



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

**Senatus Academicus**  
Friday 12 November 2021 at 2pm  
Special meeting held online

## AGENDA

### SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

1. **Report from E-Senate** S 21/22 2 A  
To approve the minute of E-Senate held from 21 – 29 September 2021
2. **Senate Standing Committees: Discussion** S 21/22 2 B  
To discuss
3. **E-Senate Process** S 21/22 2 C  
To discuss and approve
4. **Senate Effectiveness Review 2020/21** S 21/22 2 D  
(Appendix 2  
CLOSED)  
To comment
5. **Senate Elections 2021** S 21/22 2 E  
To note and comment

### ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING

6. **Conferment of the Title of Emeritus Professor** S 21/22 2 F  
To approve
7. **Library Committee membership** S 21/22 2 G  
To approve
8. **Edinburgh University Students' Association Priorities for 2021-22** S 21/22 2 H  
For information
9. **Student Partnership Agreement** S 21/22 2 I  
To note
10. **Research Strategy Group update** S 21/22 2 J  
For information
11. **Senate Standing Committees' Annual Internal Effectiveness Review Report** S 21/22 2 K  
For information
12. **Senate Standing Committees – upcoming business** S 21/22 2 L  
To note and comment

**Senate**

**12 November 2021**

**Report of Electronic Business of Senate conducted between  
Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 29 September 2021**

**1. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2021 (e-S 21/22 1 A)**

The minutes were approved.

**2. New student members**

The new membership was noted.

**3. Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2019/20 (e-S 21/22 1 B)**

Senate formally noted the report.

Comments were received and these have been passed to the University Court.

**4. Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita (e-S 21/22 1 C)**

Senate agreed to confer the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita on those professors listed in the paper.

**5. Communications from the University Court (e-S 21/22 1 D)**

The communications were noted. Comments received were passed to the author of the report.

**6. Report from Knowledge Strategy Committee (e-S 21/22 1 E)**

The report was noted. Comments received were passed to the author of the report.

**7. Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee (e-S 21/22 1 F)**

Eight members stated that they did not approve the proposed membership. Based on the principal that for E-Senate a nil response is taken as assent, the membership was approved.

Discussion papers on the E-Senate process, and Senate Standing Committee membership, will be put on the agenda of the Senate meeting on 20 October 2021.

## Senate

12 November 2021

## Senate Standing Committees: Discussion

## Description of paper

1. A discussion paper on the membership of the Senate Standing Committees.

## Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate is invited to discuss the issues below (see 'Discussion' section) relating to the Standing Committees, taking cognisance of its previous discussions and decisions on structures, relationships and membership. It is not recommended that any substantial changes to the committee structure, remits or memberships are made at this time and that Conveners of the committees are encouraged to improve effectiveness on a continuing basis and in response to annual review.
3. Senate undergoes a five-yearly external review, and the next external review is scheduled for academic year 2023/24. A substantial review of the Senate Standing Committees could take place at that time.

## Background and context

4. The following papers may be used to inform discussion:

Minutes of the Senate 29 May 2019 ( <a href="#">item 3</a> ): Review of the Structure of Senate Committees	<a href="#">Paper S 18/19 3C</a> summarises recommendations of the Task Group commissioned to review the Senate Committee structures. <i>The recommendations for change to the structure and memberships of the Senate committees were approved.</i>
Minutes of E-Senate 10-18 September 2019 ( <a href="#">item 5</a> ): Senate Standing Committee Remits	<a href="#">Paper e-S 19/20 1E</a> implements the recommendations agreed by Senate on 29 May 2019 for changes to the structures and memberships of the Senate Committees & provides terms of reference. <i>Senate approved the Terms of Reference and Memberships of the Senate Committees.</i>
Minutes of the Senate 5 February 2020 ( <a href="#">item 5</a> ): Externally facilitated review of Senate and its committees – University response	<a href="#">Paper S 19/20 2C</a> is an information paper to appraise Senate of the response to external review. Of particular note is section 17 which notes there is now a 'Conveners' Forum to facilitate planning, coordination and prioritisation of Senate Standing Committee business. <i>This includes ensuring that there is appropriate engagement with and reporting to Senate, and ensuring that there is engagement by the Senate Standing Committees with the annual planning round.</i>
Minutes of E-Senate 5-13 May 2020 ( <a href="#">item 4</a> ): Annual report of the Senate Standing Committees	<a href="#">Paper e-S 19/20 3C</a> the first such report of the standing committees in their new configuration including report on

	achievements and forward plans. <i>Senate noted the major items of committee business from 2019-20 and approved the plans of the Senate Committees.</i>
Minutes of Senate 27 May 2020 ( <a href="#">item 9</a> ): Senate annual effectiveness review.	<a href="#">Paper S 19/20 3H</a> outlines process for review and notes that the annual effectiveness review of the standing committees will also take place
Minutes of Senate 7 October ( <a href="#">item 14</a> ): Senate Committee Effectiveness Review Initial Analysis	<a href="#">Paper S 20/21 1K</a> provides information on the review conducted in summer 2020. The report had previously gone to each standing committee for discussion and action.
Minutes of Senate 10 February 2021( <a href="#">item 9</a> ): Standing Committees' upcoming business	<a href="#">Paper S 20/21 2E</a> informs Senate of planned activity. <i>Senate welcomed this useful regular addition to the agenda. Senate members were reminded that they could contact the Senate Committee Conveners if they wish to explore an issue in more detail.</i>
Minutes of Senate 2 June 2021 ( <a href="#">items 5 and 6</a> )	<a href="#">Paper S 20/21 3B and S 2021/3C</a> <i>Senate approved the Annual Report of Standing Committees and the memberships and terms of reference.</i>

5. For information, the committees to which Senate delegates powers are noted below:

- Senate Education Committee (SEC)
- Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
- Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)
- Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) – a joint committee of Senate and University Court
- Library Committee – reports to KSC
- Fitness to Practice Appeal Committee – reports to APRC
- Student Appeals Committee – reports to APRC
- Student Discipline Committee – reports to APRC
- Honorary Degrees Committee – makes recommendations to Senate

### Discussion

6. It was agreed by Senate at the meeting held on [2 June 2021](#) that a discussion paper on Standing Committees' membership would be welcome at a later date. A separate request to have Standing Committees' relationship to Senate placed on this agenda was received.
7. To aid a rounded discussion that recognises the work undertaken thus far, this paper reminds members of the previous papers brought to Senate on these topics including those providing the basis of decisions by Senate and which responded to external and internal review of the Committee structure and remits.
8. The potential value of including on the membership of the Standing Committees additional members of Senate was discussed at the meeting on [2 June 2021](#). A number of members were supportive of this, agreeing that it could assist in making the

Committees more representative and enhance discussions around high-level University policy. It was also recognised that:

- the current terms of reference and memberships for the Standing Committees were approved in September 2019 and were therefore relatively new;
- the Standing Committees were already large;
- there was an expectation that those already on the memberships of the Committees were not there as individuals but to represent their constituencies.

9. Senate Standing Committees report to Senate annually at the final meeting of the year. As noted in the Senate Annual Internal Effectiveness Review report, the format of this report will be updated to ensure that it reports at a strategic as well as granular level. Senate Standing Committees also submit a forward-looking update on committee business to each Ordinary Senate meeting.

### **Equality & diversity**

10. Senate is especially reminded of feedback relating to diversity and inclusion within its Standing Committees and the response to this by each Committee in their paper to 2 June Senate meeting on forward planning and priorities. In considering any future change or augmentation of the Standing Committee memberships (to include other Senate members), attention should be given to these priorities in order to enable further representation on the Standing Committees.

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

11. Via the minutes and stakeholder representation/cascade. Any policy change to be taken forward by Academic Services.

#### **Author**

Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services  
Date 28 September 2021

#### **Presenter**

Convener-led discussion

### **Freedom of Information**

Open

**Senate**

**12 November 2021**

**E-Senate Process**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper reminds Senate members of the arrangements for conducting Senate business via E-Senate, and asks Senate members to comment on these arrangements, and affirm these arrangements,

**Action requested / Recommendation**

2. Senate is invited to discuss and approve the recommendations below (paras. 11-14).

**Background and context**

3. Under Senate Standing Order 8, Senate may conduct business electronically under such arrangements as it may approve from time to time.
4. Currently, E-Senate takes place 3-4 weeks in advance of Ordinary Senate meetings. E-Senate is intended to be an effective way to conduct routine business out with the Ordinary meetings.
5. E-Senate is open for one week, during which time members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email to [SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk](mailto:SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk). Any comments received are shared with the Senate membership via the Senate website (EASE protected).
6. For E-Senate, a nil response is taken as assent. This is highlighted in the Senate annual induction, stated in E-Senate papers and in the email notifying Senate members that E-Senate papers are available online.
7. Following the close of electronic business, the Convener considers any comments received and decides, consulting as appropriate, whether the business may be concluded or should be referred to the next Ordinary Senate meeting. Any formal business not resolved via E-Senate is referred to the next Ordinary Senate meeting. The outcome of all electronic business is reported at the next Ordinary Senate meeting.

