate
- to engage in strategic discussions about student support structures and processes at School / Deanery level and in wider College or University fora and networks, as necessary;
- to assist the Head of School in interpreting student feedback in order to guide enhancement of the PT and student support system and inform annual review and management processes for individual PTs.
- to contribute to the School's annual and periodic quality assurance and enhancement processes.

## Essential:

- Thorough understanding of all codes and regulations relating to UG and PGT students
- Strong communication skills
  - with the ability to demonstrate empathy and compassion whilst maintaining boundaries and following due process
- High degree of familiarity with the various academic, professional and wellbeing support services on offer in the School / Deanery and across the University
- Has undertaken or will commit to undertaking core Mental Health and Wellbeing training provided by the University's Student Wellbeing Service
- Evidence of ability to work effectively as part of a multi-functional team of colleagues.

## Dean of Students

### Core Purpose

- to oversee student support in the College, working with Schools to ensure that there is an appropriate Personal Tutor system in place and working well;
- to liaise with student support services;
- to assist Senior Tutors, Heads of School and Head of College in interpreting student feedback to guide enhancement of the PT system;

### Main Responsibilities:

- to report directly to the Head of College;
- to liaise with other Deans in the College, with the Deans of Students in the other Colleges and with relevant Vice-Principals and Assistant Principals;

# Academic and Pastoral Support Policy



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

- to ensure that adequate and appropriate training and professional development is undertaken by PTs and STs;
- to collaborate with support services and Schools regarding the design and delivery of PT/ST-related training and professional development;
- to coordinate, meet and advise STs and others in key support roles;
- to foster regular interchanges between STs and student representatives.

## Assistant Principal Academic Support

### Core Purpose

- To provide leadership for the Personal Tutor system:
- To improve direct, subject-specific, support for students from teaching academics.

### Main Responsibilities

- To develop metrics that assess the quality of student support at School and individual-academic staff member level, with a view to the full inclusion of student support issues in management, workload model and reward/performance processes;
- To work with colleagues in Human Resources and the Vice Principal for People and Culture to embed academic support in relevant policies and processes;
- To communicate and promote the importance of academic support for students to the University community.

**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper notifies Committee members of plans for the annual review of Senate Committees' effectiveness.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. Committee members are asked to **note and provide comments on the plans for the review, and to engage with opportunities to provide feedback on the committees' functioning and effectiveness.**

**Background and context**

3. The 2017 version of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance states that institutions are expected to review the effectiveness of their Senate and its committees annually and to hold an externally-facilitated review every five years: "49. The governing body is expected to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of its committees, including size and composition of membership, at least every five years. As part of these processes or separately, the effectiveness of the academic board (also known as Senate, Senatus Academicus or academic council) is expected to be reviewed similarly. These reviews should be reported upon appropriately within the Institution and outside. Externally facilitated reviews should be held following any period of exceptional change or upheaval (allowing suitable time to see the effects of changes made), the usual timetable for externally facilitated review being brought forward if necessary in these circumstances."
4. In line with the requirements of the Code, during Spring/Summer 2021, Academic Services is conducting an annual review of the three Senate Standing Committees. The outcomes of this review will be reported to Senate in September / October 2021.
5. Actions identified in the previous annual effectiveness review are noted in Appendix 2.

**Discussion**

6. In the context of current University priorities and resources, review activities must be proportionate and take into account the ongoing University response to the Covid-19 emergency.
7. The review process is intended to gather information on and evaluate effectiveness in terms of the:
  - a. Composition of the committee

- b. Support and facilitation of committee meetings
  - c. Engagement of members and knowledge and understanding of their roles and committee remits
  - d. Impact and strategic relevance of Senate Committees' work
8. The review process will be primarily self-reflective and will gather information as described below:
- a. Education Committee members are asked to submit written comments to [philippa.ward@ed.ac.uk](mailto:philippa.ward@ed.ac.uk)
  - b. Senate Committee members will be invited to respond to an online questionnaire during summer 2021 (managed by Academic Services). Draft questions are appended below.
  - c. The Committee Convener and Secretary will review committee coverage of Postgraduate Research Student business.
9. Academic Services will collate the information above and produce a report on the findings.

### **Resource implications**

10. The review will be conducted by Academic Services and any resource requirements will be met from existing budgets. The resource implications of any actions identified in response to the outcomes of the review will be considered at that stage.

### **Risk management**

11. The annual effectiveness review process assists the University in ensuring that its academic governance arrangements are effective and enables the University to manage a range of risks associated with its academic provision.

