<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>

Senate Education Committee
Thursday 12 May 2022, 2.00pm
Conducted via Microsoft Teams

A G E N D A

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 10 March 2022**   SEC 21/22 5 A

3. **Convener's Communications**   Verbal Update

4. **For Discussion**

4.1 Microcredentials: Issues and Principles   SEC 21/22 5 B

4.2 Assessment and Feedback Update – Responding to ELIR   SEC 21/22 5 C

4.3 Tutors and Demonstrators Training Working Group   SEC 21/22 5 D

4.4 Committee Administration:

   4.4.1 Senate Education Committee Membership 2022/23   SEC 21/22 5 E

   4.4.2 Draft Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees   SEC 21/22 5 F
          (including provisional identification of Committee priorities
          for 2022/23)

   4.4.3 Plans for Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate   SEC 21/22 5 G
          Standing Committees

   4.4.4 Senate Presentation and Discussion Themes for 2022/23   SEC 21/22 5 H
          Meetings

5. **Standing Items**

5.1 *Curriculum Transformation*

   Consultation on the Edinburgh Student Vision   Presentation

5.2 *Student Experience*

   Student Experience Updates Taken to 15 March and 5 April 2022   SEC 21/22 5 I
   Meetings of University Executive   CLOSED

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(Any open sections of papers available via University Executive website: [Agendas/Papers/Minutes | The University of Edinburgh](#))

5.3 ***Doctoral College***   Verbal update

6.   For Approval

6.1   Policy Updates to Reflect New Student Support Model: SEC 21/22 5 J

- Virtual Classroom Policy
- Policy for the Recruitment Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators

7.   Any Other Business

**Minutes of the Meeting of Senate Education Committee
held via Microsoft Teams at 2.00pm on Thursday 10 March 2022**

1. Attendance

Present	Position
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)
Andy Dugmore	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Antony Maciocia	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)
Sarah Henderson	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)
Jamie Davies	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, UG)
Paddy Hadoke	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)
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
Tara Gold	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Vice President Education
Marie-Louise Wohrle	Postgraduate Research Student Representative
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 Division of Information Services – Ex Officio; Assistant Principal (Online and Open Learning)
Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions – Ex Officio
Sue Macgregor	Director of Academic Services – Ex Officio
Marianne Brown	Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling (Interim)
Sian Bayne	Assistant Principal Digital Education
Philippa Ward	Academic Services (Secretary)
In Attendance	
Hazel Christie	CPD for Learning and Teaching
Teresa Ironside	Director of Data Science Education
Ailsa Niven	Research Ethics Policy
Amanda Percy	Curriculum Transformation
Jon Turner	Curriculum Transformation
Patrick Walsh	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Apologies	
Judy Hardy	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)

2.   Minutes of Electronic Meeting held between 13 and 20 January 2022

The minutes of the electronic meeting held between 13 and 20 January 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

3.   Convener's Communications

3.1 Management of Closed Papers

The Committee discussed practice around the sharing of 'closed' papers with members of Senate.

Members agreed that:

- the default position was that papers were 'open'.
- where an author requested that a paper be 'closed', the Committee secretary should ensure that a strong rationale for this was provided.
- where the decision was taken to 'close' a paper, for good reason, it was important that the spread of the paper was limited. As such, current practice would continue, namely the paper would be shared with Committee members only until such time as it was agreed that the circulation of the paper could be widened.

4.   For Discussion

4.1.1 Assessment and Feedback – Responding to ELIR

The paper outlined proposals to develop a 'holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback' in response to a recent ELIR recommendation.

The Task Group undertaking the work relating to this was part of the Curriculum Transformation Programme and was looking at four key areas:

- Assessment
- Feedback
- Marking schema
- The academic year

Proposals relating to marking schema and the academic year were not included in the paper and would be brought to the Committee at a later date. Instead, the paper focussed on:

- The overall approach to assessment and feedback
- Assessment and feedback principles. These aimed to set a clear set of expectations, in order to bring consistency across the University.

Members of the Committee were asked to comment on:

- whether or not these were the correct key assessment and feedback principles;
- whether there were areas where there was a need for additional guidance or support;
- whether there were particular aspirational developments in assessment and feedback which should be included in the development of strategic priorities.

The Committee commented on the following:

- There was broad support for the principles, although it was felt that there was potential for them to be more aspirational – the principles, as written, formalised many things that Schools should already be doing.
- Making the principles 'policy' would help with achieving consistency - although concerns were raised about policy proliferation and increased reporting requirements for Schools.
- Clarity was needed on whether the proposed approach applied to all assessments.
- Where possible, the University should be moving towards a feed-forward as opposed to a feed-back approach.
- Linking the principles to the Edinburgh Student Vision was beneficial.
- Principle 6, relating to use of learning technology, would potentially benefit from being divided into two separate principles.
- In relation to Principle 7(h) - 'Enough time for feedback to be provided by staff and used by students' - members recognised that careful consideration would need to be given to workload models.
- There would be benefit in giving further thought to ways in which the External Examiner role might be recognised in Principle 7.
- Student choice and partnership were extremely important to assessment and feedback.
- Considering the wider ecosystem in which assessment and feedback operates (eg. Extensions and Special Circumstances processes) would assist with implementation of the proposed approach.
- There would be benefit in articulating more clearly the ways in which the proposed approach might help to close attainment gaps.

> **Action**: APASQA to discuss:
> - workload models with the Convener and incoming Provost
> - Principle 6 with the Assistant Principal Digital Education

4.1.2 Arrangements for 2022/23 Exam Diets

Whilst it was recognised that some courses and programmes may wish to return to using conventional exams in 2022/23, it was hoped that, wherever possible, the good and best practice developed during the pandemic around alternative forms of assessment would be carried forward.

The Assistant Principal Online and Open Learning noted that allowing online exams to continue into the evening had implications for support staff, and asked for this to be factored into exam planning.

4.2   Update on the CPD Framework for Learning and Teaching

The paper was presented by Hazel Christie, IAD, who noted that participation in the Framework had flat-lined since the pandemic. Workload was identified as being the key barrier both to participation in and to the successful running of the scheme, which relied on volunteer mentors and assessors. The importance of addressing issues around workload allocation models was recognised.

It was noted that the upcoming reaccreditation of the Framework was seen more as an opportunity for enhancement than for full-scale review. Members were supportive of the enhancements proposed in the paper, though noted that there would be benefit in offering a fully online option for the PGCAP. This was not currently possible because it was listed in the DRPS as a face-to-face course. It was agreed that steps would be taken to try to address this issue.

4.3   Draft University of Edinburgh Research Ethics Policy

The paper was presented by Ailsa Niven, CAHSS Associate Dean of Research Ethics and Integrity, who noted that the authors were asking for review and comment to ensure that the Policy was a mechanism to support UG and PG students.

Members noted that:

- the overall direction of travel was excellent.
- the commitment to supporting training in this area was very welcome.
- there would be benefit in moving the paragraph relating to students higher up the document to give it greater visibility.
- there would be benefit in providing more detail about when local research ethics committees might seek help from those with specialist expertise.
- some minor changes to the paper were necessary to reflect the governance structure in the College of Science and Engineering accurately.
- providing some workflows and examples would potentially be beneficial.
- whilst there was effective dissertation methods training in place for PGR students, there was potential to improve the offerings for PGT and UG students.
- The 'Dignity and Respect' section of the paper referred only to research participants and could be more inclusive.

4.4   Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR): Proposal to Introduce a New 'Additional Recognised Activity' and Broader HEAR Issues

Members agreed that the proposed new 'Additional Recognised Activity', *Moray House Community Champion'* should be added to the HEAR. It was agreed that provided recognised activities were substantial, verifiable and equitable, they could be School-specific.

The Committee expressed strong support for the idea of introducing a HEAR for PGR students. It was noted that the need for a PGR HEAR was increasing over time, particularly for international students who are often required to provide evidence of their

involvement in student and staff communities. Some Doctoral Training Centres were now producing their own, unregulated versions of the HEAR to compensate for the fact that the University was not providing one.

It was recognised that there would be significant resource issues associated with introducing a PGR HEAR, but the Committee agreed that further consideration should be given to this matter.

> **Action**: Convener and Secretary to discuss next steps around introducing a PGR HEAR.

4.5   Potential Review of Lecture Recording Policy

Members noted that review of the University's Lecture Recording Policy was overdue. A decision needed to be taken about whether or not to review the Policy in the context of the current industrial action.

Members discussed concerns about reintroducing automatic deletion of recordings after 18 months from 1 April 2022. It was recognised that this would likely affect students' preparation for the Summer 2022 exam diet. It was also noted that the way in which recordings were being created had changed since the start of the pandemic: many recordings were no longer just a recording of a live lecture, but had been created specifically as a resource for longer-term use. The Committee agreed that wholesale review of the Policy was necessary.

> **Action**: Convener and the Assistant Principal Online and Open Learning to discuss next steps with the Principal and University Secretary.

5.   Standing Items

5.1   Curriculum Transformation – Timelines

Presenters Amanda Percy and John Turner noted that 2022 was a critical year for the Curriculum Transformation Programme. The draft Edinburgh Student Vision had now been developed. The launch of the consultation on the Vision was imminent and would run to late April.

Members considered the overall Curriculum Transformation Programme structure, noting that the Programme may not move through the various phases in a wholly linear way: some elements would run in parallel. It was hoped that by the end of 2022, work relating to 'Curriculum Design Principles and Architecture' would be complete.

The Programme had appointed one secondee and was in the process of appointing additional secondees.

5.2   Student Experience

Members noted the updates provided by University Executive.

5.3 Doctoral College

Updates were provided on the following PGR-related activity:

- Epigeum training
- PGR Widening Access Survey
- Work on PGR wellbeing
- Work on fees and scholarships, including concerns about the appropriateness of offering partial scholarships.

6. For Information

6.1 Learn Ultra Early Adopters and Accessibility

Members noted the paper. Some concerns were raised about the short timescale for roll-out and the proposed additional two hours' workload for teaching staff to learn how to use the new interface, which was not considered sufficient. The Committee was advised that 100 courses had volunteered to be early adopters of Learn Ultra. Their experiences would provide a much clearer understanding of the work that was involved in moving across to the new system. It was confirmed that a training course would be made available to staff.