**Discussion**

8. This is an opportunity to review how business is managed through E-Senate, and particularly the practice of taking a nil response as assent. This paper invites Senate members to discuss the issue and to consider the recommendations below.
9. Treating a nil response as assent has been adopted for E-Senate to enable routine business to be transacted efficiently as electronic business. Senate currently has 213 members. A quorum is one third of the membership; therefore, 71 members are required for a quorum. Requiring a significant number of staff to engage, in order to demonstrate a quorum, reduces the efficiency of E-Senate.
10. Ordinary Senate meetings take place three times per year. Conducting business by E-Senate, as well as Ordinary Senate meetings, goes some way to ensuring that

routine business is not unnecessarily delayed by the infrequency of Ordinary Senate meetings.

11. It is recommended that the principles below are used to define whether business is appropriate to be conducted via E-Senate, on the basis that a nil response equals assent. Business may be conducted via E-Senate if the item is:
  - For information or for formal noting.
  - A routine request for observations by Senate from the University Court. Items presented to Senate by Court have been through considerable scrutiny, for example Resolutions to create new Chairs.
  - A request for observations or comment on a paper that has previously been scrutinised and approved by one of the Senate Standing Committees based on delegated authority.
  - A request for approval of a nomination for the award of Professor Emeritus / Emerita status.
12. On the basis that a nil response equals assent, comments or objections from a small number of Senate members would not necessarily result in the item being referred to an Ordinary meeting of Senate. Referring an item from E-Senate to an Ordinary Senate meeting would be at the discretion of the Convener. This would apply whether an item was for observations, comment, or approval.
13. Any comments or observations received from Senate members will be transmitted onward as set out in the relevant paper. In cases where Senate members comment on papers that are presented for information or noting only, the comments will be communicated to the author of the paper.
14. In any case, E-Senate is not used to seek decisions on new or contentious issues. Going forward, E-Senate will not be used to seek approval of the membership of committees with delegated authority from Senate.

### **Resource implications**

15. Changes to E-Senate processes would have resource implications for Academic Services.

### **Risk Management**

16. Effective academic governance assists the University in managing risk associated with its academic activities.

### **Equality and Diversity**

17. The paper does not propose any changes that have EDI implications.

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

18. Any policy change would be taken forward by Academic Services.

### **Further information**

**Author**  
Kathryn Nicol, Academic Policy Officer

**Presenter(s) (if required)**  
Convener-led discussion

**Freedom of information**  
Open

**Senate**

**12 November 2021**

**Senate Effectiveness Review 2020/21**

**Description of paper**

1. Following a light-touch internal Senate Effectiveness Review, analysis of the feedback received from Senate members and proposed actions are presented for discussion.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. Senate is invited to consider the analysis and, while recognising the low response rate to the review, to support the recommendations set out in Appendix 1, intended to aid continuous improvement of our approach to academic governance in 2021/22.

**Background and context**

3. The University is required under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance to carry out an annual internal review of Senate. In summer 2020, Academic Services carried out a primarily self-reflective review: a short questionnaire was sent to Senate members and their responses were collated and analysed by Academic Services. The review was deliberately light touch, taking into account the priority given at the time to responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Discussion**

4. Analysis and suggested actions can be found in Appendix 1. The full text questionnaire responses can be found in Appendix 2 (closed paper, provided separately).
5. Suggested actions are intended to be proportionate to the scope of an annual effectiveness review, and the volume of feedback received.

**Resource implications**

6. The recommended actions can be managed within the current resources of Academic Services, as part of their established role in support of Conveners and the cycle of committee business.

**Risk management**

7. This activity supports the university's obligations under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.

**Equality & diversity**

8. The review provides an opportunity to identify any barriers to accessibility in the conduct of Senate business.
9. Data on the gender and ethnicity profile of Senate membership will be tracked from the change of membership structure at 1 August 2020, and this will be used to inform communications and planning for Senate elections, to help to ensure that the election process is accessible to any under-represented groups.

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

10. Academic Services will report to Senate at the end of the current year on progress against actions taken in response to the review.



**Authors**

Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services  
Kathryn Nicol, Academic Policy Officer

**Freedom of Information**

Coversheet and Appendix 1 can be used in open business.  
Appendix 2 is closed.

## APPENDIX 1

### Report on the Senate Internal Effectiveness Review 2020/21

#### 1. Context and response rate

This review of Senate is conducted in compliance with the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance 2017. This is the second annual internal review of Senate under this Code: in 2018/19 an external review was conducted, and in 2017/18 only the Senate Standing Committees were reviewed. This analysis compares the results with the previous review conducted in summer 2020.

The Senate review took the form of a short online questionnaire to Senate 2020/21 members.

30 responses were received from 187 members (16% response rate). 29 responses were from members who identified themselves as members of Colleges rather than other areas (i.e. USG, ISG etc.). 1 responded selected the 'other' category, indicating they are not in a College nor a student. No student members responded.

Responses by College:

- CAHSS – 15
- CMVM – 6
- CSE – 8

The questionnaire opened on 14 June 2021 and closed on 13 July 2021. Senate members were initially contacted on 14 June 2021 and sent a reminder on 29 June 2021.

In 2019/20, 40 responses were received from +800 Senate members. Therefore, the number of responses has decreased, but the response rate has increased.

The findings and any required actions or enhancement opportunities will be reported to Senate and Court in semester 1 2021/22.

#### 2. Analysis of responses by question and proposed actions

**Q1 During your time as a member of Senate, have you had a clear understanding of your role on Senate? Do you have any suggestions for how this could be better communicated, for example via the Senate Members' Handbook, or the Senate website?**

- A large majority responded that the role is clearly communicated.
- Offering an induction session to new and continuing staff was supported: currently, induction sessions are run annually and all Senate members are invited to attend, and this will continue.
- Several members stated that they understood their role as members, but raised critical questions about whether this role is effective / appropriate. These comments will be considered in relation to questions 2 and 3.
- Two members queried how Senate members can raise items of business or initiate or amend proposals.

- Three members made suggestions for changes: one asked for longer papers to be made available more than a week in advance, two suggested Senate should sometimes work through smaller groups to allow more meaningful discussion.

#### **Comparison with 2019/20 response**

- A much higher proportion of Senate members indicated that they feel they understand their role and that this is communicated effectively. Action was taken following the previous review to update the Senate handbook, website and induction, and this appears to have been successful.
- In 2019/20, some responses stated that the described role does not match reality. This response was not received in 2020/21, suggesting that the role description has been clarified. However, as in 2019/20, a minority (around 6) fed back that Senate is passive and lacking decision-making powers or a meaningful relationship with other committees.

#### **Q2 In May each year, Senate receives an Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees. Does this provide Senate with appropriate oversight of the Committees' work?**

- Over two thirds of members responded yes.
- Two members suggested that this could be enhanced by the report being presented in person by the Committee Conveners: this was planned for the 2020/21 report and the report will be presented in person going forward.
- A minority (around 4) suggested that the Standing Committees are not accountable to Senate in any meaningful way, and that there is no, or a limited, relationship or dialogue between Senate and the Committees. Suggestions to address this were to include more Senate members on Senate committees, or to reduce the size of Senate so that the Senate membership is not larger than the Senate Committees and all Senate members are members of at least one Committee.
- Two comments noted that Senate Committee members are often ex-officio, or expressed the opinion that Senate members have no stake or say in Senate Committee work.
- One suggestion was to restructure the report to focus on Committee impact in relation to key and strategic themes rather than granular detail of committee activity, and one suggestion was to provide regular updates as well as an annual report.

#### **Comparison with 2019/20 response**

- In the 2019/20 review, a minority of members responded yes, so this has significantly improved.
- In 2019/20, a larger minority questioned or were critical of the annual report as a means of oversight – this has reduced in 2020/21, though similar negative responses were returned by a small minority.
- In 2019/20, members suggested that the Committee conveners could present the annual report in person. This suggestion is being acted on (though was disrupted by staff absence in 2020/21) and the report will be presented in person in future.