### **Equality & diversity**

12. The review provides an opportunity to identify any equality and diversity issues in the make-up of the Committees and the way they conduct their business.

### **Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

13. The report will be presented to Senate and the Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2021. If the review identifies required actions or enhancement opportunities, these will be taken forward by Academic Service (if directly related to the functioning and support of the Senate Committees) or referred to the appropriate body for consideration.

### **Author**

Academic Services  
6 May 2021

### **Freedom of Information**

Open

## Appendix 1

### Senate Standing Committees: Internal Effectiveness Review 2020-21

#### Draft questions for Summer 2021 survey

Members of the Senate Committees will be invited to fill in an online questionnaire during Summer 2021 and the draft questions for this exercise are set out below for comment. This is the same question set used in the 2019-20 Senate committee review.

#### 1. Committee remit

- 1.1. Is the Committee's remit clear? If not, what improvements would you suggest?
- 1.2. Is the scope of the remit appropriate?
- 1.3. Has the Committee adapted effectively to the challenges or changes in priority?
- 1.4. Are you happy with your Committee's use of task groups?

#### 2. Governance and impact

- 2.1. Do you have a clear understanding of how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University?
- 2.2. Do you feel that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities?
- 2.3. Are there clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities?

#### 3. Composition

- 3.1. Do you think that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit?
- 3.2. Is the size of the Committee appropriate in order for it to operate effectively?

#### 4. Equality and Diversity

- 4.1. Is the composition of the Committee suitably representative of the diverse University population?
- 4.2. Are you satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business?

#### 5. Committee members – Role clarity and participation

- 5.1. Are you clear on your role and responsibilities as a Committee member?
- 5.2. If this is not clear, do you have any suggestions on how to improve this?
- 5.3. If you were a new member in 2019/20, were you satisfied with the induction you were given to the Committee and its business?
- 5.4. Is lack of engagement by members ever an impediment to the Committee?
- 5.5. Does anything create a barrier to your engagement with the Committee?

#### 6. Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

- 6.1. Does the Committee engage and communicate effectively with stakeholders? (For example, is the Senate Committees' Newsletter an effective vehicle?)
- 6.2. Do you have a clear understanding of your role on the Committee as a representative of your College or Group?
- 6.3. Do you have a clear understanding of your role in cascading information from the Committee to your College or Group?

#### 7. Committee support

- 7.1. Do you feel that the Committee is supported effectively by Academic Services?
- 7.2. Does the information provided to the Committee (in format and volume) support effective decision-making by the Committee?
- 7.3. Do papers provide you with appropriate levels of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee, and on how Committee decisions will be implemented?



**Appendix 2**

Because of the low number of respondents to the Effectiveness Review in 2019/20, a combined analysis of the answers to the review questions provided by all of Senate's Standing Committees suggested the following recommended actions:

<b>Remit</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Committees to discuss the relevance of task groups for areas of business in particular to enable wider participation and representation which could be beneficial to the Committee in its decision making</li> <li>2. SEC to consider how to include relevant matters relating to student experience into the cycle of business (while recognising how student experience is handled by Executive).</li> <li>3. SEC to consider how to strengthen governance of hybrid L&amp;T and curriculum matters in 2020/21 where these are initiated via the ART programme.</li> <li>4. SEC to consider its coverage of PGR matters and continue to monitor the development of the Doctoral College and its role (if any) in PGR governance.</li> </ol>	<p>Academic Services and Senate Standing Committee Conveners</p> <p>SEC Convener</p> <p>SEC Convener</p> <p>SEC Convener</p>
<b>Composition</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Committees to consider their membership actively in the course of each year in order to ensure it remains relevant (e.g co-opted members)</li> </ol>	Academic Services
<b>Governance &amp; Impact</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Paperwork – Committees to consider whether it may be possible to allocate readers for some of the more peripheral items.</li> <li>7. Presentation of papers - Committees to invite those who submit papers to present them if they are not a member. This seems to happen in some cases but not in others. This would ensure a more helpful discussion and better understanding for those who are putting the proposal forward for approval and understand the issues raised when a paper is not approved.</li> </ol>	<p>Academic Services</p> <p>Academic Services</p>
<b>EDI</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. More emphasis across all Committees on EDI as an integral consideration to all business and decision-making.</li> <li>9. Committees to request that contributors ensure that cover papers portray more evidence of EDI considerations</li> </ol>	<p>Senate Standing Committee Conveners</p> <p>Academic Services</p>
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Conveners and Secretaries to introduce continually improved inductions for members</li> </ol>	Academic Services and Senate Standing