Philippa Ward
Academic Services
6 April 2021

Senate Education Committee

12 May 2022

Microcredentials: Issues and Principles

Description of paper
1. The paper gives an overview of current sector trajectories for microcredentials and short courses, provides a snapshot of the current state of play at our own University and proposes a set of key principles to guide the development of strategy in this area. It contributes to Strategy 2030 outcomes relating to teaching excellence, inclusivity and lifelong learning, relevance to society, digital outreach and commitment to both the local region and the international community.

Action requested / recommendation
2. For discussion and endorsement.

Background and context
3. See paper.

Discussion
4. See paper.

Resource implications
5. None immediate, though potentially significant resource implications should SEC endorse a strategic focus on microcredentials development, support and marketing.

Risk management
6. Broad risks are outlined in the paper. Should the university move ahead with a strategic focus on microcredentials, a detailed risk analysis will be conducted.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
7.

Equality & diversity
8. Microcredentials have the potential to enable new, more granular, accessible and inclusive ways of being a student. Should the university decide to prioritise microcredential development, further detailed focus on equality and diversity issues will be required.

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

9. Should the approach outlined in the paper be endorsed, the work will be taken forward through the Curriculum Transformation Programme.

<u>**Author**</u>

Professor Sian Bayne and
Dr Melissa Highton

4th May 2022

<u>**Presenter**</u>

Professor Sian Bayne and
Dr Melissa Highton

Freedom of Information Open

Microcredentials: issues and principles

Background

This paper gives an overview of current sector trajectories for microcredentials and short courses, provides a snapshot of the current state of play at our own university and proposes a set of key principles to guide the development of strategy in this area.

The University has an historic mission to meet our civic and social responsibility, making education open to all comers through outreach, extra-mural, adult, lifelong and community education. We also have 20 years' experience of delivering online learning and strong research expertise in digital education, both of which give us good capacity to address the growing sectoral shift towards shorter, stand-alone, online course delivery and 'micro-credentialing'.

While there are competing definitions and various forms of microcredentials in circulation, they can be generally defined as small 'chunks' of learning and skills acquisition often recognised by a digital certificate or badge (Kato et al 2020). Microcredentials can be stacked towards larger units of competence in a format that is verified, secure and shareable with peers, employers and educational providers. They normally certify achievement at a granular, sub-course level and are often assumed to carry the promise of personalisation and just-in-time value. They can be framed as the starting point for degree-level study, and are widely seen as a potentially valuable complement to universities' traditional offers – one which has the potential to enable flexibility and reduced costs for students, supports rapid responses to changes in the employment market, addresses skills gaps, and opens up wider access and opportunities for lifelong learning.

At the same time, the promise of microcredentials needs to be understood alongside some of the sector's more troubling trajectories, in particular 'unbundling' (the disaggregation of educational provision into its component parts, often through partnership with private providers) (Czerniewicz et al 2021), marketisation and the dominance of human capital theory in higher education policy (positing that that the primary function of universities is to demonstrate their alignment to the needs of employers and economy) (Marginson 2019, Jackson 2021). In some quarters, microcredentials are seen as fundamentally and inevitably disruptive to current degree models and to the future of the university sector itself (for example KPMG 2020).

A critical perspective on the trend for microcredentials therefore often sees them as problematic, shifting universities away from their focus on in-depth scholarship, educational values and social responsibility, to an over-alignment with the 'needs' of employers (Komljenovic 2019). The rapidity and 'agility' enabled by microcredentials can also be seen as aligning to the needs of the gig economy and the shoring-up of precarious employment via discourses of 'upskilling' (Wheelahan and Moodie 2021). There are concerns that – unless universities develop responsible and values-based strategies for them – microcredentials amplify existing inequalities, creating a context longer term in which the

in-depth study of research-led curricula becomes a model only accessible by those with the resources to buy into long-term, traditional degree programmes (Ralston 2021).

Risks and opportunities

In considering our approach to microcredentials and other alternative forms of credit, therefore, we need to think carefully about how their advantages and potential risks balance with our aspirations as a university, the future of the sector, the locus of our value to society, and the values articulated in Strategy 2030 of excellence, inclusivity, diversity, community and integrity.

The prestige and place of universities in society has historically been built on their mandate to accredit programmes of learning and award qualifications which evidence individuals' grasp of extended, in-depth curricula. On this basis, university qualifications have traditionally been seen and used as a route for graduates to achieve social mobility, enhanced status and increased earning power (Boero et al, 2019). The value of degrees themselves has been based in broad societal trust in the university as a locus of reliable, contemporary knowledge and recognised expertise (Nuhoḡlu Soysal and Baltaru, 2021). For research-intensive universities like Edinburgh, this is particularly the case – to date the high value of our degrees is tightly linked to the perception of the university as a place of prestige where in-depth, extended, research-led teaching is provided to students, and high-quality degree qualifications are secured. This needs to be taken into account as we develop strategy for alternative, more granular forms of credentialling.

Such alternative forms are often assumed to be both enabled and driven by technological change, and their futures are commonly assumed to be digital and data-driven. As part of this picture, the future of credit is increasingly described as sitting, not with universities, but within an 'internet of skills' in which qualifications are secured from diverse providers, and training and experience are recorded, verified and shared directly with potential employers (Cardenas-Navia and Jyotishi, 2021) using blockchain or similar technologies. Such moves represent a radical 'decentralisation' of credentialing which, in its most extreme instances, removes universities entirely from their current role as degree providers and gatekeepers.

Awareness of such risks, however, should sit alongside openness to the opportunities microcredentials give us to support the university to reach its WP goals, and to get ahead of the game in implementing fit for purpose systems to help deliver on our online and distance learning, and lifelong learning objectives. While short course, PPD, CPD and 'workforce skills' activity across the university is growing, a lack of comprehensive mapping and co-ordination of this risks a proliferation of local processes which will be confusing for learners, students and partners.

Sector-wide trajectories

The need for alternative forms of credentialing is often framed in terms of universities' readiness to respond to the 'megatrends' of automation, increase in life expectancy and

rapid technological change, and their ability to adapt to meet changing economic needs and an uncertain future for work. There is a general focus on microcredentials and other alternative forms of credit as potentially enabling new forms of lifelong and life-wide learning, flexibility for learners, employability, inclusivity and prosperity for individuals.

A review conducted by OECD provides evidence that policy moves on microcredentialing have proliferated in member countries' higher education systems over recent years, amplified by the pandemic (OECD 2021). One example, the current EC Proposal on Microcredentials, proposes to establish a common EU definition, set of standards and principals for microcredentials in order to support individuals 'to continually update their knowledge, skills and competences to fill the gap between their education and training and the demands of a rapidly changing labour market' (European Commission, 2021). In the US microcredential provision is expanding (McGreal and Olcott 2022), in part building on the visibility of its sector-leading digital platforms (EdX, Coursera, MIT Open Learning and others). Work in the US also focuses also on digital credentialling and the ways in which 'Learning Employment Records' might be used to record, track and share experiential learning and microcredentials without the intercedence of a university or other accrediting body (American Workforce Policy Advisory Board 2020).

More locally, Universities Scotland and QAA Scotland have been calling for a more coherent sector approach to microcredentials as a route toward 'more flexible pathways and access to knowledge and skills development' (Tierny and Westacott 2021), while funding from SFC for 'upskilling' standalone courses has increased year-on-year – our university is already delivering a portfolio of courses via this route.

Developments at Edinburgh

Microcredentials, CPD and short course activity is already underway in many areas of the university, including:

- professional level CPD offered to individuals (for example CSE and CMVM Postgraduate Professional Development schemes)
- skills to business in partnership (for example) Business School Executive Education programme and the Micromasters in Predictive Analytics developed through the Distance Learning at Scale programme
- short courses and lifelong learning being run by COL
- lifelong learning and access to short courses structured into the design of conventional MSc programmes, for example through EFI and the Bayes MSc Data Science, Technology and Innovation programme
- skills for work with SFC funding particularly computer, data and digital skills via Bayes and EFI in support of City Deal
- data-driven innovation CPD programmes under development through the Usher Institute
- collaborative activities through UNA Europa

The Distance Learning at Scale (DLAS) programme helped establish process for designing, creating and testing the University's ability to produce and support microcredentials. It provided a range of benefits to the University, including better marketing of online courses, improved processes for inclusive design and an increased understanding of the opportunities and lessons for delivering microcredentials.

Conversations have taken place in several committees regarding how the university might take forward the microcredentials agenda in an organised way. These include:

- discussion of the current paper at the Curriculum Transformation Board meeting on 14th April 2022

- a taskforce of the Senate Education Committee on 'standalone courses' which reported in May 2021, highlighting the variety and diversity of activity, and recommending the university clarify its strategic objectives in this area

- papers highlighting the lessons learned and recommendations from the DLAS project considered at Knowledge Strategy Committee and Senate Education Committee

- a paper on 'non-traditional learning' considered by the CAHSS Planning and Resources Committee in August 2021, emphasising the strategic value of diversification and the role of short courses, CPD and microcredentials for supporting this

- a paper taken to University Executive in August 2021 by Information Services, emphasising the gap in the learning and teaching technology ecosystem for standalone short courses

The conversation with University Executive agreed that there was a need to invest in a system to teach, administer and purchase standalone courses for the growing University-wide need, recognised that enabling digital credentialing models will require accommodating new forms of course design, engagement and support models, and emphasised the importance of learner experience. It was recognised that Edinburgh has some big gaps and hurdles to overcome with our current systems and processes, particularly the way we matriculate 'learners' into our organisation via EUCLID. These gaps were identified by DLAS and continue to hinder operations in EFI, COL and Bayes.

So while there is energetic and organic growth in the broad area, and a recognition that we do not currently have the systems in place to fully support its growth, conversation to date regarding the broader purpose and strategic alignment of short courses has been fragmented. We do not yet have a clear institutional position or integrated strategy for microcredentials, and its fit within the Curriculum Transformation Programme has been only partially discussed.