**Q.3 During your time as a member of Senate, do you feel Senate has engaged effectively with the strategic priorities of the University? In what ways? How could Senate engagement with strategic priorities be improved?**

- Around a third of responses were positive, though some commented on lack of power to set strategic priorities, and the lack of clear evidence of Senate's discussions having an impact or being part of a pathway to change.
- Around a third of members did not agree that Senate engages effectively with strategic priorities, in terms of setting strategic priorities, making decisions rather than making comment, or seeing evidence of the impact of Senate discussions. Members stated that Senate is not asked to make decisions on setting or implementing strategic priorities, and that Senate acts as an audience for these discussions rather than a decision-making body.
- One comment describes the role of Senate members who are not on any of the Senate Standing Committees as largely 'ceremonial' because there is no mechanism for Senate as a whole to make decisions on strategic issues or to approve / disapprove Senate Standing Committee decisions.
- One comment notes that the power to effect change is limited, and that Committees may need to be reminded both of what the priorities are and 'how change happens.'
- A small number of members suggested that presentation and discussion topics could be solicited from Senate members, solicited from staff across the University, or solicited from students. A student-led presentation and discussion session was suggested. One suggestion for a future topic was staff support / staff wellbeing.

**Comparison with 2019/20 response**

- The proportion of positive, negative, and ambivalent or neutral responses is broadly the same as in the previous review.
- The more negative comments are very similar to those returned in the previous review: these focused on the lack of decision-making power of Senate; lack of clarity in the role of Senate in the governance structure; whether Senate is able to affect change and influence management decisions.

**Q.4 Do you feel that Senate is supported effectively by the Senate Support team within Academic Services? Please comment on what works well, and what you think could be improved.**

- The response was overall very positive.
- A small number of members made suggestions: Senate papers could be made available on a rolling basis, or there could be more communication with members between meetings.
- It was noted that if changes were to be made to the function and structure of Senate, these would have implications for the Senate Support team, and more support could be dedicated to supporting interactions, conversation and exchange between Senate members.

**Comparison with 2019/20 response**

- The responses are very similar to those received in 2019/20.

Suggested actions in response to 2020/21 review

Area Under Review	Recommended Action	Responsible	Date
<b>Role and remit</b>	1. Review of Senate Standing Orders to take place in 2021/22, this is an opportunity to simplify and communicate the Senate agenda-setting process.	Academic Services	1. Draft to Senate February meeting, final version to May meeting.
<b>Oversight of Senate Standing Committees</b>	2. Bring a discussion paper on the Senate Standing Committees to Senate 3. Revise the format of the annual Senate Standing Committees report to focus more on key and strategic themes rather than granular detail.	Academic Services and Senate Standing Committee Conveners	2. Paper to Senate 20 October meeting 3. By Senate May 2022 meeting (next annual reporting point)
<b>Senate engagement with strategic priorities</b>	4. Review process for identifying Senate presentation and discussion topics	Convener and Senate Support, in consultation with Senate	4. Bring proposal to Senate by May 2022
<b>Committee Support</b>	5. Continuously review practical arrangements for Senate meetings to prioritise accessibility and opportunities for discussion.	Academic Services	Ongoing

Progress on actions identified in the 2019/20 review

Area Under Review	Recommended Action	Responsible	Status
<b>Role and remit</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update the Senate Handbook, Website and Induction in order to:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Revise the description of the role of Senate to clarify the role of Senate within the University governance structure.</li> <li>1.2 Clarify and ‘resurface’ the relationship between Senate and the Senate Standing Committees, highlighting remits and ex-officio membership.</li> <li>1.3 Develop visual mapping of flow of committee business in broader University context and make available to Senate / Senate Committee members.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Review compliance with the Senate Standing Orders, in particular Senate Standing Order 22 a) on Senate approval of Standing Committee membership.</li> <li>3. Make a recording of the Senate induction available to members on request.</li> </ol>	<p>Academic Services in consultation with Senate Convener and Court Services</p> <p>Academic Services</p> <p>Academic Services</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Senate Handbook and website updated</li> <li>2. Standing Orders to be reviewed in 2021/22</li> <li>3. Now standard practice</li> </ol>
<b>Oversight of Senate Standing Committees</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Senate Standing Committee Conveners to present annual report to Senate in person, and take questions.</li> <li>5. Add a standing item to Senate formal business agenda: update from Senate Standing Committees on upcoming business. This would be opportunity for Senate to comment in advance on the planned business of the Committees, but not to scrutinise Committee business in detail.</li> </ol>	Academic Services and Senate Standing Committee Conveners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Annual report presented to Senate at 2 June meeting, and this will be standard practice going forward.</li> <li>5 - complete</li> </ol>
<b>Senate engagement with strategic priorities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Presenters will be asked to speak to Senate’s formal remit to ‘superintend learning and teaching and promote research’, and to provide information on how the Senate Standing Committees have been or will be consulted on the presentation topic.</li> <li>7. Presenters asked to provide a short written update on how Senate comments will be fed forward into the project, to be circulated to Senate soon after the meeting.</li> </ol>	Academic Services to update guidance to speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Presenter guidance updated</li> <li>7. Updates were published on the Senate website, but feedback from Senate members shows effective communication requires further work.</li> </ol>
<b>Committee Support</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Continuously review practical arrangements for Senate meetings to prioritise accessibility and opportunities for discussion.</li> </ol>	Academic Services	Ongoing

**Senate****12 November 2021****Senate Elections 2021-22****Description of paper**

1. The paper provides Senate with information on the provisional nomination deadline and election date for academic staff members in 2022.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. Senate is asked to note the provisional dates and offer comments.

**Background and context**

3. Academic staff members are elected annually to Senate. These elections are conducted under the [Senatus Academicus \(Senate\) Election Regulations](#).
4. Under the Senate Election Regulations, the nomination deadline and election date will be formally confirmed by Senate at its meeting on 9 February 2022.
5. Election of student members of Senate is managed by the Edinburgh University Students' Association.

**Discussion**

6. The provisional dates are:

Wednesday 9 February 2021	Senate formally declares nominations open
Wednesday 9 March 2022 (12 noon)	Nominations close
Monday 14 March 2022	Candidate information made available online
Wednesday 23 March 2022 (9am) to Wednesday 30 March 2022 (12 noon)	Voting open online

7. Possible conflicts and mitigating factors:
  - a. Flexible learning week takes place from 21 February to 25 February, during the Senate nomination period. However, the length of the nomination period (one month) should ensure that all staff have opportunities to participate in the process.
  - b. Both nominations and voting will take place online, and therefore will remain accessible to staff working off site. Nominations will be open for a full month, and voting will be open for a full week, falling across two calendar weeks, which is intended to ensure that all staff are able to access the process.
  - c. The nomination and election process will be complete before the beginning of the Spring teaching vacation (11 to 22 April 2022).

**Resource implications**

8. These will be met primarily within Academic Services.

### **Risk management**

9. The University's Risk Policy and Risk Appetite statement refers to the University holding 'no appetite for any breaches in statute, regulation.' Senate elections are mandated by University Ordinance 212.

### **Equality & diversity**

10. Ordinance 212: Composition of Senatus Academicus was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) (published on the [Equality and Diversity webpages](#)). The EIA recommended publicising elections through a broad range of channels, to ensure that staff in all categories are aware of opportunities to stand for election, and this will be taken into account in planning election communications.

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

11. Any comments will be taken into consider in election planning. The final timetable will be presented to Senate for approval in February 2022.

### **Author**

Kathryn Nicol  
Academic Policy Officer

### **Freedom of Information**

Open



**Senate**

**12 November 2021**

**Conferment of the Title of Emeritus Professor**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides the Special Minute for Professor David Webb who retired recently.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For approval.

**Discussion**

3. This Senate is invited to confer the title of Emeritus Professor upon Professor David Webb who retired recently.

The Special Minute is attached as an appendix.

**Resource implications**

4. None.

**Risk management**

5. Not applicable.

**Equality & diversity**

6. Not applicable.

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

7. Professor Webb will be contacted by Senate Secretariat in due course.

**Author**

Senate Secretariat  
October 2021

**Freedom of Information**

Open paper

**Professor David John Webb CBE MB ChB, MD, DSc, FRCP, FRSE  
FMedSci FPhS (Hon), FFPM (Hon)  
Emeritus Professor of Therapeutics and Clinical Pharmacology**

Professor Webb has held the Christison Chair of Therapeutics and Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Edinburgh for 26 years and been employed by the University of Edinburgh since 1990. He trained initially in general medicine in London before taking up a training fellowship within the MRC Blood Pressure Unit in Glasgow. He then returned to London as a clinical lecturer at St George's Hospital to train in internal medicine, cardiovascular medicine and clinical pharmacology. He took up a clinical senior lectureship in medicine at the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, with Sir Christopher Edwards, and was appointed to the Christison Chair in 1995.