	11. Re-set the expectations for the role of members in the cascading of information to constituencies in respect of each Committee's remit and decision making, with specific reference to the requirement for information to be reported to and from relevant College committees.	Committee Conveners
<b>Communications</b>	12. Academic Services to work with Committees to build on the success of the Committee Newsletter and to support increase in effective cascading of information to stakeholders.	Academic Services

**Senate Education Committee**

**Membership 2021/22**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Colm Harmon	Vice-Principal Students (Convener) – Ex Officio
Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Deputy Convener) – Ex Officio
Sabine Rolle	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Lisa Kendall	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Stephen Bowd	Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate Research)
Judy Hardy	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Andrew Dugmore	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Antony Maciocia	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)
XXX	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, UG)
Sarah Henderson	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)
Paddy Hadoke	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)
Tara Gold	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Vice-President Education – Ex Officio
Stuart Lamont	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Permanent Staff Member – Ex Officio
XXX	Postgraduate Research Student Representative
Iain Gordon	Head of School, CSE
Richard Andrews	Head of School, CAHSS
Mike Shipston	Head of Deanery, CMVM
Sue MacGregor	Director of Academic Services – Ex Officio
Velda McCune	Representing Director of Institute for Academic Development – Ex Officio
Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment & Admissions – Ex Officio
Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division of Information Services – Ex Officio
Shelagh Green	Director for Careers & Employability – Ex Officio
Sian Bayne	Co-option – Digital Education
Paula Webster	Co-option – Student Analytics and Insights
	Co-option
(Philippa Ward)	(Secretary)

**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Draft Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees**

**Description of paper**

1. This is the draft annual report to Senate from the Senate Standing Committees: Education Committee; Academic Policy and Regulations Committee; and Quality Assurance Committee. It reports on the Committees' achievements and use of delegated powers in 2020-21. It also proposes outline priorities for 2021-22.

**Action requested**

2. The Committee is invited to comment on the draft report, in particular the major items of committee business from 2020-21 and the proposed plans of the Committee for the next academic year.

**Background and Context**

3. The Senate Standing Committees provide an annual report setting out progress on activities in the past year and seeking Senate approval for their general strategic direction and priorities for the next academic year.
5. The draft report provides an opportunity for Senate Standing Committee members to feed into the annual review and planning process.

**Resource implications**

4. The proposed plans for 2021-22 will have some resource implications relating to time spent by members of the Committees and Policy Officers in Academic Services or staff invited to participate in working groups. Some of the resource requirements for wider work of the Committees will be met through existing resources or have agreed funding in place.

**Risk Management**

5. Each individual strand of proposed activity will be subject to risk assessment as appropriate.

**Equality and Diversity**

6. Where required, Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for individual work packages completed next year.

**Next steps / implications**

7. Comments from the Committee will be fed into the final version of the report. The report will be presented to Senate for noting and approval on 2 June 2021. The approved report will be highlighted in the Senate Committees' Newsletter. The Senate Committees will progress the agreed strategic approach during 2021-22 as set out in the report. This report will also be shared with the University Court for information.

**Authors**

Professor Colm Harmon, Convenor of Senate Education Committee  
Professor Tina Harrison, Convenor of Senate Quality Assurance Committee  
Professor Alan Murray, Convenor of Academic Policy and Regulations Committee  
Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services  
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer  
Kathryn Nicol, Academic Policy Officer  
Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer

SEC: 12.05.21  
H/02/42/02

**SEC 20/21 5 K**

Philippa Ward, Academic Policy Officer

5 May 2021

**Freedom of Information**  
Open

## Annual Report of the Senate Committees 2020-21

### 1. Executive Summary

This report summarises the achievements of the Senate Committees, and their use of the powers delegated to them by Senate, for academic year 2020-21, along with their proposed plans for 2021-22.

### 2. Introduction

The three Standing Committees of Senate (hereafter referred to as the Senate Committees) are the Senate Education Committee (SEC), Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), and Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

Senate has delegated to these Committees a range of its powers, and these powers are set out in the Committees' Terms of Reference. Links to the Terms of Reference and memberships of the Senate Standing Committees are below:

- [Education Committee](#)
- [Academic Policy and Regulations Committee](#)
- [Quality Assurance Committee](#)

Sections 3, 4 and 5 below provide information on the Standing Committees' activities in 2020/21.