For discussion at SEC: principles and strategy

Principles

As a basis for discussion, we propose a draft set of principles to guide our planning in this area:

1. **not just about skills:** microcredentials will be developed in the context of a continuation of our commitment to full degree programmes and the value of in-depth, research-led curricula

2. **local control:** Schools and units will decide which courses are offered – all these will be research-informed and build on best practice in the university; approval and quality assurance will sit – as currently – with School Boards of Studies; guidance will be developed to support Boards' decision-making in relation to microcredentials and short courses

3. **not just about income:** activity in this area will generate income or value, or both (for example our MOOCs portfolio has significant value beyond its ability to generate income)

4. **a broader concept of 'student'**: 'learners' on non-accredited courses are not the same as 'students' on degree programmes and accredited courses (for example, learners will not get a student card or University of Edinburgh login providing access to all student services); students on accredited short courses will get access to services for the duration of their studies

5. **institutional values alignment:** all online courses should be designed from the start to be accessible, inclusive and aligned with the institution's cross-cutting goals for widening access, accessibility, equality and diversity, financial accountability, risk management, data privacy, information security, accessibility and health and safety

6. **principles-based design:** all online courses will engage in a facilitated process of learning design which draws upon principles established through the Curriculum Transformation Programme

7. **supporting international partnerships:** courses developed through international partnerships will be supported, for example UNA Europa, Universitas 21, LERU and Coimbra: colleagues will be supported by ISG to choose the right platform for their course

8. **provision of services and support:** digital services will be developed to support this area of activity, including staff training, course migration, digital badging, online course production, open educational resources, media asset management, marketing of digital courses and helpdesk support, IT helpdesk

9. **careful platform partnerships:** platforms to support and host activity in the area will be chosen carefully, in consultation with all university stakeholders; platform

partnership agreements will be reviewed for legal, financial, reputational and security risk; procurement will align with our sustainable procurement and digital strategies and data privacy, accessibility and usability will all be considered

10. **the right platforms for the right courses:** courses carrying credit will use university-hosted platforms, non-accredited courses can use the proposed new CPD platform, or one of our MOOC platforms

Strategy

These principles will underpin an integrated strategy in this area which aligns with Strategy 2030. Such a strategy might be framed along the following lines:

We will support flexible, lifelong learning by integrating short courses and microcredentials within our existing degree programmes and as stand-alone offers.

Microcredentials will contribute to improved digital outreach which supports global participation in education.

We will support and lead on Scotland's commitment to widening participation.

We will be a destination of choice, based on a clear 'Edinburgh Offer'.

We will create opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with and amplify our work.

Edinburgh will become the Data Capital of Europe. We will deliver inclusive growth, provide data skills to at least 100,000 individuals, and create new companies and solutions for global challenges.

We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.

We will see integrated reporting of our whole organisational impact against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Siân Bayne and Melissa Highton, March 2021

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Senate Education Committee

12 May 2022

Assessment and Feedback Update – Responding to ELIR

Description of paper

1. Following the last SEC, this paper sets out a revised and updated proposal for a 'holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback', responding to the recent ELIR recommendation.

2. This paper contributes to the Strategy 2030 outcome: The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.

Action requested / recommendation

3. Senate Education Committee is asked to discuss and approve the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities contained in this document in preparation for implementation for the start of next academic year.

Background and context

4. Our recent QAA ELIR report made the following recommendation, urging us to put in place an institution-wide approach to addressing assessment and feedback within this academic year:

    'Over an extended period of time, the University has considered a broad evidence-base which has highlighted concerns about assessment and feedback and this remains an area of challenge for the institution. The University is asked to make demonstrable progress, within the next academic year, in prioritising the development of a holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback'.

5. A Task Group of the Curriculum Transformation Programme was formed, co-led by Tina Harrison and Sabine Rolle, and was tasked with coordinating the University's response to the ELIR recommendation within academic year 2021/22 and to do so with strategic alignment to the Curriculum Transformation Programme.

6. The Task Group is taking a broad based approach and covering the following four key areas: Assessment; Feedback; Marking Schema; the Academic Year. Given the urgency of the ELIR recommendation to develop an approach to assessment and feedback within this academic year, this paper shares initial proposals relating to:

    a. The overall approach to Assessment and Feedback
    b. Assessment and Feedback Principles

7. The paper does not address Marking Schema and the Academic Year. Proposals relating to these will be brought to the Curriculum Transformation Board and Senate Education Committee at a later date.

Discussion

8. The proposed approach, and the key principles, are based on extensive research undertaken by the Task Group that has taken into account the following:

    a. Insight from a range of student feedback sources, including from NSS and PTES, and focus groups conducted by the Task Group;
    b. Insight from the LEAF evaluation and ELDER process;
    c. Good practice examples of assessment and feedback from across the University;
    d. External benchmarking of other universities' approaches to assessment and feedback, particularly of those institutions that perform well on external indicators, such as the NSS, TEF;
    e. Discussion at SEC on 10th March 2022.

9. Based on the research undertaken, the proposal for a holistic and strategic approach to assessment and feedback comprises the following four key aspects:

    a. **Assessment and feedback principles.** A set of key principles to guide practice in assessment and feedback. The principles set out the baseline expectations for quality, ensuring a degree of consistency in assessment and feedback practice. The principles also signal to students what they can expect to experience with regards to assessment and feedback practice. The intention is for the principles to have the status of a policy and to sit alongside the taught assessment regulations. Schools would be expected to map their practice against the principles, identify gaps and actions to address them.

    b. **Assessment and Feedback priorities.** The principles (above) set the baseline expectations, but we should also strive for creativity and enhancement of our assessment practice, also building on the significant developments made to assessment during the pandemic. Feeding in to and aligning with the overall principles of Curriculum Transformation, the priorities for assessment and feedback are forward-looking and aspirational, encouraging greater creativity in assessment practice including, but not limited to, the following areas: greater emphasis on authentic assessments; increased formative assessment and feedback; increased assessment for learning; increased student partnership in assessment and student agency in assessment. There is a priority associated with each of the principles.

    c. **Support/guidance for staff.** To support colleagues in implementing the assessment and feedback principles and priorities, we propose to curate a series of Teaching Matters blogs that address each of the core principles and priority themes, drawing on insight and best practice from within the university and further afield. It may also be useful to develop a network/community of practice to discuss and share insight on assessment and feedback practice.

    d. **Guidance for students.** To help students make the most of assessment and feedback, a student-facing guide will be produced explaining the assessment and feedback principles from a students' perspective and helping students to understand the assessment and feedback process and their role in it. The student guide will be co-created with the student interns that are working with the Task Group.

10. An initial draft of the Assessment and Feedback Principles was presented to the Directors of Teaching Network and the Curriculum Transformation Programme Reference Group. A series of small group discussions were held with Directors of

Teaching. Detailed comments were received from a number of colleagues which have been taken into account in the version of the principles attached to this paper. The comments received to date have been positive and supportive of the broad principles. Some colleagues felt that the principles are appropriate but challenging to meet, whereas other colleagues felt they were not aspirational enough, hence the development of priorities. Comments have been very helpful in improving the expression and clarity of some of the principles and challenging others. A sense of the comments and changes made to the principles as a result is provided in the comments/notes boxes at the end of each of the key principles, as well as an indication of the feedback made at the last SEC and how these comments have been reflected in this current draft.

11. Senate Education Committee is asked to discuss and approve the assessment and feedback principles and priorities.

Resource implications
12. There are likely to be some implications for staff time in the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback principles, although it largely provides a framework and reference point that can be used in annual course and programme review.

Risk management
13. The recommendations within the paper are aimed at reducing the risks associated with poor performance in assessment and feedback and the likelihood of an unsatisfactory outcome in a future ELIR from not taking action.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
14. N/A

Equality & diversity
15. One of the core principles directly addresses inclusive assessment practice and equality in assessment outcomes. An EqIA will need to be carried out on the final principles and priorities once approved by SEC.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
16. Following this committee meeting a further iteration of the assessment and feedback principles will be produced for wider consultation and input. A final version will come back to a subsequent meeting of Senate Education Committee for approval and implementation from the start of academic year 2022/23. An implementation and communication plan will be developed, including guidance to support the implementation. Work will continue on the other aspects of the Task Group's work to feed into the Curriculum Transformation Programme.

Authors

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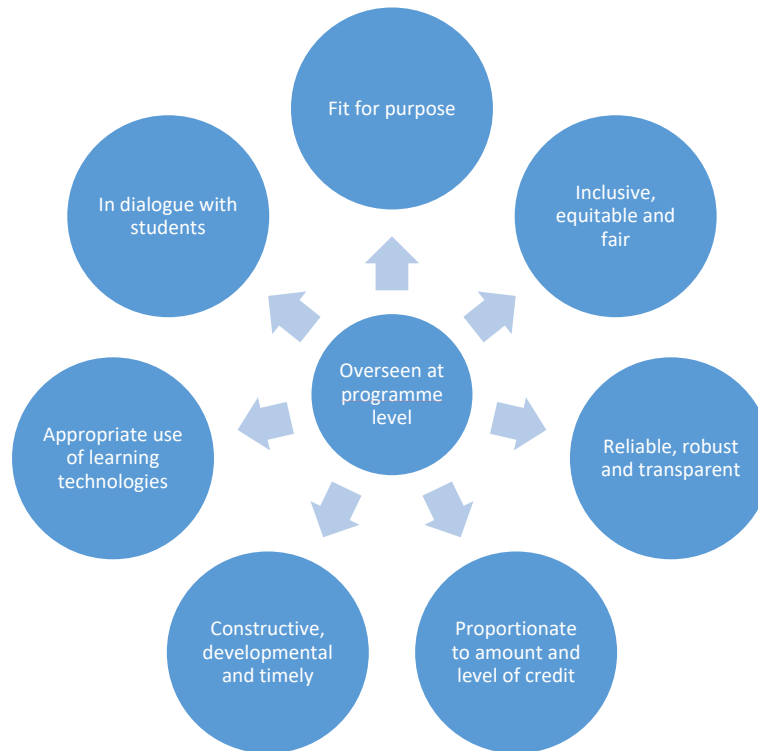
Presenter

Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)

Dr Ian Glen (Curriculum Transformation Partner)

Date 6th May 2022

Freedom of Information *Open*

University of Edinburgh

Assessment and Feedback Principles

- **Our assessment will be fit for purpose**

    a. Assessment shall prepare students to become practitioners in their discipline;

    b. Assessment shall be for and of learning;

    c. Assessment shall contribute towards the Edinburgh Student Vision;

    d. Assessment methods shall be appropriate to, and align with, the programme and course learning outcomes.

Comments/notes

- *At a general level, the purpose of assessment is to develop, and assure the learning of, students' knowledge, skills and graduate attributes relevant to their programme. As such, individual course assessments should be aligned to the overall programme level objectives and learning outcomes.*
- *Within this overall purpose, the purpose of individual assessments will vary, including assessment of or for learning, or summative and formative assessment. The nature of assessment should be fit for the purpose, given the overall programme and course objectives and positioning within the programme.*
-

- **Our assessment and feedback practices will involve conversation with students**

    a. Students, teaching staff and markers shall develop a shared understanding of the purpose of assessment;

    b. Students, teaching staff and markers shall develop a shared understanding of the marking criteria (and expectations)**;**

    c. Students shall be supported to undertake assessments and to develop assessment and feedback literacy;

    d. Students and teaching staff shall develop a shared understanding of academic integrity in general and expected academic practices in relation to specific assessments.

    e. Students shall have the opportunity to engage in dialogue (with teaching staff) and contribute to the development of assessment and feedback practices.