Professor Webb led Edinburgh's University Department of Medicine (1997-2001), established Edinburgh's Centre for Cardiovascular Science (2000) and helped create the Queen's Medical Research Institute (QMRI) at Little France (opened 2005). He ran a Wellcome Trust Cardiovascular Initiative (1998-2001) and Wellcome Trust Scottish Translational Medicine and Therapeutics Initiative (2008-2014). His own research on the pathophysiology of hypertension, on arterial stiffness & endothelial function, has been funded mainly by the British Heart Foundation. He has published over 500 peer-reviewed papers on clinical pharmacology & cardiovascular disease (h-index 110). His work has contributed to the introduction of inhibitors/antagonists of angiotensin II, endothelin, PDE5 and renin.

He was awarded the British Pharmacological Society's SKB Silver Medal for research (1994) the Lilly Prize and Gold Medal for contributions to clinical pharmacology (2003). He was its President (2018-19) and will be President of the International Union of Basic & Clinical Pharmacology's (IUPHAR's) World Congress of Basic & Clinical Pharmacology (Glasgow 2023).

Professor Webb has been an honorary consultant physician/clinical pharmacologist/toxicologist in Edinburgh for over 30 years, running NHS Lothian's ESH-accredited Hypertension Excellence Centre. He also teaches, trains and mentors undergraduate and postgraduate doctors and scientists. His main clinical interests are in hypertension and cardiovascular risk management.

Outside of direct academic work, Professor Webb is Deputy Chair and Non-Executive Director of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Board and Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC). He is also a member of Council of the UK Academy of Medical Sciences and IUPHAR. He previously chaired the Scottish Medicines Consortium (2004-8). He has been President of the Scottish Society of Physicians and Vice-President of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh. In 2020, Professor Webb was appointed Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Professor Webb continues to be active in clinical research, including first-in-human studies, and in supporting and mentoring other members of the hypertension and renal community within QMRI working in both basic and clinical research. David plans to continue to undertake research in collaboration with colleagues, write review articles, and continue with some specialised clinic research, for which he will seek an honorary NHS contract.

**Senate**

**12 November 2021**

**University of Edinburgh Library Committee Membership 2021/22**

**Description of paper**

1. The paper details the proposed Library Committee members for the session 2021/22.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. Senate is invited to approve the attached membership.

**Resource implications**

3. None.

**Risk Management**

4. Not applicable

**Equality and diversity**

5. Yes, we anticipate no negative impact on any of the protected characteristics. Membership of this Committee was chosen on the basis of those staff able to speak for their relevant areas. The Committee is able to seek specialist advice on the protected characteristics if they feel they are not fully represented on the Committee e.g. information on disability from the IS disability information officer.

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

6. Any agreed actions should be communicated to the Secretary of the Committee who will ensure communication with relative stakeholders.

**Author**

Louise Tierney  
Secretary to the Library Committee, Information Services  
October 2021

**Freedom of Information**

Open paper.

# University of Edinburgh Library Committee

## Membership List for 2021/22

### **Expiry**

#### **Student Representatives:**

Tara Gold (Vice-President Education)	2022
<i>Vacancy</i> (PG Representative)	2022
<i>Vacancy</i> (UG Representative)	2022

#### **Appointed by the Knowledge Strategy Committee:**

Professor Dorothy Miell (Convener/Chair)

#### **College of Arts, Humanities & Social Science:**

Professor Melissa Terras (College Library and Information Strategy Committee Convener)	
Dr Philippa Sheail	2024
<i>Vacancy</i>	2024

#### **College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine:**

Professor Jurgen Schwarze (College Library Committee Convener)	
Dr Louise Connelly	2024
Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif	2024

#### **College of Science & Engineering:**

Professor Iain Gordon (College Library and information Strategy Committee Convener)	
Dr Petros Wallden	2024
Alex Laidlaw	2024

#### **Library and Related Professional Staff Representatives:**

Gavin McLachlan (Chief Information Officer & Librarian)	ex-officio
Jeremy Upton (Director of Library & University Collections)	ex-officio
Carl Jones (Library and University Collections)	2024
Barry Croucher (User Services Division)	2021

#### **External Representative:**

Diane Job (Director of Library Services, University of Birmingham)

#### **In Attendance:**

Eleanor Rideout (Records Management)  
Jo Craiglee (Head of Knowledge Management and Planning)  
Louise Tierney (Secretary to the Committee)

#### **Nominated Deputies:**

**College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine**

Prof. Niall Anderson

**College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences**

**College of Science and Engineering**

Not appointing deputies

**To Receive Papers (not in attendance):**

Natalie Hay ([natalie.hay@eusa.ed.ac.uk](mailto:natalie.hay@eusa.ed.ac.uk) – EUSA administration support)

Anna Maciulewicz ([anna.maciulewicz@eusa.ed.ac.uk](mailto:anna.maciulewicz@eusa.ed.ac.uk) – EUSA Administration support)

Julie Gordon ([julie.gordon@ed.ac.uk](mailto:julie.gordon@ed.ac.uk) – PA to Chair)

Amanda Hogg ([Amanda.hogg@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Amanda.hogg@ed.ac.uk) – PA to Director of Library & University Collections)

Mary Young ([mary.young@ed.ac.uk](mailto:mary.young@ed.ac.uk) – covering PA for Amanda Hogg)

**Senate****12 November 2021****University of Edinburgh Students' Association  
Vice President Education Priorities 2021/22****Description of paper**

1. This paper provides an overview of the Students' Association Vice President Education's priorities for the academic year 2021/22.

**Action requested / Recommendation**

2. For information.

**Background and context**

3. In March 2021, Tara Gold was elected as the Students' Association's Vice President Education for the academic year 2021/22. This paper outlines her priorities for the year ahead, including key areas of work.

**Discussion**

4. Over the coming year, Tara will be focusing on the following priority areas:

**Strengthening the University's response to the pandemic**

Covid has had an incalculable impact on student's lives; their academics, mental health, and finances, all of which needs to be kept in mind as we return to campus. Marginalised students have been particularly adversely affected throughout the pandemic, necessitating increased consideration of their perspectives and needs. The shift to online learning has also presented an opportunity to improve the accessibility.

Tara will work to strengthen the University's Covid response by prioritising the centring of student voices in decision making and planning, advocating for measures to support students who have missed essential components of their degrees, and working to ensure progress on accessibility is not lost in the return to on-campus activity.

**Modernising Edinburgh's curriculum**

Events in recent years have increasingly highlighted the decreasing suitability of Edinburgh's curriculum for students. Furthermore, while the topic of decolonisation has been highlighted as an area of activity, the University is yet to enact decolonisation efforts across its educational offering, which is central to the creation of an educational experience that reflects the University's espoused values. *The Curriculum Transformation Project* represents an opportunity to reimagine the curriculum, to help it reflect the world we live in now and the unique challenges we face in it.

Through The Curriculum Transformation Project, Tara will prioritise supporting student engagement and involvement in the programme's work and outputs. Centrally, ensuring the perspectives of students from marginalised backgrounds are heard and supported is a priority in creating an inclusive and accessible curriculum. Tara will push for strong engagement of the project in decolonisation work, and the integration of modes of accountability on decolonial activity into its operation, to ensure alignment between values and educational delivery. Tara will also work to establish processes for future processes of curriculum transformation, creating more opportunities for student-staff collaboration so

that learners have an active role in shaping the education they want and need. Another key focus will be integrating recognition of broader aspects of the university experience into the curriculum, such as internships, studying abroad, student activism and research.

### **Increasing transparency, responsibility, and accountability**

Tara will prioritise fostering more transparency, responsibility and accountability from the University and its structures to improve the student experience. Complex and opaque University processes create additional burdens on students, particularly when dealing with difficult circumstances, often exacerbating pre-existing inequities. Tara will work on improving the navigability of University structures for students, particularly student support services, advocating for better co-ordination between services and clearer student communications of available support and how to access it.

Tara will also work with stakeholders to make the University's structures more accountable on issues important which are important to students, such as sustainability and ethical partnerships, and will advocate for the strengthening of reporting procedures, support structures, and policy protections for marginalised students in academic spaces.

### **Risk Management**

5. To be considered if specific actions arise from the paper.

### **Equality and Diversity**

6. The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion remain at the heart of the Students' Association's work, and this paper reflects that. Equality and diversity implications will be considered if specific actions arise from the paper.

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

7. To be agreed if specific actions arise from the paper.

### **Further information**

#### **Author**

Stuart Lamont  
Academic Policy Coordinator,  
Edinburgh University Students' Association  
03/09/21

### **Freedom of information**

Open

**SENATE****12 November 2021****Student Partnership Agreement 2021-22****Description of paper**

1. This paper is the proposed University of Edinburgh Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) for 2021-22. This SPA and its priority areas help to promote Strategy 2030 in particular the following areas of activity:

- ii) 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.
- vi) We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear “Edinburgh Offer”. All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.
- vii) We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.