Section 6 sets out proposals for future work. These proposals have arisen from Committee discussions, and discussion at the Senate Committee Conveners' Forum. The proposals are designed to assist the University in pursuing its Learning and Teaching agenda and wider goals and laid out in the University Strategy 2030:

- [Strategy 2030](#)

### 3. Key Committee and Task Group Activities in 2020-21\*

Name of Committee	No. of meetings
Senate Education Committee	5
Academic Policy & Regulations	4
Senate Quality Assurance Committee	5

Name of Task Group	Task Group of:
Personal Tutor System Oversight Group	SQAC
Student Support Services subcommittee	SQAC
Data Task Group	SQAC
Support for Curriculum Development Group	SEC
Online Remote Examinations and Assessment (OREA)	SEC

\*Includes meetings scheduled for the remainder of the session.

The remits and memberships of any task groups are available within the relevant Committee pages at: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees)

### 4. Senate Committees' Progress in 2020/21

Section 4 provides information on progress against the activities proposed in last year's report to Senate. Section 5 provides information on other committee activity in 2020/21.

#### **4.1 Education Committee**

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

<b>Activity</b>
<p><b>1. Drive the curriculum reform agenda in the evolving context</b></p> <p><b>November 2020 Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Presentation on curriculum review by the Vice-Principal Students – the Committee considered a number of key issues, for example the complexity of the University's offer; the way in which prospective applicants view the University; whether the University's curriculum reflects its philosophy; and whether the University currently over-teaches and examines.</li><li>- 'Space, Place and Pedagogy: 'Beyond Digital' Learning and Teaching' (Paper B) – the Committee gave 'in principle' support for the proposals outlined in the paper, and agreed that they would be taken forward as part of the curriculum transformation agenda.</li><li>- 'Providing an Excellent Learning Experience for our International Students' (Paper D) – the Committee agreed that there were opportunities to look further at this as part of the curriculum transformation agenda. It was agreed that consultation around curriculum reform / transformation should involve a diverse group of students.</li></ul> <p><b>January 2021 Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 'Lessons from the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program' (Paper B) – it was recognised that the lessons learned from this Program may help to inform the curriculum transformation agenda.</li><li>- 'Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) PGT Model' (Paper D) – it was recognised that the proposed model may benefit not only EFI's PGT programmes, but the University's PGT (and potentially UG) offering as a whole.</li></ul> <p><b>March 2021 Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The Committee considered, for information, a paper taken to the 23 February 2021 meeting of University Executive providing a brief update on the work of the Curriculum Transformation Programme and the draft Board's membership and Terms of Reference.</li></ul> <p><b>May 2021 Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Presentation by the Vice-Principal Students</li></ul> <p><b>Additional update to be provided by Amanda Percy</b></p>
<p><b>2. Ensure effective responses to ELIR recommendations</b></p> <p>This will be taken forward in 2021/22 due to the ELIR being delayed until March 2021.</p>

**3. Oversee the ongoing development of the Doctoral College and monitor its impact upon the experiences of PGR students including discussion and influence of the University approach to PGR scholarships.**

**November 2020 Meeting**

- The Doctoral College Operational Plan was received by Education Committee
- The Committee noted a change of name from the PGR Steering Group to the Doctoral College Operational Group.

**January 2021 Meeting**

- The Committee noted that the Doctoral College Operational Group had met for the first time and was prioritizing activities to ensure that it had capacity to deal with issues around COVID mitigation.

**Update Provided by Doctoral College May 2021**

The Doctoral College now consists of around 225 staff across all Schools, Deaneries, Colleges and key services. The Microsoft Teams pages are very active allowing staff to share ideas and problems quickly and get back solutions available for all from the services. It has allowed us to react quickly to current events (especially around the pandemic) as well as to hugely enhance change management in all aspects of research student support and training.

The new Doctoral College Operational Group is running carrying over the business of the former Steering Group. There is also a Management Group set up under the auspices of Research Policy Group (soon to be Research Strategy Group) and functionality has been divided between them. There is a common core membership.

Over the last year the Operational/Steering Group has overseen the creation of our themed plan with seven key themes each led by one of the Deans: Administration, Wellbeing, Communities, Research Strategy, Recruitment and Finance, and Governance and Planning. These have sub-themes also with a lead. Below these we are developing workstreams to action tasks.