Comments/notes
• *This principle was added following discussion at the last SEC and with helpful input from Cathy Bovill.*

- **Our assessment and feedback will be inclusive, equitable and fair**

    a. Assessment shall be developed taking into account diverse student learning needs and approaches;

    b. As far as possible, assessments shall be designed to minimise the need for individual learning adjustments;

    c. Students shall have the opportunity to experience a range of assessments across their programme;

    d. Assessment outcomes should be equitable; where outcomes are unequal assessment methods shall be reviewed and revised accordingly.

Comments/notes
• *Supporting students to undertake assessment was removed from this principle and included in the new principle relating to 'conversation with students' and expanded to make reference to developing assessment and feedback literacy.*
• *This is an area where further guidance may be needed to help colleagues in designing inclusive assessments, potentially using the Universal Design for Learning framework.*
• *'Equitable outcomes' seems to have been interpreted that courses should produce the same profile of marks or we should mark to a distribution, which wasn't the intention. The intention is that assessment shouldn't disadvantage certain groups/characteristics.*
• *An earlier principle about assessment variety and choice has been changed to 'opportunity to experience a range of assessments across their programme' as this was interpreted that students should be given a*

> *choice of assessment. Choice of assessment within a course is now an aspiration/future priority.*

- **Our assessment and feedback will be reliable, robust and transparent**

    a. Assessment design should support and encourage good academic practices and minimise opportunities or incentives for academic misconduct;

    b. Marking criteria (and any marking rubrics) shall be provided to students along with the assessment task;

    c. Where multiple markers are involved, the marking and moderation process shall support consistency in standards and feedback.

Comments/notes

- *Some comments seem to suggest that an attempt to minimise academic misconduct implies a return to exams, which is not the intention.*
- *It was pointed out that it is not enough to simply communicate marking criteria to students, students and staff need to have a shared understanding of the criteria. This now features in the new student-focused principle. – further guidance will be needed in developing this shared understanding.*
- *An earlier version of the principles included the use of marking rubrics. This received very mixed comments. Marking rubrics may not be desirable in all circumstances, so the intention is to include this in guidance as one of many ways in which marking criteria can be made more explicit to students and understandable.*

- **Our assessment and feedback will be proportionate to the amount and level of credit**

    a. Assessment load shall be manageable for students and staff, while providing sufficient breadth and depth to maintain standards and facilitate student learning;

    b. Assessment workload shall be comparable across courses at the same level and credit weighting;

    c. The format and volume of feedback shall vary according to the type and scale of assessment ensuring feedback is targeted appropriately.

Comments/notes

- *A number of comments welcomed further guidance on how to achieve greater consistency in assessment load, whilst also recognising that this would be difficult/impossible to mandate and institutional level (and could stifle creativity in assessment).*
- *Exemplars can be provided, leaving schools and programmes to agree consistency/comparability of assessment loads that are more meaningful at the local level.*

> - *The type and amount of feedback provided will vary according to the type and scale of assessment (e.g. exam feedback focused more on the mark and generic feedback, compared with continuous assessed work).*

- **Our feedback on assessment will be constructive, developmental and timely**

  a. Feedback shall be provided on all assessed work;

  b. All feedback shall facilitate student learning by helping students evaluate and develop their performance;

  c. Students shall be given sufficient time to reflect and act upon feedback between assignments, where this is practical;

  d. Feedback on all assessed work shall normally be returned within three weeks of submission. Where this is not possible, students shall be given clear expectations regarding the timing and methods of feedback.

  > **Comments/notes**
  >
  > - Some comments asked should we be expected to provide feedback on all assessed work? Including exams and dissertations? I think so, but the amount and nature of the feedback will vary, which links to the principle of proportionality and it outlined there as an additional point.
  > - Feedback turnaround times – It is proposed that we state 3 weeks, rather than 15 working days – as this seems to be used across the sector and more accurately reflects the time from a students' perspective. The regulations would need to be adjusted to remove 15 days from the assessment regulations. An indicative standard is desirable, but allowing flexibility to schools to vary this where 15 days is not achievable, or where shorter turnaround times are the norm. In such cases, students shall be given clear expectations regarding the timing.

- **Our assessment and feedback will make appropriate use of learning technologies**

  a. Learning technologies shall be used to facilitate efficient and user-friendly assessment, marking and feedback for students and staff;

  b. Learning technologies shall be used in ways that respect and support the development of students as data subjects and data citizens;

  c. Learning technologies shall be used with due consideration of the effects of potential biases and limitations of algorithmic systems and/or automated components on which the technology may be based.

  > *Comments/Notes*
  >
  > - *The previous SEC discussion noted that this principle contained two aspects – appropriate use of technology and innovative use of technology – and it would be desirable to separate these out. The 'appropriate use' of technology has been retained here as the principle*

> *(baseline expectation) and the innovation/creative use of technology now forms the priority for development.*
> - *A number of comments noted that our existing learning technologies are not user-friendly or enhance assessment practice and this should drive investment in technology that we need.*
> - *Some concerns that colleagues will be told which technologies to use and won't be able to exercise academic judgement. This is not the intention, but we do need to ensure that technologies are approved by IS for use (to ensure we are meeting data requirements) and that they can be supported.*
> - *Should emphasise use of learning technologies where appropriate.*

- **Our assessment and feedback approaches will be developed and monitored at the programme level to ensure:**

  a. Overall fitness for purpose of assessment and alignment with programme learning outcomes;

  b. Alignment with and development of the Edinburgh Student Vision;

  c. Variety in assessment across a programme;

  d. Appropriate challenge for the level of study, enabling students to develop and improve during their degrees;

  e. Assessment timing is suitably coordinated and sufficiently flexible affording students appropriate time to undertake each assessment;

  f. An appropriate balance of formative versus summative assessment across a programme;

  g. Consistency in assessment load relative to credit (to protect against over-assessment);

  h. Enough time for feedback to be provided by staff and used by students.

> ***Comments/notes***
>
> - *This is a central principle that ensures oversight of all the other principles.*
> - *Overall, there was much support for this as a principle, but recognition that it may be difficult to operationalise at least in the short term. Where courses are not aligned to distinct programmes, oversight may be maintained at the subject or even school level. The basic premise of the principle is to take a coordinated and holistic approach to the design and management of assessments.*

Assessment and Feedback Priorities

The principles (above) set the baseline expectations for assessment and feedback. For each principle we propose a priority to encourage enhancement in assessment and feedback. The relationship between principles and priorities is outlined in the table, and with further details on the priorities below.

Principles (Expectations)	Priorities (Enhancement)
• Fit for purpose	• Increase authentic / sustainable assessment
• Conversation with students	• Students as partners / co-creators in assessment and feedback
• Inclusive, equitable and fair	• Assessment and feedback inclusive by design
• Reliable, robust and transparent	• Academic integrity in assessment design
• Constructive, developmental and timely feedback • Proportionate	• Increased opportunity for formative assessment and feedback, and feedback as ongoing dialogue
• Proportionate • Appropriate use of learning technology	• Increased use of technology to support creativity, innovation and experimentation in assessment and feedback (including supporting increased inclusivity and academic integrity).
• Overseen at programme level	• Development of programme level (compared with course level) assessment

Increased use of authentic assessment

The use of authentic assessment is not new and we have many excellent examples across the University, but there is scope to increase the opportunity for students to engage in assessments (where relevant) where they have to perform real-world tasks or that are analogous to the kinds of activities/issues/problems that are faced by citizens, consumers or professionals.

Students as partners / co-creators in assessment

As above, this is not new and we have many excellent examples of this across the University, but not enough. There are many benefits to working more closely in partnership with students in assessment and feedback and providing opportunities for co-creation or co-design of assessment/feedback with students (thanks to Cathy Bovill for the summary):

- Improved academic performance or higher quality of work from students (Bovill 2014; Deeley and Bovill 2017)
- Enhanced skills for future professional development including teamwork, critical reflection, and communication skills (Deeley 2014)
- Opening up of the assessment process to be more transparent (Deeley 2014)
- Shift from a focus on grades to a focus on learning (Delpish et al. 2010)
- Helps to promote academic integrity (Egan 2018)
- Increased autonomy, self-regulation, and responsibility (Deeley and Bovill 2017)
- Creation of a learning community (Deeley and Bovill 2017)
- Increased experience of negotiation and development of associated skills (Bovill 2014; Deeley 2014)
- Enhanced assessment literacy (Andrews, Brown and Mesher 2018; Deeley and Bovill 2017

Assessment and feedback inclusive by design

Inclusive assessment aims to tackle assessment at point of design to ensure the ways in which we assess do not exclude students. It includes looking at all aspects, from the design of assessment tasks to the development of marking criteria to the method and mode of feedback. This is not only about addressing the needs to our disabled students, but goes much further to ensure that as far as possible we take account of the different learning needs of all our students. It can also lead to increased assessment choice and flexibility not only across courses but within courses Inclusive assessment practice can contribute to closing attainment/awarding gaps.

Academic integrity in assessment design

With the rise in academic misconduct, it is important that we consider ways in which we can strengthen academic integrity through assessment design and be more aware of the risks to academic integrity arising from different types of assessment, and the mitigations. Further work is needed to understand the academic integrity challenges inherent in written assessment and identify ways of addressing them, and consider the role and place of team working and collaboration. This links with other key priorities, since academic integrity can be strengthened by increasing partnership with students and increased use of authentic assessment.

Increased opportunity for formative assessment and feedback

Students learn more from formative assessment and feedback, but we need to do this in a way that does not increase workload for students or staff. It is not intended that this would lead to an increase in assessments, but a re-think in terms of the place of feedback in the

assessment process. There are opportunities to increase feedback dialogue within existing assessments and shift the balance or emphasis of feedback from the end of the assessment (when students cannot change anything) to earlier in the assessment process, allowing students to learn from the feedback and improve their performance. Feedback becomes more valuable.

Increased use of technology for innovation and creativity in assessment

Learning technologies can be used to increase the scope for creativity, innovation and experimentation in assessment and support new kinds of assessment. Learning technologies can also contribute to addressing many of the other priorities, but particularly enhanced diversity, authenticity and choice of assessments.