**Action requested / Recommendation**

2. Senate is invited to note the Student Partnership Agreement 2021-22

**Background and context**

3.1 Responsibility for leading and administering the SPA has shifted from Academic Services to the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) at the end of academic year 2020-21, due to changes in staffing. A group representing IAD, EUSA, and Academic Services, along with the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, work together to create the SPA and make decisions about related SPA funding.

3.2 The SPA is a broad statement of intent for the University and EUSA to work in partnership. The priority areas/themes are negotiated annually with staff and students but stayed the same during 2020-21 due to disruption caused by Covid-19 and due to the continued relevance of the themes. The priority areas have now been updated and once approved become the focus for SPA Funding which is available for small student-staff partnership projects of up to £500 each, and these projects enable increased activity to take place across the University focused on the agreed priority areas.

3.3 The timeline for consultation and approval of the SPA 2021-22 is later than normal due to the handover of SPA lead responsibility from Academic Services to IAD. SPA funding will therefore be available for projects for the 2021-22 academic year as well as for the calendar year across 2022. We plan to return to earlier consultation and approval for the SPA 2022-23 to ensure all projects run during one academic year only.

**Discussion**

4. Priority areas have been updated for 2021-22. Education Committee has approved these priority areas at their meeting of 15 September 2021.

**Resource implications**

5. None. NB. The associated SPA funding scheme is funded by the IAD up to a total of £5000 for 2021-22.

**Risk Management**

6. No risks identified



## **Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals**

7. Previous SPA projects have focused on sustainability. The priority areas proposed for 2021-22 are most closely connected to supporting SDG 5 on achieving gender equality, and to some extent SDG 8 on promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

## **Equality and Diversity**

8. Equality, diversity and inclusion are explicitly proposed as a priority area within the SPA 2021-22 and thus will be likely to be the focus of some of the SPA funded projects this academic year.

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

9.1 Once agreed, IAD colleagues will ensure the SPA is uploaded to new SPA webpages <https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/student-engagement/student-partnership-agreement> and the SPA and associated funding will be advertised widely. SPA funded projects will be encouraged in relation to the priority themes, but not excluding other relevant themes.

9.2 Following Senate approval the proposed timeline for SPA 2021-22 activity is:

SPA updated on webpages	by end of October 2021
Funding call opens	Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021
Funding call closes	Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
Panel meets	Wed 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
Inform applicants by	Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
Consultation/Approval for SPA 2022-23	April/May 2022

## **Consultation**

10. EUSA have conducted student consultations about this year's themes. The Directors of Teaching network and Senate Education Committee have also been consulted about this year's priority areas.

## **Further information**

### **Author**

Dr Catherine Bovill  
Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement  
Institute for Academic Development  
September 2021

## **Freedom of information**

Open paper

## STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT 2021-22

### Working together to enhance the student experience

#### Introduction

##### **What is a Student Partnership Agreement?**

Student Partnership Agreements were first outlined in the Scottish Government's 2011 paper *Putting Learners at the Centre – Delivering our Ambitions for Post-16 Education*, which, amongst many other things, proposed the development of a document setting out how students and their institutions interact. Sparqs (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland) subsequently published guidance in 2013 for the development of student partnership agreements for universities. A number of Scottish HEIs have since developed Student Partnership Agreements or are working towards their development.

A Student Partnership Agreement is essentially an explicit statement of the ways in which the institution and the student body are working in partnership. It should be a living document that is reviewed annually and, over time, will enable progress on activities to be documented and communicated.

It is not a contract and has no legal basis. The term 'partnership' reflects a mature relationship, based on mutual trust and respect. Partnership working recognises that members of the partnership have legitimate, though sometimes different, perceptions and experiences. By working together towards a common agreed purpose, we can achieve positive outcomes to the benefit of all concerned. The core emphasis is on common goals and activity rather than separating out staff and student responsibilities.

##### **Benefits of a Partnership Agreement**

A key benefit of a Student Partnership Agreement is the ability to engage and communicate with the wider student body, beyond the Students' Association. In particular, a Student Partnership Agreement can:

- serve to map and promote student engagement opportunities across the University;
- act as a tool to reflect on the ways in which staff and students interact and highlight any enhancements that can be made;
- be used to monitor and review the effectiveness of student engagement;
- provide tangible evidence of the partnership between students and staff.

##### **Why develop a Student Partnership Agreement?**

The University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh University Students' Association have enjoyed a long and productive partnership, which has been commended in Enhancement-led Institutional Review reports from the Quality Assurance Agency for Scotland. We were already working in partnership before Student Partnership Agreements, and in many ways we were ahead of most Scottish HEIs in developing a joint Students' Association and University of Edinburgh Student Engagement Statement in 2013 that set out our explicit commitment to working in partnership with our students and outlined the various ways in

which students could engage with the University. This agreement builds on the strength of that established partnership.

The priorities in the Student Partnership Agreement align with the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy and Students' Association own priorities, rather than creating new initiatives. The agreement serves to highlight ways in which the wider University, including all staff and students, can effectively work together to enhance the student experience. It sets out our values, our approach to partnership and the priorities we have agreed to work on.

## Our values

Our partnership is underpinned by the following core values and sets out expectations of both students and staff to enhance the student experience:

**Excellence** – We are committed to excellence in education, expect the highest standards of our teachers and learners, and recognise high quality teaching. We want to be known nationally and internationally for the quality of our teaching and the quality of our graduates.

**Inquiry** – We foster an approach to learning based on research and inquiry. We celebrate and encourage independent, critical thinkers. We provide opportunities for student-led, co-designed learning within and beyond the main discipline. Our excellence in research enhances our teaching and we consider that every student is an active researcher and participant in building knowledge.

**Community** – We are all members of a vibrant community based on collaboration, co-creation and support for one another. Our connectivity extends across different disciplines and outside the University to our alumni and external partnerships. Our community is underpinned by high-quality academic and pastoral support, peer-learning, clubs and societies.

**Inclusion** – We celebrate the diversity of our University community. We value and respect each other. We create a welcoming and supportive environment in which all members of our community have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

**Responsibility** – We promote the highest standards of individual behaviour and personal accountability, ensuring we act ethically and sustainably. We all have a responsibility to develop the student experience, including engaging constructively in giving and receiving feedback to positively enhance the Edinburgh experience for current and future students.

## Partnership at Edinburgh

Our commitment to working in partnership with students is articulated at the highest level in the University's Strategic Plan and the University Learning and Teaching Strategy. Staff at the University of Edinburgh currently work in partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association to ensure that students are central to:

- governance and decision making,
- quality assurance and enhancement,
- providing opportunities for students to become active participants,
- fostering collaboration between students and staff.

Appendix 1 sets out examples of working in partnership

## **Partnership in Practice – Our Priorities**

Our priorities are set out in the following themes, which relate to ongoing work in the Student Experience Action Plan and the University Strategy and have been discussed with the Students' Association, the Directors of Teaching Network and approved by the Senate Education Committee.

### **Community**

- Supporting staff and students to develop, enhance, and support resilient learning communities that promote a sense of wellbeing and belonging.

### **Equality, diversity and inclusion**

- Ensuring that we work in partnership to promote a University community where all are welcome, respected and nurtured. Making intentional efforts to meet the needs of our diverse community of students and staff, recognising intersectionality, and that we may need to change the way we practice to ensure some individuals and groups, who traditionally have been underserved, feel welcome and wish to engage.

### **Transforming learning and teaching**

- Engaging in curriculum enhancement through student-staff co-creation. Recognising the power of learning, teaching, and assessment to transform the student experience. Supporting work on decolonisation of the curriculum and university-wide curriculum transformation.

### **Reviewing the Student Partnership Agreement**

The Partnership Agreement will continue to be reviewed annually to check on progress and to review the themes following the election of student sabbatical officers and outcomes from major student surveys. If the themes remain relevant they may continue for a further academic year to allow for greater continuity and impact.