We have set up two substantial working groups looking at Scholarships and Diversity in Recruitment. Both report formally to SRFSG but are overseen by the Doctoral College operational group. The Scholarships group has proposed (and it has been accepted) that Principal's Career Development Scholarship and Edinburgh Global Research Scholarship be stopped and put in place a replacement scheme called the Edinburgh Doctoral College Scholarship. It is also aiming to include a baseline of conditions for such Scholarships which it aims to roll out to all UoE scholarships and beyond. This will include sick pay, family leave and mandatory training in EDI and ethical research. The Recruitment group has just completed its report with recommendation building on good practice in our Doctoral Training Centres and Centres of Doctoral Training across the institution.

**4. Monitor the evolution and implementation of the institutional policy to support the University's Lecture Recording service in the context of Adaptation and Renewal post-Covid-19.**

**September 2020 Meeting**

- The Committee approved a new Virtual Classroom Policy. The Policy clarifies rights and responsibilities when delivering and recording teaching and learning using the Virtual Classroom Service and other online technologies.



The Virtual Classroom Service is used in the regular delivery of fully-online programmes, and during the COVID-19 pandemic has permitted online and hybrid delivery of programmes normally delivered on campus. The Policy helps to manage the potential risks associated with virtual classes. The Policy extends existing principles agreed for lecture recording to this context, amending them or making separate provision where required.

The Policy applies University-wide to staff, students and visiting lecturers involved in running or participating in virtual classroom sessions. The Policy also covers online student pastoral support meetings. The Policy does not cover teaching recorded or live-streamed using the Lecture Recording service, or non-teaching online events, meetings and other activities as these are covered by the Lecture Recording Policy.

**5. Monitor ongoing effectiveness of Student Health & Wellbeing Strategy in the context of overall student learning experience.**

**November 2020 Meeting**

- An update on the Student Mental Health Strategy was provided by the Director of Student Wellbeing. Members noted excellent work by the University's mental health services both to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to continue developing strategically.

**6. Ensure strengthening of the Committee's link to the Space Strategy Group.**

**January 2020 Meeting**

- Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) PGT Model – the Committee discussed the importance to the model of the University having suitable teaching space, and the Space Strategy Group's role in this.

**Additional update to be provided by Estates**

**4.2 Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)**

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

**Activity**

**1. Work with the relevant work streams of the Adaptation and Renewal Programme to oversee the implementation of any significant policy changes associated with the developing programme of work.**

No action to date.

**2. Monitor any requirement for longer term regulatory and policy changes as a result of Covid-19 and take appropriate action as required.**

APRC agreed a package of measures to mitigate the ongoing impact of Covid-19 in January 2021. Recent efforts have been focused on producing user-friendly guidance to support Schools with the implementation of these measures, which has now been published on SharePoint. The guidance will be accompanied by a series of case studies to demonstrate the application of the various measures.

Following the successful operation of virtual meetings of Boards of Examiners in 2019/20, and following Semester 1 in the current session, APRC agreed in January 2021 to amend the Taught Assessment Regulations to allow Boards of Examiners to meet virtually, wherever this is considered appropriate by the relevant Convener. This not only supports diversity of participation from members, who may not otherwise be able to attend in-person meetings, but also supports the University strategic goals relating to climate impact, by reducing the need for staff to travel to meetings.

**3. Input as required into Curriculum Transformation project (led by Education Committee).**

This will be taken forward in 2021/22.

**4. Review of Enhancement-Led Institutional Review outputs and take appropriate action as required.**

This will be taken forward in 2021/22 due to the ELIR being delayed until March 2021.

#### **4.3 Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)**

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

##### **Activity**

**1. Continue to contribute to preparations for the University's next Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) and oversee activities in response to the review.**

The Committee contributed to the preparations for the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) and will oversee activities in response to the University's successful outcome. The University was judged to have "effective arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience", a positive judgement and the best possible outcome for an ELIR.

The Review Team commended the University for: our commitment to working in close partnership with our students; the work of the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) in supporting staff development and sharing good practice; the development and expansion of Peer Support/Peer-Assisted Learning Schemes; our support for student involvement in Internal Periodic Reviews. The Review Team identified a number of areas for further development, the majority of which we were already working towards. There are two areas in particular where we have been asked to make significant progress over the course of the next academic year: personal tutoring/student support and assessment and feedback.

The final report will be published in the middle of July and circulated widely. The University is required to take action on the areas for further development and to report on this to the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (who run the ELIR process) one year after the publication of the report. The Committee oversee the response to the recommendations, ensuring alignment with existing areas of work, including Curriculum Transformation.