Development of programme level assessments

A key principle is that assessment and feedback should be monitored at the programme level and coherence at the programme level, but this principle is based on the assumption that assessment occurs at the course or unit level. This priority encourages us to consider the development of assessment at a broader level than the individual course, at the wider programme level. There are some examples of this across the University, and innovation in this area in discussion at EFI, but scope for greater use. Careful placement of programmatic-level assessment can be useful in assessing broader programme-level learning outcomes, reducing over-assessment and managing assessment load. It can also free up space for more formative assessment to take place at appropriate points.

Senate Education Committee

12ᵗʰ May 2022

Tutors and Demonstrators Training Working Group

Description of paper
(Should also explain how any proposals will contribute to one of more of the Strategy 2030 outcomes)
1. This paper proposes the creation of a Tutor and Demonstrator working group to explore and recommend changes to our provision and monitoring of training for tutors and demonstrators to address Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) recommendations regarding the training and support of tutors and demonstrators. By mapping the training and support on offer to all Tutors and Demonstrators across the University, we can make recommendations to improve both the offerings and support structures, as well as share good practice, where appropriate. This contributes to a number of areas of Strategy 2030 outcomes, most directly those in vi), vii), ix) and xii).

Action requested / recommendation
2. To approve the setting up of a working group to report via the Tutor and Demonstrator Steering Group to Senate Education Committee to explore and recommend changes to our provision and monitoring of training for tutors and demonstrators.

Background and context
3. The current policy on [Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators](#) is due for general review. The responsibility for this review is being led by the Tutors and Demonstrators Steering Group with representatives from Academic Services, Human Resources and the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), although the policy is formally owned by Academic Services. Part of this Policy mandates the provision of training to all Tutors and Demonstrators. The Policy (p 5, para. 5.1 and 5.2) states, "*5.1 Tutors and demonstrators must not commence their duties until the School has provided them with necessary formal induction on all core aspects of their role. Schools must have a formal induction plan and mandatory content is set out in the Appendix. 5.2 The School must determine the mandatory training which tutors and demonstrators must undertake in relation to the courses on which they are assigned to tutor or demonstrate. Mandatory training, and other ongoing training relating to tutoring and demonstrating generally may, in some circumstances, be delivered separately to the formal induction and may continue after tutoring or demonstrating duties have been commenced. Heads of School must recommend a necessary amount of training, taking account of the level at which tutors and demonstrators are teaching, and their experience.*" Central University- Level training is provided by the Institute for Academic Development but we believe there is considerable variation in local level training provision and oversight and this was highlighted in the ELIR. With representation from across the University, the Working Group will be best placed to conduct a mapping exercise of the

current training provision in place in each School and Deanery, as well as understanding the support structures in place around this local training. School and Deanery contacts will be sourced through the existing Tutors and Demonstrators Network, where numerous members have already identified themselves as being the appropriate local contact for this exercise.

Discussion

4. A Tutor and Demonstrators Network has been formed with representatives from all Schools, and HR. It will be expanded to include other services as well as UCU representation. So far it has 94 members from all Schools and Deaneries. These include School managers and academic leaders as well as the trainers and those involved with administration of T&D. The forum acts as a sounding board for policies, enables exchange of good practice, facilitates the sharing of problems and liaising with the services. The Tutors and Demonstrators Steering Group acts as a senior oversight group within this Network. The group includes representatives from the Doctoral College, the three Colleges, IAD, HR, UCU and Academic Services. This will meet a small number of times each year and report to the ELIR oversight group and Senatus Quality Assurance Committee and act as a governance body for the network. Once the ELIR response is complete we would expect that the body would become a governance body for Tutors and Demonstrators and report to Senatus Education Committee.

   The working group membership will be recruited via the Tutors and Demonstrators Network with 5-6 membership representatives from all 3 Colleges. It will be led by an Institute for Academic Development representative, Fiona Quinlan-Pluck.

   The aims of the working group are:
   a. Map the training provided to Tutors and Demonstrators throughout the University
   b. Understand who has responsibility for Tutor and Demonstrator training throughout the University and propose a structure to ensure oversight of T&D in each School/Deanery
   c. Gauge awareness of the Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators at School level.
   d. To liaise with the T&D Network to facilitate consultation and to make recommendations to the steering group and feed into the ELIR review

Ensuring that the Policy for the Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators is fully supported throughout the University, and is fit for purpose, the working group will first review the training practices currently in place at programme, School and College level. The Working Group will look to ascertain the level and scope of training available to all Tutors and Demonstrators, and who is responsible for that training.

Resource implications
5. Resources for this group will be met from within existing budgets.

Risk management

6. There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this working group, nor in the activities and outcomes of the work involved. Indeed, there are considerable risks in failing to act on this ELIR recommendation which are likely to be mitigated by an appropriate response from this group. There is a small risk that having a smaller agile group will not be sufficiently representative of the institution, but we expect that this will be mitigated by the existence and use of the T&D network.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

7. This paper does not contribute to the SDGs, it is responding to the recommendations of the ELIR report.

Equality & diversity

8. EDI is a vital consideration in access to training. Working Group Membership will be recruited on a voluntary basis with the member's College and position relating the Tutors and Demonstrators being the only aspect to be judged for membership. No EIA is included.

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

9. The working group will report to the Tutor and Demonstrator Steering Group and SEC as appropriate. Actions will be communicated via the Tutor and Demonstrator Network and other established channels of communication.

Author
Fiona Quinlan-Pluck
Antony Maciocia
26ᵗʰ April 2022

Presenter
Antony Maciocia

Freedom of Information *This paper will be open*

Membership Senate Education Committee

2022/23

Name	Position
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)
Laura Bradley	Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate Research)
Dean of L&T (TBC)	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Patrick Walsh	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Antony Maciocia	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)
Jamie Davies	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, UG)
Sarah Henderson	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)
Paddy Hadoke	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)
Sam Maccallum	Edinburgh University Students' Assocation, Vice-President Education – Ex Officio
Stuart Lamont	Edinburgh University Students' Assocation, Permanent Staff Member – Ex Officio
Marie-Louise Wohrle	Postgraduate Research Student Representative
TBC	Head of School, CSE
TBC	Head of School, CAHSS
Mike Shipston	Head of Deanery, CMVM
Tom Ward	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
Marianne Brown	Co-option - Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling (Interim)
Sian Bayne	Co-option – Digital Education
(Philippa Ward)	(Secretary)

Senate Education Committee

12 May 2022

Draft Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees

Description of paper
1. This is the draft annual report of 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 2021-22. It also proposes outline plans for 2022-23.

Action requested
2. Members are invited to comment on and approve the content included for Senate Education Committee (highlighted in yellow), noting in particular the proposed priorities for academic year 2022/23.

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.

Resource implications
4. The proposed plans for 2022-23 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. It is noted that following discussion of Committee effectiveness in the last academic year, all Senate Standing Committees undertook to place more focus on effective evaluation of E&D dimensions.

Next steps / implications
7. The finalised report will be passed to Senate for approval and will then be highlighted in the Senate Committees' Newsletter. The Senate Committees will progress the agreed strategic approach during 2022-23 as set out in the report. This report will also be shared with the University Court for information.

Authors
Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer
Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
Pippa Ward, Academic Policy Officer

Presenters
Professor Colm Harmon, Convenor of Senate Education Committee

Freedom of Information Open

Annual Report of the Senate Committees 2021-22

| 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 2021-22, 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 2021/22.

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 2021-22* |

Name of Committee	No. of meetings
Senate Education Committee	5 (one electronic)
Academic Policy & Regulations	7 (two additional, special meetings)
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
Exams Sub-Group	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

| 4. | Senate Committees' Progress in 2021/22 |

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 2021/22.

| 4.1 | Education Committee |

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity
1. Input into the Curriculum Transformation project Curriculum Transformation was a standing item on Education Committee agendas in 2021/22. Members received a presentation on Curriculum Transformation timelines and the draft 'Edinburgh Student Vision' at its March 2022 meeting, and an update on the Vision consultation at its May 2022 meeting.
2. Ensure effective responses to ELIR recommendations Members received and endorsed the ELIR response action plan at its September 2021 meeting. At its March 2022 meeting, the Committee commented on a paper outlining proposals to develop a holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback in response to ELIR recommendations. This included consideration of the University's overall approach to assessment and feedback, and assessment and feedback principles aimed at providing a clear set of expectations to bring consistency across the University. An updated version of the principles was brought to the May 2022 meeting for final approval. Education Committee also received, for information and comment, copies of the student experience updates that were taken to University Executive throughout the year.
3. Other matters considered during the year Other key items considered by Education Committee during the year included: - Progress with the Doctoral College - The University's involvement in the delivery of microcredentials - Digital Strategy - Academic integrity - Ongoing input into academic year planning in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (capacity planning, exam diet planning etc.)

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

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity
1. **Input as required into Curriculum Transformation project (led by Education Committee, carried forward from 2019/20).** The Committee has not yet been required to provide detailed input to this project, although the Committee's experience with regards to the diversification of PGT degree models has been fed into the discussions of the Curriculum Transformation Project. The Committee expects to have greater involement as at the detailed design and implementation stages, as these are where interaction with academic regulations will occur.
2. **Review of Enhancement-Led Institutional Review outputs and take appropriate action as required. (Carried forward from 2019/20).** The committee has not yet been asked to consider any policy or regulation changes as a result of this work. Discussions with relevant colleagues have occurred when the regular work of the Committee has overlapped with points of the ELIR action plan. For instance, APRC discussions around possible changes around coursework extensions and the ELIR response on assessment and feedback
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).** The Committee has not needed to make any regulatory or policy changes as a result of Covid-19 in 2021-22. The Committee continues to monitor the requirement for longer term regulatory and policy changes as a result of Covid-19.
4. **Other matters considered during the year** Other key items considered by Academic, Policy and Regulations Committee during the year included: - The potential impact of industrial action - Changes of terminology due to the implentation of the new model of student support - Short-term adjustments to the policy around extensions and special circumstances - Minor updates to the Support for Study Policy - Arrangements for awarding credit to UG students who have a single semester overseas - Mechanisms for approving courses and programmes offered by EFI

4.3 Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity
1. **Develop and oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).** The Committee continues to receive regular updates on the ELIR Action Plan. The University is required to provide a follow-up report to QAA Scotland on actions taken or in progress to address the outcomes of the review one year after the publication of the ELIR reports (15 July 2022). A first draft of the report has been submitted to the University Executive (10 May 2022 meeting), and an update on ELIR actions will be presented to Senate (25 May 2022 meeting). The report will be developed in

response to comments from the University Executive and Senate and the ELIR Oversight Group will approve the final version before it is submitted to QAA (with the proviso that it will need to be endorsed by University Court in October 2022 before the final version can be published).