## Appendix 1: Examples of working in partnership

### University level involvement:

- The Student Representation system - [www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation)
- Student participation on committees at every level of the University, including
  - Student-Staff Liaison Committees,
  - School and subject area committees,
  - College Committees,
  - Senate, Court and the Senate Committees
- Student participation in Task and Project Groups
- Student participation in the Internal Periodic Review Process, including full membership of review teams – [Information for students on Internal Review Process](#)

### Student-led initiatives, including, but not limited to:

- Peer Learning and Support – <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/peerlearningsupport>
- Student-Led Individually Created Courses (SLICCs) <http://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/facilitators-toolkit/case-studies/sliccs>
- Student Awards (formerly the Activities Awards and Impact Awards, now combined into a single event): <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/whatson/awards/studentawards>
- Student-Led Teaching Awards - [www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/teachingawards](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/teachingawards)
- Student Led Activities from Societies to volunteering that enhance student life. – <http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities>
- Student Groups: <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/list> (groups for marginalised and underrepresented students) or <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/yourvoice/yourrepresentatives/liberationofficers> and <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/yourvoice/yourrepresentatives/sectionrepresentatives> (student representatives for marginalised and underrepresented students)

**Senate****12 November 2021****Research Strategy Group Update****Description of paper**

1. Summary of issues within the scope of Research Strategy Group (RSG) that are relevant to the wider University community. RSG's strategy responsibility for research policy are directly relevant to the achievement of the following outcomes set out in Strategy 2030
  - i) We will see our research having a greater impact as a result of partnership, international reach and investment in emergent disciplines.
  - iii) We will be a global leader in artificial intelligence and the use of data with integrity.
  - vii) We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
  - viii) 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.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For information.

**Background and context**

3. Since the last Senate meeting in June 2021, RSG met on 19<sup>th</sup> July (last meeting for 2020/21) and 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021; it will meet five further times in 2021/22: 18<sup>th</sup> October; 13<sup>th</sup> December; 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022; 18<sup>th</sup> April ; 8<sup>th</sup> June)
4. This report outlines:
  - Timing of the publication of REF2021 results and analysis
  - UK Government Innovation Strategy and University engagement
  - UK Research and Innovation Open Access policy
  - Responsible use of Research Metrics
  - Benchmarking relative to Russell Group – HESA ESA KPIs
  - RSG subgroups

**Discussion****Timing of the publication of REF2021 results**

5. The REF2021 results will be published on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Universities will receive their own institutional results in advance on 9<sup>th</sup> May, and those of other institutions on 10<sup>th</sup> May, with results received by the press on 11<sup>th</sup> May. All results released will be under embargo until publication on the 12<sup>th</sup>. The embargoed results released on 9<sup>th</sup> May will contain the same data as the wider publication: the overall quality profile; the three sub-profiles (outputs, impact and environment; the FTE of the staff submitted to each UoA; and the proportion of REF eligible staff who were submitted. These metrics will be supplied for each UoA submission made by that institution as well as some summary statistics to enable some initial comparisons.
6. RSG will consider a report on lessons to be learnt from the REF submission stage at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October. The report on lessons to be learnt will be developed further following the result release and discussed by RSG, with appropriate engagement with Senate. It will take into account of actions already being taken to address the issues raised in the REF2021 Equality Impact assessment.

- 7 The University submitted all eligible academic staff<sup>1</sup> and so the protected characteristics of the eligible staff reflect the characteristics of the University's academic staff in toto. The particular lessons to be learnt from the REF 2021 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) are concerned with the number of outputs attributed to each academic who was included and their protected characteristics. The REF required that a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5 outputs must be attributed to each member of eligible staff, with an average of 2.5 outputs per FTE included in the University's REF submission for each UoA.
- 8 The results of the EIA show that there are some inequities in the distribution of outputs across different protected characteristics. This means that there will need to be further consideration of this in the planning and preparation for the next exercise as well as in relation to wider research culture at the university. For example across all REF panels (a grouping of Unit of Assessments into similar disciplines) the number of output attributed self-declared female academics, relative to headcount, was lower male academics in the same Panel. Despite UK nationals making up the majority in each panel, for Panel A (Medicine and Life Sciences) and Panel B (Physical Sciences) the average contribution to the output total was less than the average contributions from International and EU27 and EEA nationals. This may reflect differences in the career stage at which non UK academics are appointed bringing with them a body of outputs.
- 9 It should be noted that the University's REF policy were 1) to have an inclusive approach to submission, and 2) that REF submission will not affect career progression, meaning that where the data shows bias within protected characteristics, the REF 2021 exercise will have no effect on the individual academics. Moreover information on the number of outputs attributed to individual will not be made available to those making career progress decisions

#### UK Government Innovation Strategy and University engagement

- 10 In July the UK Government published its *Innovation Strategy*<sup>2</sup>. It is a useful indication of this aspect of the UK Government's vision for a post Brexit UK. The Innovation Strategy announced that the UK Government will establish a National Science and Technology Council, which will set out 'Missions': unifying themes which aim to deliver solutions to big social challenges, via partnerships between HEIs, industry and other agencies. The approach to developing, manufacturing and rolling Covid19 vaccines used example. The UK government anticipates that its 'Missions' will bring together researchers working in one of seven Technology Families that are UK strengths:
  - Advanced Materials and Manufacturing
  - AI, Digital and Advanced Computing
  - Bioinformatics and Genomics
  - Engineering Biology
  - Electronics, Photonics and Quantum
  - Energy and Environment Technologies
  - Robotics and Smart Machines
- 11 The Innovation Strategy also signalled that there would be a number of follow-on consultations and strategies such as an *Independent review of all UK organisations undertaking innovation and R&D* and a *National Cyber Strategy*. The wide range of the

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<sup>1</sup> REF2021 eligibility was defined in the University's REF code of practice. The inclusive approach meant that there was a 46% increase in staff FTE submitted of which half is due to growth in staff number and half to the University inclusive policy. UoE REF Code of practice : [university-of-edinburgh\\_ref2021-code-of-practice.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/REF/2021/code-of-practice)

<sup>2</sup> BEIS Innovation Strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-innovation-strategy-leading-the-future-by-creating-it>

scope of University's Research and Knowledge Exchange activities mean that RSG anticipates that the University will benefit from contributing to each of the consultations and considering what each strategy means for the University.

#### UK Research and Innovation Open Access policy

- 12 In August the UKRI published its new Open Access policy<sup>3</sup> which means the policies of each of its Research Councils are now aligned. There is some flexibility in how the policy can be applied to allow for differences in publishing norms across disciplines. Overall, this should make things clearer and easier for authors, librarians, and research administrators.
- 13 As expected, the new UKRI OA policy is in line with Plan S, namely that for journal articles and conference proceedings, there is a requirement for immediate OA with a full open licence and wherever possible without an embargo. This was expected as several UK research funders, such as the Wellcome Trust and Cancer Research have already made their OA policies Plan S compliant. The new UKRI policy will extend its Open Access expectation to long-form publications (monographs) from 2024 which is a longer interval than had been anticipated. It is expected that a REF specific OA consultation will take place in the New Year and it is known that the development of the OA policy for the next REF will take into account the evidence gathered during the UKRI consultation on its new OA policy as well as addressing REF specific issues.
- 14 The Scholarly Communications Team in the Information Services Group held series of open meetings across all three Colleges in 2020 about the anticipated content of the UKRI OA policy which was then subject to a consultation. The University has already taken significant steps to comply with the new UKRI policy and is in the process of approving a new *Research Publications and Copyright policy*.
- 15 The Scholarly Communications Team will be holding a round of open meetings for authors and research managers as more information particularly about the practicalities is published by UKRI.

#### Responsible use of Research metrics

- 16 The University become a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)<sup>4</sup> in 2018/19. Following this, the University developed its own Statement on the responsible use of research metrics. The University statement sets out five key commitments in responsible use of research metrics at the University, including: "No minimum performance objectives or targets will be set on the basis of a quantitative measure for which the individual cannot reasonably control the outcomes (e.g. grant income alone). The University will provide clear information to staff on how any quantitative data will be used in making decisions that affect the career opportunities for individuals". The University's REF2021 code of practice provides information on principles to be followed when selecting outputs for REF inclusion that are consistent with the University's statement on the responsible use of research metrics.
- 17 RSG set up a Research Metrics task and finish group. Its purpose was to identify recommendations to put to RSG that would enable researchers, especially those charged with making career decisions, to make responsible use of research metrics. The Research Metrics task and finish group presented its final report to the meeting of RSG in July. RSG has asked its Research Culture subgroup to plan how to implement

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<sup>3</sup> UKRI Open Access policy <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-open-access-policy/>

<sup>4</sup> San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment: <https://sfedora.org/>



most of the fourteen recommendations; these include identifying a basket of metrics for assessing applications for academic promotion or appointment.