**2. Review responses to the coronavirus pandemic gathered via the University's Quality Assurance Framework, gather learning for future developments and share good practice across the institution.**

The Committee considered the annual School quality reports (25 reports from the Schools and Deaneries), annual College quality reports and the outcomes of annual reports from the student support services (16 reports). The reporting process this year was streamlined to focused on the impact of and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic while also allowing for optional reflection on other aspects of academic standards, student performance and the student experience. The Committee identified examples of positive practice and issues for further development at institutional level including: staffing and workload pressures; central communications to students and staff; equality, diversity, and inclusion issues arising due to the impact of the pandemic; the implementation of the new Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) service; the performance of the various online teaching platforms; access to on-campus space and resources and issues with the Assessment and Progression Tools (APT). The Committee has requested a response to each issue from individuals and areas with relevant responsibilities and a progress report on actions will be considered at the April meeting of SQAC. A report on these issues has also been submitted to the University Executive

**3. Review the approach to gathering student feedback across the University from Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs).**

The Committee continues to monitor the implementation of mid-course feedback through annual monitoring, review and reporting processes. The Committee has reviewed [to be updated following meeting to note whether approval received] a revised Student Voice Policy, taking into account the recommendations of the CEQ Review Project Board (approved by University Executive) to decentralise the management of course evaluation feedback, affording greater flexibility to schools in how they may gather and respond to the student voice. In support of this change, the CEQ Review Board is developing a toolkit to support local collection of end of course feedback (e.g. question banks, different methods of collecting feedback) to be available for the start of AY 2021/22. The Board will look at options for a University wide survey once there is more clarity on the future of the NSS.

**4. Examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data.**

A Data Task Group has been established to exploring data options for a new system of monitoring student retention, progression, and attainment. The membership of the Group is as follows: **Dr Paul Norris**, Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS); **Paula Webster**, Head of Student Data and Surveys (Student Systems); **Fizzy Abou Jawad**, Vice President (Education), Students' Association; **Brian Connolly**, Academic Services. The Group submitted a progress report to the April meeting of SQAC (the agenda of which focused on QA Data and included the annual Degree Classification Outcomes report). The Committee was presented with a range of analysis on student progression and attainment and noted a number of progression and attainment gaps and asked the Data Task Group to undertake further exploration to help understand possible contributory factors.

**5 Other Committee Activity in 2020/21**

Other committee activity carried out in 2020/21 is summarised below.

- The attached Annex sets out any new strategies / regulations / policies / codes that the Committees have approved (the more substantive of which are covered in Section 4 above), along with changes to existing documents.

## **6 Senate Committees' Priorities for 2021/22**

### **6.1 Planning Context**

Once again, the year will be planned in the context of Covid-related considerations driven by the institutional response to Scottish Government guidelines. This will influence the mode of operation and interaction between the Committees and their stakeholders.

### **6.2 Education Committee**

<b>Activity</b>
1. Ensure effective responses to ELIR recommendations. (Carried forward from 2020/21).
2. Input into the Curriculum Transformation project [Additional comment to be requested from programme team]

### **6.3 Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

<b>Activity</b>
1. Input as required into Curriculum Transformation project (led by Education Committee, carried forward from 2019/20).
2. Review of Enhancement-Led Institutional Review outputs and take appropriate action as required. (Carried forward from 2019/20).
3. Monitor any requirement for longer term regulatory and policy changes as a result of Covid-19 and take appropriate action as required. (Continued from 2020/21).

### **6.4 Quality Assurance Committee**

<b>Activity</b>
1. Develop and oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).
2. Implement the recommendations from the Digital Maturity report and consider how quality processes and the data that they produce can support the Curriculum Transformation programme.
3. Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data.
4. Engage with quality assurance and enhancement-related aspects of the Scottish Funding Council review of coherent provision and sustainability.

5. Implement the recommendations from the review of Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs).

**Annex – new regulations/policies/codes, and reviews of and amendments to existing regulations/policies/codes, approved by Senate and its Committees during 2020/21**

**[Information on 2020/21 updates to be added below – updating in progress]**

<b>Senate Committee</b>	<b>Name of document</b>	<b>Type of change (New / Revision / Deletion / Technical Update / Reviewed and no changes made)</b>
SEC	Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy	
SEC	Virtual Classroom Policy	New policy approved at SEC in September 2020. See papers at: <a href="#">virtualclassroompolicy.pdf (ed.ac.uk)</a>
SEC	Academic and Pastoral Support Policy	Amendments to the Senior Tutor role description approved by SEC in March 2021. See papers at: <a href="#">20210303agendapapers.pdf (ed.ac.uk)</a>
APRC	Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2020/21	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2021. See papers at: <a href="#">20210325agendaandpapers.pdf (ed.ac.uk)</a>
APRC	Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2020/21	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2021. See papers at: <a href="#">20210325agendaandpapers.pdf (ed.ac.uk)</a>