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.**
The Committee is working with Academic Services to develop a SharePoint site to optimize the presentation of quality data/evidence to Schools/Deaneries and encourage greater engagement and traction with quality processes.

3. **Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data in response to the recommendations from Thematic Reviews.**
The Committee has driven work to identify awarding gaps across the University via the Thematic Review process (and the Data Task Group established to progress the recommendations of recent reviews) and the annual quality assurance (QA) processes. Schools and Deaneries have increasingly engaged with widening participation (WP) and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data to identify any gaps in attainment for different groups of students. However, they have struggled to understand the underlying causes of these gaps or what good practice should be encouraged and cultivated to address them.

The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) is now undertaking work to determine the underlying causes of awarding gaps and share good practice with Schools to help them address these gaps. The EDIC will explore options to establish a set of expectations or baselines in relation to WP and EDI data (based on the findings of the work to understand the causes of gaps and good practice) to allow Schools to gauge their relative performance. These expectations/baselines will in turn be monitored by the SQAC as part of the School annual reporting process.

The Convenor of EDIC attended the April 2022 meeting of SQAC to consider the roles both committees will have in overseeing the work to determine the underlying causes of the awarding gaps with the aim of establishing and sharing good practice with Schools and Deaneries to help them address these gaps.

4. **Engage with quality assurance and enhancement-related aspects of the Scottish Funding Council review of coherent provision and sustainability.**
The Committee's focus on the use of quality data (see above) will allow the University to address one of the core principles for the approach to quality assurance and enhancement in the Review report (building on feedback from stakeholders about what is valued in existing approaches): "Evidence-based: data and evidence should inform our understanding of practice and quality assurance, and our plans for enhancement" (page 70). The Committee will receive an update later in this session on the SFC Review and its implications for the University's Quality Framework

5. **Implement the recommendations from the review of Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs).**
The Committee is monitoring the implementation of the new Student Voice Policy through annual monitoring, review and reporting processes. The Project Board is focused on developing a toolkit to support local collection of end of course feedback (e.g. question banks, different methods of collecting feedback).

5   Other Committee Activity in 2021/22

- **Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation Committee**
  The Committee continues to oversee the accreditation of the SRUC programme, 'Environmental Management (BSc)' and the outgoing 'Environmental Resource Management (BSc)'. The Accreditation Committee met in March 2022 and affirmed continued accreditation of the programmes. SRUC's application for Degree Awarding Powers (DAP) has been approved to progress to the scrutiny stage by the QAA Advisory Committee. SRUC has now entered a period of scrutiny which will continue for a minimum of a full year, and there may be an indication of the outcome in Summer 2023.

- 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 2022/23

6.1   Planning Context

Once again, the year will be planned in the context of Covid-related considerations driven by the institutional response to the relaxed government guidelines. This will influence the mode of operation and interaction between the Committees and their stakeholders and it is expected that the balance will shift to more in-person/on-campus activity.

6.2   Education Committee

Activity
Curriculum Transformation
Student Experience – ongoing input into matters being taken forward by University Executive
Enhancement-led Institutional Review – ongoing response to outcomes of 2021 ELIR, particularly around assessment and feedback
Doctoral College developments
Academic Integrity

6.3   Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Activity
Feed into the Curriculum Transformation Programme and support discussion around this.
Continue to support policy changes required as part of the new Student Support model.

Support the review of the Support for Study policy to ensure this remains fit for purpose, particularly in the context of changes resulting from the new Student Support model.
Support a review of coursework extensions and special circumstances policies, taking account of the recommendations of the ESC Review (conducted during 21/22).
Develop a timeline for undertaking the scheduled periodic review of policies which were delayed due to external factors.

6.4   Quality Assurance Committee

Activity
Oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).
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.
Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data.
Continue to monitor the implementation of the Student Voice Policy via annual quality assurance processes.
Engage with the QAA and Universities UK review focused on strengthening the external examining system.

Annex – new regulations/policies/codes, and reviews of and amendments to existing regulations/policies/codes, approved by Senate and its Committees during 2021/22

New and updated policies, regulations and guidance will be published on the Academic Services website in due course: https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/new-policies (currently showing updates for 2021/22. 2020/21).

Senate Committee	Name of document	Type of change (New / Revision / Deletion / Technical Update / Reviewed and no changes made)
SEC	Open Educational Resources Policy	Revision
SEC	Policy for the Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors & Demonstrators	Revision
SEC	Academic & Pastoral Support Policy	Review underway to take account of changes to the Student Support model
SEC	Virtual Classroom Policy	Revision to take account of changes to the Student Support model
SEC	Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy	Review underway
APRC	Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2022/23	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2022.
APRC	Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2022/23	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2022.
APRC	Support for Study	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2022.
APRC	Authorised Interruption of Study	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Course Organiser: Outline of Role	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Performance Sport Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Programme and Course Handbooks Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Protection of Children and Protected Adults	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.

APRC	Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.

Senate Education Committee

12 May 2022

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 2022, 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 2022.

5. Actions identified in the previous annual effectiveness review, and progress against these actions, are noted in Appendix 2.

Discussion

6. 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

7. 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**
   b. **Quality and Assurance Committee members are asked to submit written comments to Brian.Connolly@ed.ac.uk**
   c. **Academic Policy and Regulation Committee members are asked to submit written comments to Olivia.Hayes@ed.ac.uk**
   d. Senate Committee members will also be invited to respond to an online questionnaire during summer 2022 (managed by Academic Services). Draft questions are appended below.
   e. The Committee Convener and Secretary will review committee coverage of Postgraduate Research Student business.

8. Academic Services will collate the information above and produce a report on the findings.

Resource implications

9. 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

10. 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

11. 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

12. The report will be presented to Senate and the Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2022. 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
10 May 2022

Freedom of Information
Open

Appendix 1

Senate Standing Committees: Internal Effectiveness Review 2021-22

Draft questions for Summer 2022 survey

Members of the Senate Committees will be invited to fill in an online questionnaire during Summer 2022 and the draft questions for this exercise are set out below for comment. This is the same question set used in the 2019-20 & 2020-21 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

Due to the low number of respondents to the Effectiveness Review in 2020/21, a combined analysis of the answers to the review questions provided by all of Senate's Standing Committees suggested the following recommended actions:

Area Under Review	Recommended Action	Responsible	Date
Remit	1. Student Experience to be included as standing item for SEC 2. SQAC and SEC to consider triggers for escalation and relationship with University Executive	Secretary Conveners' Forum	Complete Complete
Composition	3. Senate to receive discussion paper on this topic at a later date.	Academic Services will take this forward with Senate Convener.	Ongoing
Governance & Impact	4. Each committee to consider more effective use of short-life working groups	Convener/Secretary	Ongoing
EDI	5. Each committee to ensure proactive consideration of EDI for all papers/discussion and decision making. 6. Senate to receive a discussion paper on 'composition' at a later date, to include EDI	Convener/Secretary Academic Services will take this forward with Senate Convener.	Considered at every meeting Ongoing
Role	7. Each committee to consider effective induction for members and implement revised approaches as required	Convener/Secretary	Start of new academic year and for any member appointed mid-year
Communications	8. Each committee to be more explicit at each meeting regarding how decisions will be communicated or implemented	Convener/Secretary	Considered at every meeting

Senate Education Committee

12 May 2022

Senate Presentation and Discussion Themes for 2022/23 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 2022/23. 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.

Discussion
5. The themes below have been covered in recent years.

   2021/22
   - Freedom of Expression
   - The Edinburgh Graduate Vision
   - REF and ELIR Outcomes and Actions

   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
6. None relevant

Risk management
7. None relevant

Equality & diversity
8. 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
9. Committee secretary will collate suggestions and pass these to the Senate Clerk.

<u>Author</u>
Philippa Ward, Academic Policy Officer
4 May 2022

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Open

Senate Education Committee

12 May 2022

Policy Updates to Reflect New Student Support Model – Virtual Classroom Policy and Policy for the Recruitment Support and Development of Tutors & Demonstrators

Description of paper

1. The paper provides updated versions of the Virtual Classroom Policy and Policy for the Recruitment Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators. Minor amendments (tracked changes) have been made to both policies to reflect the University's new Student Support model.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval

Resource implications

3. None

Risk management

4. N/A

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

5. N/A

Equality & diversity

6. N/A

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

7. N/A

Freedom of Information *Open*

Virtual Classroom Policy

Purpose of Policy

This policy clarifies rights and responsibilities when delivering and recording teaching and learning using the Virtual Classroom service and other online communication and collaboration technologies.

Overview

The Virtual Classroom service is used in the regular delivery of fully-online programmes, and, in response to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, has also permitted online and hybrid delivery of programmes normally delivered on campus.   The intention of this policy is to help manage the potential risks posed by challenges and complexities in the arrangements for virtual classes. The policy extends existing principles agreed for lecture recording to this context, amending them or making separate provision where required.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy applies University-wide to all staff, students and visiting lecturers involved in running or participating in virtual classroom sessions using the Virtual Classroom service or any other supported communication and collaboration service. The policy also covers online student pastoral support meetings. This policy does not cover teaching recorded or live-streamed using the Lecture Recording service, or non-teaching online events, meetings and other activities.

Contact Officer	Neil McCormick	Educational Technology Policy Officer	Neil.McCormick@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	**Approved**: 10.09.20	**Starts:** 14.09.20	**Equality impact assessment:**	**Amendments:**	**Next Review:** 2021/2022

Approving authority	Senate Education Committee
Consultation undertaken	College Teaching Deans and Heads of IT, EUSA, Trades Unions, Legal Services, Knowledge Strategy Committee
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Learning, Teaching and Web Services
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Accessible and Inclusive Learning; Dignity and Respect Policy; Disciplinary; Student Conduct; Learning Analytics; Lecture Recording Policy; Open Educational Resources; Web Accessibility; Timetabling; IP Exploitation; Student IPR;
UK Quality Code	QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality, Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching; and Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement
Policies superseded by this policy	None
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.
Keywords	Virtual Classroom, Collaborate, hybrid delivery, online delivery

Virtual Classroom Policy

Definition

The term "virtual class" here refers to a teaching session delivered to some or all of its participants online using the Virtual Classroom service or using any other supported communication and collaboration service. This policy also covers online student pastoral support meetings.