#### Benchmarking relative to UK Russell group – Research KPIs

- 18 A recent benchmarking exercise carried out by Edinburgh Research Office compared the University relative to other members of the Russell Group using financial data and PGR data reported to HESA for the academic years 2015/16 to 2019/20. In 2019/20 the University was placed 5<sup>th</sup> in Russell group in terms of its research expenditure<sup>5</sup> as reported to HESA: an improvement of one place since 2018/19. Over the period 2015/16 to 2019/20, the University's main source of research income as reported to HESA has continued to be the UK Research Councils. Funding from charities steadily increased as did funding from EU and, although from a low base, funding from industry also rose.
- 19 The FTE of PGR students has steadily risen from 2,925 in 2015/16 to 3,065 in 2019/20. Relative to the rest of the Russell group in terms of its PGR count the University is 6<sup>th</sup>. Data published alongside the REF results in May will give further information on our relative performance and related data.
- 20 The figures reported to HESA on Research Expenditure are one of the metrics used by the Scottish Funding Council in its formula for calculating each HEI's share of its Research Excellence Grant. It anticipates that the Scottish Funding Council will hold a consultation on possible changes to its REG formula. In the current formula, metrics that have the largest weight are the REF2014 result and the FTE of the staff submitted to REF2014. A separate element of the REG, which is based on a rolling average of HESA research finance data, is more responsive year on year.

#### RSG subgroups

- 21 The Terms of Reference for the new RSG subgroups are supplied as an annex alongside revised Terms of Reference for the RSG Research Ethics and Integrity Subgroup. All of the RSG subgroups have now met. Their Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually to ensure they continuing to contribute to RSG fulfilling its responsibilities

#### **Resource implications**

- 22 None. This report is for information

#### **Risk management**

- 23 RSG are always mindful that, being at the leading edge in the creation of knowledge and making a positive difference to society, means also ensuring University staff understand the inherent risks and take sensible measures to mitigate them in line with the University's threefold appetite for risk in respect of reputation, compliance and finances. The Research Ethics and Integrity Review group is key to this.

#### **Equality & diversity**

- 24 The extension of RSG's responsibilities is strengthening its objective of becoming an exemplar of good research practice and stewardship of university-wide research policies, including those relating to researcher development and research ethics and integrity. The RSG Research Culture Working group has specific objectives of establishing policies and mechanisms to promote a positive research culture at the

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<sup>5</sup> HESA refers to Research Income although HEIs are must supply details of their Research Expenditure.

University of Edinburgh across all stages in an individual's research career regardless of ethnicity, gender and ableness

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

25 RSG will take an inclusive approach in order to ensure that the lessons to be learnt from the REF2021 submission are widely communicated. To facilitate greater and more effective dissemination RSG membership now includes representation from Communications and Marketing as well as having a Research Engagement subgroup. The new template for RSG papers for discussion explicitly asked for information about communication plans.

**Author**

Dr Susan Cooper,  
Senior Strategic Planner  
and Deputy REF Manager  
12 October 2021

**Freedom of Information**

Open

## **The University of Edinburgh's Research Ethics & Integrity Group: Terms of Reference**

1. The terms of reference for the group are as follows. The Group will:

- a. work on behalf of the Research Strategy Group to ensure that research integrity and governance has a strong profile at Edinburgh and is part of our ethos and culture.
- b. ensure compliance with the Universities UK Concordat as well as the terms and conditions of funders of University research including Scottish Funding Council, UK Research and Innovation.
- c. ensure that information on all aspects of integrity, ethics and governance is visible and up to date.
- d. identify gaps in policy and procedure and recommend to Research Strategy Group specific actions to remedy gaps.
- e. ensure that there is a connected community of integrity professionals at Edinburgh with key named individuals.
- f. engage, through membership and collaboration, with other University committees and RSG sub-groups on matters of common interest.
- g. draw on advice and guidance from those involved with the governance of research programmes involving clinical volunteers and human tissue<sup>1</sup> and animals in scientific research. <sup>2</sup>
- h. promote awareness and training of integrity and ethics.
- i. act as point of contact with the UK Research Integrity Office.
- j. ensure compliance with statutory reporting requirements and other reporting needs.

### **Membership**

2. The membership of the Research Ethics & Integrity Group includes the holders of the following posts:

Director, Edinburgh Research Office, CSG (Chair)  
Academic Lead for Research Integrity and Improvement (Vice-Chair)  
Nominated Academic Representative  
Research Integrity Manager, Edinburgh Research Office, CSG  
Associate Dean (Research Ethics and Integrity), CAHSS  
College ECR Representative, CAHSS  
Research Support Officer, CSE  
College ECR Representative, CSE  
Head of College Research Office, CMVM  
College ECR Representative, CMVM  
College Research Officer, CAHSS  
Research Governance Coordinator, CAHSS.  
Co-Director of Research Ethics, CMVM  
Impact Officer and Administrative Lead for Ethics, CMVM

Baillie Gifford Chair in the Ethics of Data and AI, EFI

Head of Research Contracts, Governance and Integrity, Edinburgh Research Office, CSG

Director of Health and Safety, CSG

Head of Library Research Support, Library and University Collections, ISG

Head of Research Governance, ACCORD office, CMVM.

Clinical Facilitation Manager, Clinical Research Governance, ACCORD office, CMVM

Head of Researcher Development & Assistant Director, Institute for Academic Development, University Secretary's Group

Academic Developer, Institute for Academic Development, University Secretary's Group

University Records Manager, Records Management Office, University Secretary's Group.

Senior Strategic Planner, Governance & Strategic Planning, University Secretary's Group and Secretary to Research Strategy Group

In Attendance (Minute Secretary)

PA to Director of Edinburgh Research Office, CSG

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<sup>1</sup> <http://accord.scot/about-accord>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.ed.ac.uk/research/animal-research/regulation;](http://www.ed.ac.uk/research/animal-research/regulation)

## **Frequency of Meetings**

3. REIRG meets four times each year. As a subgroup of Research Strategy Group, the Chair will provide a report to RSG covering issues that REIRG feel merit the attention of RSG.

## **Reporting**

4. Reporting on research integrity and ethics matters is intended to be both light touch and ensure compliance with external reporting requirements. It is also intended to show the senior management of the University that there are clear and effective processes for the monitoring of research with regard to integrity and ethics. We will, at a minimum, need to ensure we can show we are compliant with the UUK Concordat on Research Integrity as well as meeting any specific requirements of funders such as UKRI and the Scottish Funding Council. Other funders may have their own distinctive reporting requirements and we will maintain a watching brief in this regard.

5. SFC's requirements are light-touch – we are required to assure through the Annual Outcome Agreement that we are compliant with the UUK Concordat on Research Integrity.

6. We will regularly review our approach to annual reporting to ensure that we remain fully compliant with the expectations of UKRI and funders of University of Edinburgh research other than SFC and UKRI. As a subgroup of RSG, we will ensure that the group's annual report to the University's Risk Management committee shows our full commitment to maintaining and promoting the highest standards of research integrity and ethics within the university. Following approval by RMC the annual report will, in compliance with the UUK Concordat, be made publicly available.

7. We recognise that individual Colleges of the University of Edinburgh may have additional needs that need to be part of their individual reports, but the minimum is what is needed to create a university-level report that can be provided to UKRI, and provided to any other external agencies that require it.

**Author:**

Alan Campbell  
Research Integrity Manager  
Edinburgh Research Office  
The University of Edinburgh

v.5 17 June 2021

## Research Engagement sub-group Terms of Reference and Membership

The purpose of the Research Engagement sub-group is to ensure we have a coordinated approach to research communication and engagement across the University of Edinburgh. This in order to enhance our profile as a world leading research university amongst key stakeholders and the public; thereby securing funding, enhancing the impact of our research, and attracting the best staff and students.

The group combines senior academic perspectives and insights with specialist professional expertise on approach and delivery.

The group will:

- Develop strategic approaches to research communication and engagement across the institution, including:
  - Recommending priority campaigns targeting external channels aimed at broad as well as specialist audiences.
  - Maintaining an overview of major public engagement projects and platforms, and where appropriate connect events to university themes and campaigns.
  - Ensuring colleagues representing the university are equipped with high quality and up to date materials on our current work and recent achievements.
- Promote the use of management information systems for sourcing information to ensure we capture and promote new excellent research across the institution.
- Enhance our capability to utilise public engagement as a methodological element of research activities through awareness-raising and exchange of best practice.
- Ensure alignment with the Innovation Strategy, including its working group on communication.
- Ensure alignment with the Community Plan, including that public engagement with research is appropriately embedded in activities delivered through the plan.
- Report to Research Strategy Group (RSG) and advise it on engagement issues, and take forward engagement-related priorities set by RSG.

The sub-group will meet three times a year, in October, February and May.