**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Senate Presentation and Discussion Themes for 2021/22 Meetings**

**Description of paper**

1. A request to the Committee to suggest themes for the presentation and discussion section of next year's Senate meetings, and a note of recently presented topics.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. The Committee is invited to make suggestions for themes for the presentation and discussion sections for Senate 2021/22. These will be collated by the Secretary to Senate Education Committee and passed to the Senate Clerk.

**Background and context**

3. Senate meetings are divided into two sections: an open presentation and discussion section, and a section for formal business open to Senate members only.
4. All members of staff are invited to attend the presentation and discussion section of the Senate meetings and this is an opportunity to hold open discussions on a key strategic theme.
5. From 2018/19, Senate also began to receive 'year-on updates' on selected topics presented in the previous year. In 2020/21, these updates were incorporated into the main presentation topics.
6. Suggestions for themes are being sought from the Senate Education Committee, the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, the Senate Quality Assurance Committee, and the Research Policy Group.

**Discussion**

7. The themes below have been covered in recent years.

**2020/21**

- Adaptation and Renewal: Students
- Adaptation and Renewal: Research and Innovation
- Adaptation and Renewal: Reshaping and Estates & Digital Infrastructure

**2019/20**

Main topics:

- Support for Early Career Researchers
- Student Support and Wellbeing: Review of Personal Tutoring and Student Support, and update on the Student Mental Health Strategy
- Enhancement-Led Institutional Review
- Curriculum Reform

Year-on updates:

- Student Experience Action Plan
- Research Excellence Framework

**2018/19**

Main topics:

- Teaching and Academic Careers
- Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
- Enhancing the Student Experience – Approach and Action Plan
- Refreshing the University's Strategic Plan
- Research Excellence Framework
- Student Experience Action Plan
- Widening Participation

Year-on update:

- Careers and Employability

**Resource implications**

8. None relevant

**Risk management**

9. None relevant

**Equality & diversity**

10. Committees are encouraged to consider equality and diversity as a factor in their selection of suggestions, and equality and diversity implications will be considered in the final selection of presentation themes.

**Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

11. Committee secretaries will collate suggestions and pass these to the Senate Clerk.

12. Collated themes will be passed to the Principal, who will make the final selection of presentation and discussion themes for 2021/22. Selected themes will be advertised via the [Senate website](#) and in advance of each meeting.

**Author**

Kathryn Nicol, Academic Policy Officer  
5 May 2021

**Freedom of Information**

Open



**Senate Education Committee**

**12 May 2021**

**Learn Foundations Update**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides an overview of the Learn Foundations project.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. This group is asked to note the paper for information only – particularly, the current School engagement with the Learn Foundations Project.

**Background and context**

3. Learn Foundations is a three-year, three phase project designed to support the University in being a world leader in digital education, offering an outstanding student experience to as diverse a group of students as possible.

**Discussion**

4. The Learn Foundations project is fundamental to the University's [Strategy 2030](#) and our aim to 'expand digital education to reshape our teaching for the future'. Learn Foundations aims to achieve this by:
  - Making Learn easier to use for both staff and students;
  - Ensuring courses are more accessible and inclusive;
  - Encouraging more consistent use of terminology related to learning and teaching;
  - Providing a better student experience in the online teaching and learning space.

In order to achieve the above, the Learn Foundations project has committed to supporting partner Schools and Deaneries with the following resources:

- An institution-wide approach to basic course structure as a minimum standard;
- Standardised course terminology;
- Access to training resources and a comprehensive programme of Learning Technology training;
- Opportunity to help define the use of the virtual Learning environment for future students via a programme of user experience research (UX);
- Support from 10 student helpers across the summer of 2021 to support migration on to the new standard structure;
- Review of current courses for accessibility and course design with access to a report and recommendations based on any analysis undertaken.

The approach has been developed in partnership with both staff and students. Engaging with more than 4000 students across the University. Through this research, we have built up a very rich and detailed understanding of what students and staff need to do in Learn, and how (along with why) this can be used to improve both the staff and student experience within Learn.