Maintaining a safe space for teaching and learning

The University intends each virtual class to remain a safe place for the exposition and discussion of potentially controversial ideas between the lecturers and students on a Course. A safe space is a prerequisite for building academic community which is in turn critical to student engagement and learning.

1) Virtual class participants will abide by the Dignity and Respect Policy.

2) Access to a virtual class by default will normally be limited to the staff, students or learners on the instance of the Course(s) that the teaching relates to. The lecturer may authorise access for other relevant participants. A student or employee accessing a virtual class without authorisation may be investigated under the Code of Student Conduct or Disciplinary Policy (as applicable).

3) Staff and students contributing to a virtual class will normally be identified within the service by name. This is in the interests of maintaining a safe learning space, supporting academic community and student engagement, and of the effective running of the session. Where a student believes their interests in not being identified within a virtual class may outweigh these interests, they should contact their personal tutor or Student Adviser or the lecturer or course organiser for the Course concerned in advance to discuss whether their participation can be anonymous or pseudonymous.

4) While the building of online academic communities of learning is often likely to be more effective when interactions include video, each participant may nonetheless choose whether or not their video and/or still image is displayed to others within a virtual class.

Making a virtual class recording

Who can record

5) No recording of the virtual class may be made using the service without the lecturer's authorisation.

6) The person who initiates and stops the recording must make all participants aware that recording is about to commence, and that recording is stopped. Participants should be made aware whether other virtual class elements such as text chat or the participant list will be recorded.

7) Students may, under the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, make their own audio recording of any of their teaching on their own device for the sole purpose of their own personal study.

What can be recorded

8) A recording may include all or part of a virtual class.

9) Where the virtual class contains a lecture, and unless they have a good reason not to, the lecturer should record the lecture to allow students on the Course to review it. 'Good reason' is as defined in paragraph 2.2 of the Lecture Recording Policy.

10) There is no expectation on the lecturer to record other, more interactive virtual classes such as seminars, tutorials or laboratories. Lecturers who intend to record such sessions should check for any objections from participants before commencing recording[1].

11) The University will provide guidance on what elements of the virtual class can be recorded. The lecturer may consider which elements of the virtual class (e.g. video, audio, slides, file uploads, text chat) will be most useful for student revision.

12) A student is required to be recorded if the recording is a mandatory part of their assessment. If a student otherwise wishes to make a contribution within a virtual class without it being recorded, they may request that recording is paused or stopped for their contribution or may nominate a proxy within the class to contribute for them.
   a) The University will only delete a student's contribution from a virtual class recording if the student's interests in deleting their recorded contribution clearly outweigh the University's interests in keeping it. The student should contact the lecturer in the first instance to request deletion of all or part of their contribution. Where necessary, the School will decide whether the student's contribution shall be cut from the recording or whether the whole recording shall be deleted.

Uses of virtual class recordings

13) Virtual class recordings may be used for the following purposes:

   a) The University will provide access to recordings, where available, to students and relevant staff on the instance of the Course to which the virtual class relates.

   b) A student may only use the recording for the purposes of their own personal study. The student must destroy any copy of the recording they hold once this purpose has been met. This will be on completion of the final assessment to which the Course relates or when the student leaves the University, whichever is sooner.

   c) Students will access recordings by streaming them, and will not be permitted to download local copies except:
      i) where the School provides a download of a recording to a disabled student on the Course when this has been specified as a reasonable adjustment.
      ii) that the lecturer at their discretion may provide download access to all students on the Course where, in the lecturer's opinion, this is appropriate.

   d) The lecturer may publish the recording as an open educational resource, with appropriate modifications and safeguards, including an appropriate attribution, licence and having obtained any permissions required from other participants or third parties whose intellectual property resides within the recording. Guidance on this is contained within the Open Educational Resources Policy and Website Accessibility Policy.

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[1] Guidance: where a Course includes regular recording of interactive virtual classes, it is recommended that the Course Organiser discusses recording with the students at the start of the Course, prior to any recording taking place. This might include the reasons for recording, how the recordings will be used and ways to opt out of being recorded.

e) A lecturer may use recordings of their own virtual classes within their own performance review; to facilitate peer observation of their teaching; or if they are investigated under the [Disciplinary Policy](#).

f) The University may use a virtual class recording within the scope of an investigation under the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

g) A School may use a virtual class recording in exceptional situations to provide continuity, as specified within business continuity plans relevant to the School. Examples of exceptional situations might include significant disruption from a pandemic or other natural event or the unforeseen loss of part of the University estate. The School will, where reasonably possible, inform the lecturer beforehand that their recording is to be used and for what purpose, and the lecturer will retain the right not to permit this use. If the lecturer, acting reasonably, objects to use for this purpose, the School will not be permitted to use the recording.

h) The relevant Service Owner[2] may audit recordings in the context of service operation and management, and may where necessary delete an inappropriate recording sooner than the end of the normal retention period.

14) Any other use of a recording will require further, separate agreement between the University and other parties with rights in the recording. In particular:

a) The recordings and any associated metadata will not be used by the University for staff performance review or disciplinary processes without the lecturer's permission, except in the case of alleged gross misconduct.

b) Recordings may not be used as a replacement for intended staff presence in a lecture room or virtual class unless the lecturer permits this.

c) Recordings will not be used to cover University staff exercising their legal right to take industrial action without the lecturer's consent.

d) Staff and students may otherwise only use, modify, publish or share restricted-access virtual class recordings or excerpts with the permission of the School that provides the Course and of the lecturer and of any other participants in the recording. It shall be a disciplinary offence to use, modify or distribute recordings without permission, including but not limited to: copying the recording, issuing copies of it to the public, renting or lending copies of it to the public, playing it in public or broadcasting it. An employee or student using, modifying or distributing a recording without permission may be investigated under the [Disciplinary Policy](#) or [Code of Student Conduct](#) (as applicable).

Participant and University rights

15) In contributing to a virtual class that they have been notified is being recorded, participants agree to the University recording them and agree to give the University the licences necessary to use any recordings for the purposes in this policy.

---

[2] The senior owner of the service within Information Services, ultimately accountable for ensuring that the service meets current and future needs and expectations.

16) The policies on [exploitation of intellectual property](#) and [student intellectual property rights](#) cover the status of intellectual property generated by the University's employees and students. Where the University and an employee have agreed that the employee retains some or all of the intellectual property rights to material used within a recording, the employee agrees to grant the University a non-exclusive licence to use the material for the purposes in this policy.

17) Performer rights reside with the lecturer and other virtual class participants, who by using the services agree to the recording and agree that the University may use their performance for the purposes in this policy. Participants wishing to assert their right to be identified as author or performer should do so as part of the recording, for example on an introductory slide.

18) Where a student holds some or all of the intellectual property rights to material used within a recording, the student grants the University a non-exclusive licence to use the material for the purposes in this policy.

19) External visiting lecturers (or their employer as appropriate) retain copyright in work and any other intellectual property rights they generate and, by accepting the terms of the external visiting lecturer agreement, agree to grant the University a non-exclusive licence to use the recording for the purposes in this policy.

Data protection, security and retention

20) The privacy statement for each service will detail how the University will use, share and retain data in relation to that service.

21) Recording of sensitive personal data shall not take place without the explicit written consent of the person(s) to whom the data relate.

22) The University or its software partners will securely host media captured within a virtual class. Data are hosted within the United Kingdom or European Economic Area and the data protection and data security arrangements must satisfy the University's Data Protection Officer and Chief Information Security Officer respectively.

23) If a lecturer wishes to retain a recording for longer than the normal retention period then they should transfer the recording to the University's [Media Asset Management Platform](#). The University cannot be held responsible for any recordings deleted after the retention period.

24) Learning Analytics relating to virtual classes may be used in accordance with the [Learning Analytics Principles and Purposes, Policy and Governance](#) arrangements.

Accessibility

25) Recordings must not breach equality legislation and must comply with the [Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy](#). The University will provide clear, accessible guidance on how to access virtual class recordings.

Copyright and licensing

26) Anyone presenting material within a virtual class must ensure that they do not infringe third-party intellectual property rights, including copyright. Presenters must cite copyright material appropriately on slides and for recordings used within virtual classes and must ensure that materials do not contain any restricted information in actionable breach of confidence or in

breach of data protection law, nor constitute a breach of publishing or collaboration or other agreement that governs their research or work at the University or elsewhere.

27) If a licence for material used within a recording constrains the University to retain that material for less than the recording retention period then the lecturer must arrange for deletion of the material at the end of the time specified by the licence.

Student support meetings

28) Access to online student pastoral support meetings will be limited to those agreed to beforehand. Meetings will not be recorded using the service except in exceptional circumstances and with written agreement from all participants.

02 September 2020

Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Purpose of Policy

The Policy sets out requirements for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators.

Overview

The Policy covers a range of aspects of recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators, including: arrangements for contracts and payment; roles and responsibilities; mandatory induction and training; non-mandatory training and development; and resolving problems.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The Policy applies to all tutors and demonstrators at the University.

Contacts (HR issues)	Corporate Human Resources and College Human Resources
Contact (Educational issues)	Academic Services
Contact (Training and development issues)	Institute for Academic Development

Document control

Dates	**Approved**: July 2017	**Starts:** 1 Sept 2017 (full implementation 2018-19)	**Equality impact assessment:** June 2017	**Amendments:** Sept 2021	**Next Review:** TBC

Approving authority	Senate Education Committee
Consultation undertaken	Combined Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee Schools Colleges Edinburgh University Students' Association UCU Focus groups of tutors and demonstrators
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services, Institute for Academic Development and Human Resources.
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	https://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-guidance
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code Chapter B3 (Learning and Teaching)
Policies superseded by this policy	Code of Practice for Tutors and Demonstrators
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.
Keywords	Tutors, demonstrators, induction, training

Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators

Tutors and demonstrators are integral members of their course teams. The following framework is designed to ensure that tutors and demonstrators contributing to our on-campus and on-line courses receive appropriate support and guidance for the task and that they are well supported in providing excellent quality teaching. Those providing tutoring and demonstrating services comprise a heterogeneous group which includes postgraduate research students, post-doctoral research fellows and practitioners from various professional fields.

1. Recruitment processes

1.1 Recruitment of tutors and demonstrators must be in line with the University's recruitment and selection policies and procedures. Schools must provide fair and equal opportunities to become tutors or demonstrators to those with the relevant knowledge and skills who may be interested, although the opportunities will vary across Schools and in some specific circumstances, the University's recruitment procedures may allow variations for certain categories of post.