Agreeing on an institution-wide approach to basic course structure, and course terminology, will help to alleviate needless confusion caused by basic inconsistencies. It will also mean that there is still the required flexibility to structure good teaching within courses. In fact, it means that more attention can be paid to the teaching elements without having to think about where to put links and resources that are a basic requirement.

The Learn Foundations approach is being delivered via the provision of a standardised template for Learn courses (informed by user research with both staff and students), terminology and a checklist to support staff.

Around 90% of all Schools and Deaneries within the University will be using the Learn Foundations approach in the coming year, providing an enhanced user experience for both staff and students. Our aim has been to encourage as much adoption as possible to build a consistency of approach across the institution, which will mean support services can also be more effective.

## 5. Communications and Engagement

The project has implemented a comprehensive communications and engagement plan to support the delivery of Learn Foundations over the coming academic year, focusing on embedding the Learn Foundations approach across all Courses and promoting services and resources that support hybrid teaching.

The communications plan has two strands: continuing engagement with participating Schools, and engaging those Schools who have not yet adopted the Learn Foundations approach.

Progress to date is as follows:

College	School	Phase One Adoption (June 2019)	Phase Two adoption (June 2020)	Phase Three Adoption (June 2021)
	Business School	✓		
	Centre for Open Learning	✓		
	School of Divinity	✓		
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	School of Economics		✓	
	Edinburgh College of Art		✓	
	School of Health in Social Sciences		✓	
	School of History, Classics and Archaeology		✓	
	School of Law			✓
	Moray House, School of Education and Sport		✓	
	School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences			✓
	School of Social and Political Sciences*			
	School of Biological Sciences		✓	
	School of Chemistry		✓	
College of Science and Engineering	School of Engineering		✓	
	School of Geosciences	✓		
	School of Informatics		✓	
	School of Mathematics		✓	
	School of Physics and Astronomy		✓	
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine	Edinburgh Medical School	✓		
	Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies**			
	Deanery of Biomedical Sciences		✓	
	Deanery of Clinical Sciences	✓		
	Deanery of Population, Genetic and Population Health Sciences		✓	

\* Discussions are still ongoing with the School of Social and Political Sciences.

\*\* The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies have already implemented part of the Learn Foundations approach.

**Figure 1:** Adoption overview for the Learn Foundations approach.

## 6. User Experience

The project has engaged with all participating Schools, undertaking additional user research to determine if the current template remains fit for purpose to support hybrid teaching. This involved:

- Student surveys to understand priorities when using the Learn (this is a repeat of the exercise undertaken during Phase One which led to the development of the Learn Foundations template).
- Semi-structured interviews undertaken in partnership with Schools will be undertaken for both staff and students to understand how the template is impacting upon their experiences (students) and to inform guidance (staff) being created.
- Two rounds of usability testing cycles were completed in partnership with Schools (one staff and one student) to understand the template usability from both staff and students.

This user experience (UX) work was analysed with relevant outputs built into the current design of the Learn Foundations template. Details of this can be located on the following blog posts:

- [Understanding what staff and students need from Learn for hybrid teaching and learning;](#)
- [Card sort reveals how students expect to navigate learn for hybrid learning;](#)
- [A top task survey has shown what staff and students prioritise in hybrid teaching and learning.](#)

## Learn Foundations Student Intern Support

Given the positive feedback from colleagues about the impact of Learn Foundations on student experience, we plan to continue a similar support approach this year by employing 12 student interns to:

- Support partner Schools and Deaneries with their preparations for Semester 1 of the coming academic year;
- Support Schools and Deaneries by mapping courses to understand current course design and completing accessibility reviews.
- Support Schools and Deaneries with additional tasks in support of Course Organisers for both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Using this central team of student interns has a number of benefits, taking the burden off school administrative staff during the busy summer period, and providing employment opportunities for our students. Evidence of the value of the Learn Foundations internship as well as its impact on learning for students can be found on one of the most recent Teaching Matters posts – [Spotlighting on the Learn Foundations approach – A backstage pass.](#)

It is proposed that a Learn Summer migration Service is implemented into the live service teams to allow for a central 'reset' to occur each year with students being at the heart of the work being undertaken.

**Resource implications**

7. All resource implications have been discussed in full with each of the partner Schools as implications vary from School to School.

**Risk management**

8. Not included

**Equality & diversity**

9. The experience of Learn users has been considered from an accessibility and inclusivity perspective with both built into the heart of the project.

**Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**

10. Not included

**Author**

*Lee-Ann Simpson  
6th May 2021*

**Presenter**

*Melissa Highton*

**Freedom of Information**

Open