1.2 The recruitment process must be completed in time to allow tutors and demonstrators to manage their commitments and to be given a formal induction to their roles before their duties commence (see section 5).

1.3 Recruitment and selection for posts must adhere to the University's Conflict of Interest policy.

2. Contracts and Payment

2.1 This section applies to those who have a contract to deliver tutoring and demonstrating only, rather than those who may undertake some tutoring or demonstrating as part of their wider role.

2.2 Tutors and demonstrators must receive a contract which must be issued and accepted before the tutor or demonstrator commences duties. Payment for duties will be made in line with University pay and reward processes.

2.3 Employees are engaged on standard University of Edinburgh conditions of employment and must ensure they familiarise themselves with employee policies relevant to their post.

2.4 Tutors and demonstrators will be asked to undertake duties which are consistent with the grade at which they are paid. The relevant generic or specific job descriptions will set out these duties.

2.5 Tutors and demonstrators must be paid for all contact hours and such time as the School specifies is necessary to fulfil all their duties (see 3.1), in line with the relevant work allocation model. Tutors and demonstrators must also be paid for their formal induction and mandatory training associated with the contracted teaching and demonstrating (see section 5), and any School meetings at which attendance is mandatory (see section 3).

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2.6 For tutors and demonstrators who are current students, employment is offered for a fixed period of time related to the period of the programme of study. Tutors and demonstrators who are not current students may be offered employment on a fixed-term or open-ended basis. For fuller information please see the Appendix in the [Fixed Term Contracts Reason Codes](#).

2.7 For postgraduate research students registered at the University, tutoring and demonstrating (or any other employment at the University) must not impede the successful completion of the students' own degrees and must not contravene any conditions their funding body applies regarding the number of hours of paid teaching or other employment that they can undertake. Full-time postgraduate research students must work no more than an average of 9 hours per week across the academic year and must discuss any proposed employment with their principal supervisor.

2.8 For students on ~~Tier 4~~Sponsored Students visas, constraints on employment set by the UK Home Office will apply. Heads of School[1] are responsible for complying with University procedures which ensure that Tier 4 visa holders are not contracted to work in excess of the limits imposed by their visa.

2.9 Payment for tutoring and demonstrating cannot be included in a scholarship but must be paid separately through a contract as above on the appropriate grade for the work.

3. Role and responsibilities

3.1 Tutors and demonstrators may contribute to a range of duties, and must be paid for all hours of work that the School has specified are necessary to fulfil these duties (see 2.5), which may include, but are not restricted to, the following:
- Seminars and workshops;
- Tutorials;
- Formative and summative marking and assessment of work (see 3.5-3.7);
- Laboratory and other practical classes;
- Field trips;
- Meetings with students (office hours);
- Giving and receiving feedback;
- Teaching administration, including mandatory course and team meetings; and
- Preparation for tutoring/demonstrating.

Allocation of tasks

3.2 It is the responsibility of the Course Organiser, or a suitably delegated member of staff, to allocate tasks to tutors and demonstrators, to provide guidance on the scope

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[1] Hereafter, 'Head of School' may refer to the Head of School or suitably delegated member of staff. Schools should identify delegated staff members and communicate these to tutors and demonstrators via the key contacts information (see Appendix).

of and time required for particular tasks, and to supervise all tasks undertaken. The School should set out a fair and transparent process for allocating tasks and hours of work. The Course Organiser is responsible for ensuring that tasks allocated are consistent with the job description, appropriate to the grade, and reasonable within the time allocated. The School must set out a clear, published, timeframe for allocating tasks and hours, so that tutors and demonstrators are informed of their work well in advance of commencement.

3.3 Should the Course Organiser, or a suitably delegated member of staff, deem it appropriate on an occasional basis for tutors and demonstrators to undertake limited tasks that are not normally applicable to their grade, but are thought to be useful for development reasons, the Course Organiser must provide appropriate levels of supervision for these tasks and provide the tutor or demonstrator with feedback on their performance. Where the Course Organiser identifies a substantial, on-going need for work done above the level normally undertaken by tutors and demonstrators, they must seek advice from the College HR Team on how to proceed.

Pastoral support

3.4 While tutors and demonstrators can act as a convenient first point of contact for students who wish to discuss personal problems, their role is to direct students to more specialised sources of pastoral support. Formal induction should include guidance on appropriate people within the School (e.g. a Student Adviser or Personal Tutor) or University support services to whom students can be referred, and on relevant local procedures.

Involvement in assessment and feedback

3.5 The Head of School is responsible for appointing markers who contribute to the assessment process. Where the Head of School appoints tutors or demonstrators to undertake assessment and feedback duties, the Course Organiser has responsibility for allocating these duties and for ensuring that the type of tasks and the manner in which they are undertaken are in accordance with the University's Taught Assessment Regulations.

3.6 Where tutors and demonstrators are allocated assessment and feedback duties, the Course Organiser is responsible for supporting and overseeing their work. This will include briefing tutors and demonstrators in advance on how to conduct all relevant aspects of the assessment and feedback process.

3.7 The Course Organiser has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate moderation processes are in place and for informing tutors and demonstrators of these arrangements. Typically, Course Organisers will organise more robust moderation processes when marking is undertaken by tutors and demonstrators.

4. Access to facilities and resources

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4.1 Tutors and demonstrators must be given access to all facilities and resources that the Head of School specifies that they require to fulfil their duties, and a summary of these must be included in the formal induction (see section 5). Tutors and demonstrators must also be given the opportunity to be included in applicable fora designed to consult and liaise with staff members within the Schools in which they tutor or demonstrate.

5. Mandatory induction and training

5.1 Tutors and demonstrators must not commence their duties until the School has provided them with necessary formal induction on all core aspects of their role. Schools must have a formal induction plan and mandatory content is set out in the Appendix.

5.2 The School must determine the mandatory training which tutors and demonstrators must undertake in relation to the courses on which they are assigned to tutor or demonstrate. Mandatory training, and other ongoing training relating to tutoring and demonstrating generally may, in some circumstances, be delivered separately to the formal induction and may continue after tutoring or demonstrating duties have been commenced. Heads of School must recommend a necessary amount of training, taking account of the level at which tutors and demonstrators are teaching, and their experience.

6. Support, Feedback and Review

6.1 It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that tutors and demonstrators are adequately supported in their roles and that their work is monitored satisfactorily. As well as the support provided by the Course Organiser, Schools may provide additional support to tutors and demonstrators, and information on sources of support and guidance must be communicated as part of the formal induction.

6.2 Feedback makes a valuable contribution to tutors' and demonstrators' experience and development. It is important that tutors and demonstrators receive constructive and relevant feedback on their performance in a timely manner and this feedback may be received through various channels.

6.3 Schools are responsible for providing tutors and demonstrators with a formal annual review of their development and progress. For tutors and demonstrators working 0.2 FTE or more this will take the form of an individual meeting, which should be undertaken by the Course Organiser or other suitable member of staff. For tutors and demonstrators defined as low-hours employees (working less than 0.2 FTE), alternative arrangements apply, see: Low hours employees' guidance. If tutors and demonstrators are currently postgraduate research students, reviews of their development and progress in tutoring and demonstrating must be separate from the postgraduate research annual review process.

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7. <u>Non-mandatory training and development</u>

7.1 It is valuable for tutors and demonstrators to be given the opportunity to develop beyond their current tasks and the annual reviewer, or suitable alternative, must provide the opportunity to discuss with them the availability of any optional training which will allow this development. This training might include courses or briefing meetings organised by the School or the Institute for Academic Development (IAD).

8. <u>Resolving problems</u>

8.1 If tutors and demonstrators experience any difficulties relating to their duties, they should make an appointment with the key contact outlined by the Head of School in their induction. Where tutors and demonstrators who are current students experience issues in balancing work with studies, they should speak to their principal supervisor in the first instance.

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<u>**APPENDIX**</u>

<u>**Formal Induction Plan**</u>

Each School must form an induction plan for tutors and demonstrators which must include the following:

<u>Key contacts</u>

- Whom tutors and demonstrators should contact in case of any queries about the course (e.g. Course Organiser), their development, their contract or pay (e.g. School office staff) (advise two different people in case of absence or conflict).
- An introduction to all key people in relevant formal roles in the School, including those in a supporting or guiding role.

<u>Contracts, pay and duties</u>

- How many hours tutors and demonstrators are expected to work (including detail of preparation time, marking time, teaching time).
- The tasks for which tutors and demonstrators will be paid.
- How much tutors and demonstrators will be paid for this work, when they will be paid, and how they will be paid.

<u>Course and subject specific information (as relevant to specific roles)</u>

- Course content and processes.
- The facilities and resources that are available to tutors and demonstrators.
- How administrative tasks related to teaching operate for the course/subject
- Detailed marking criteria (where tutors are involved in assessment).
- Feedback or review arrangements that are in place and when these processes will occur, including how tutors and demonstrators may provide feedback on their experiences.

<u>Roles and responsibilities</u>

- The expectation of tutors and demonstrators in terms of teaching and assessment responsibilities.
- The role of tutors and demonstrators in relation to pastoral support for students, including information regarding the key staff in the School with a role in providing pastoral support, local procedures for referring students, record keeping and confidentiality issues.

<u>Relevant policies and procedures</u>
- This Policy document.

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- Arrangements for making tutors and demonstrators aware of reasonable adjustments that they need to make for students with disabilities.
- Information about any teaching-related accessibility, equality, and diversity policies (e.g. Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy).
- Any confidentiality or data rules or processes within the School.
- Relevant health and safety guidance.
- Any School handbooks or other documentation for tutors and demonstrators.
- All relevant employment policies.

Training and development

- Mandatory training activities.
- Additional development opportunities (e.g. Institute for Academic Development provision and support, including workshops, and support towards Higher Education Academic accreditation)
- Sources of guidance on best practice and teaching methods
- Advice on how to structure and organise preparation time.

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List of policies linked in the document:

Recruitment Policies:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-guidance

Policy on Conflict of Interest:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/policies-guidance/a-to-z-of-policies-and-guidance

Pay and reward processes:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-reward

Pay scales:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-reward/pay/pay-scales

Fixed-term contracts – reasons:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/policies-guidance/a-to-z-of-policies-and-guidance

Conditions of employment:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/policies-guidance/conditions-service

Taught Assessment Regulations:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf

Low Hour Employees:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/learning-development/annual-review/guidelines/line-managers-reviewers/low-hour-employees