## Appendix 2

**RSG 21-07-14**

**Open**

**Paper J**

Research Engagement Sub-group Membership

Chair	Prof Michael Rovatsos Deputy VP Research
Vice-chair CAM	Ed McCracken, Head of News
Vice-chair ERO	Dr Anne Sofie Laegran Head of Knowledge Exchange & Impact
CAHSS	Prof Louise Jackson, Associate Dean Knowledge Exchange and Impact
CAHSS	Dr Patricia Erskine, Head of Stakeholder Relations,
CMVM	Professor Linda Bauld, Bruce and John Usher Chair of Public Health
CMVM	Hazel Lambert, Public Engagement with Research Manager
CSE	Dr Daniel Barker, Academic Lead for Public Engagement School of Biological Sciences
CSE	Dr Stuart Dunbar, Engagement Manager
CAM	Gavin Donoghue Deputy Director and Head of Stakeholder Relations
EI	Amy Rafferty, Head of Marketing and Communications
Edinburgh Global	Kirsty Gillies, Head of Comms and IT
D&A	Claire Simpson. Philanthropy Communications Manager

Servicing the group: Dr Fiona Murray, Public Engagement Coordinator, ERO.

## RSG Research Cultures Working Group: Terms of Reference

### 1) Purpose

Research culture encompasses the behaviours, values, expectations, attitudes and norms of our research communities. It influences career paths of those who carry out research and determines the way that research is conducted and communicated. This working group will work on behalf of the Research Strategy Group to establish policies and mechanisms to promote positive research cultures at the University of Edinburgh, incorporating equality, diversity and inclusion, across all career stages. These cultures should ensure that the university offers a world-class environment in which to do research. It will also provide oversight for the implementation group for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.<sup>1</sup>

### 2) Remit

The group will develop research cultures across the University, with common principles but recognising the diversity of activity in the different Colleges, different career stages, etc. including:

- Understanding and responding to external drivers, e.g. the UK Government Road Map for Research and Development<sup>2</sup> and Wellcome Trust Strategy<sup>3</sup>, so ensure University policy and plans meet external expectations with respect to People and Culture and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the aspirations set out in Strategy 2030.<sup>4</sup>
- Establishing mechanisms to collect and monitor data with respect to research careers, to provide a baseline and establishing measures of progress. Relevant data would include EDI, career progression, bullying and harassment cases and their resolution, research culture surveys. For collection and analysis of these metrics, the working group will liaise with relevant University committees which include those set out in Section 2 Governance and Operation.
- Monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, the Technicians' Commitment Action Plan and the Race Equality and Anti-Racism Action Plan and other relevant Action Plans, as these apply to researchers.
- Monitoring and advising on responsible and fair approaches for research assessment, including the use of research metrics, continuing the work of the Responsible Metrics Group.
- Putting in place medium- and long-term mitigations against the impact of Covid-19 on research careers including impact on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Identifying resources to support an excellent research culture, including good practice guides and a programme of essential training in research leadership.
- Ensuring that professional development is an integral part of all researchers' roles, recognising that researchers may follow a variety of career paths.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-research-and-development-roadmap>

<sup>3</sup> <https://wellcome.org/about-us/strategy>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ed.ac.uk/about/strategy-2030>



## Appendix 3

### RSG 21-07-14

### Open

### Paper K

- Publicising mechanisms for those who feel they have been bullied, harassed or discriminated against to report their experience, including through the Research Staff Hub and Doctoral College.
- Driving improvements in the profile and participation of under-represented groups within the research community in the University.
- Building the profile of the University of Edinburgh as a leading institution in which to establish and grow a research career in a supportive environment that strives for equity across all equality groups.
- Advocating for mechanisms to enhance research culture through collaboration with funding bodies, learned societies, other HEIs, industry partners and other external networks.

## 2) Governance and Operation

- The working group will act under the auspices of the Research Strategy Group, which reports to University Executive.
- The working group will report to the Research Strategy Group at least twice annually.
- The working group will, through its members, maintain close links with the Research Ethics and Integrity Group (REIRG), Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and its sub-committees (EDIC), the Concordat Implementation Group, the Staff Experience Committee and the Doctoral College Committee.
- In addition to researchers, who are the primary stakeholders, the working group will have representatives from CAM, EI, ERO, IAD and HR.
- The working group will aim to promote transparency, inclusion and engagement in its working by making the agenda, note of the meeting and papers available within the University with the exception of closed business.
- Members will make best efforts to attend to ensure that momentum is maintained and will undertake to be a conduit between their community and the wider University community, raising issues of concern and disseminating the work of the Working Group.

## 3) Membership

The membership of the Working Group will seek to ensure fair representation from across the University community that comes under the remit of Working Group. Members are selected to capture diverse experiences and career paths. Particular attention is paid to the complementary groups identified above as well as the primary stakeholders. The membership is given below.

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • Convenor: Jane Hillston       | DVPR (Planning, Resources and Research Policy) |
| • Depute convenor: Sara Shinton | IAD, Institute for Academic Development        |
| • Susan McNEILL                 | Human Resources                                |
| • Radhika GOVINDA               | School of Social and Political Science         |
| • Lee MURPHY                    | Edinburgh Clinical Research Facility           |
| • Kerry MILLER                  | Library, ISG                                   |
| • Hayden LORIMER                | School of Geosciences                          |
| • Karen CHAPMAN                 | Centre for Cardiovascular Science              |
| • Omolabake FAKUNLE             | Moray House School of Education and Sport      |

## Appendix 3

### **RSG 21-07-14**

- Enrique SANCHEZ MOLANO
- Cecile B MENARD
- Timm KRUEGER
- Elisa PARISH
- Sukanya KRISHNAMURTHY
- Kathryn NASH
- Lawrence DICKSON
- Emily SENA
- Colin PULHAM
- Neil CHUE HONG
- Dayle CRASKE
- Christina BOSWELL
- Claire PEMBLETON
- Val HUGHES-WHITE
- Olivia HALE
- Louise KER
- Tobias KELLY
- Marika ASGARI

### **Open**

Roslin Institute  
School of Geosciences & IAD  
School of Engineering,  
Centre for Cardiovascular Science  
School of Geosciences work  
School of Law  
Health and Safety  
Centre for Clinical Brain Sciences  
School of Chemistry  
EPCC  
Communications and Marketing  
School of Social and Political Science  
Edinburgh Innovations  
Easter Bush Campus Operations and Services  
College of Science and Engineering  
Edinburgh Research Office  
School of Social and Political Science  
School of Physics and Astronomy

### **Paper K**

Members of the working group are encouraged and expected to speak freely and respectfully while pushing structures and institutions to adopt positive research culture changes. As such, their work as members of this committee should be recognised as leadership and academic citizenship. However, how they undertake their role should be ring-fenced and shall not have any detrimental impact on promotion, progression, or permanency matters. The University should also consider this as a possible best practice for other committees or working groups.

A membership term of three years is expected although the contributions of fixed-term employees are vital, so flexibility will be shown to any members on shorter contracts. However to ensure that the group's work continues with minimum disruption, the transitions for founding members will be staggered over the academic years 23/24 and 24/25.

#### **4) Frequency of meetings**

The RSG Research Cultures Working Group will meet five times a year. In months where meetings are not taking place an RCWG sponsored event will be scheduled and opened to a wider audience.

**Senate****12 November 2021****Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review****Description of paper**

1. This paper provides information to Senate on the light-touch Senate Standing Committee Effectiveness Review conducted in summer 2021.

**Action requested / Recommendation**

2. Senate is requested to note the review analysis and proposed actions below. The report has previously been presented to the Senate Standing Committees for discussion and action.

**Background and context**

3. The University is required under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance to carry out annual internal reviews of Senate and the committees that carry delegated responsibilities. In summer 2021, Academic Services carried out a primarily self-reflective review with input requested from committee members across the themes of Remit, Composition, Support, Engagement and Impact of the committees' work.
4. Information on the Senate Standing Committees' remits and membership:  
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees>

**Discussion**

5. The review was primarily self-reflective and the input requested from committee members was intended to be proportionate to the current University priorities, particularly taking into account the ongoing University response to the Covid-19 emergency.
6. The review process intended to gather information on and evaluate effectiveness in terms of the:
  - 6.1. Committee remit
  - 6.2. Role in the governance structure and impact
  - 6.3. Composition of the committee
  - 6.4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
  - 6.5. Committee members' role clarity and participation
  - 6.6. Stakeholder engagement and communications
  - 6.7. Committee support
7. The response rate was low across all three committees (14 replies in total), so there is little to act on, but there are potentially some common themes such as in relation to committee remits, communication and equality, diversity and inclusion.

**Resource implications**

8. The recommended actions will require coordination by Committee Secretaries in Academic Services as part of their established role in support of Conveners and the cycle of committee business.

**Risk Management**

9. This activity supports the university's obligations under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.

### **Equality and Diversity**

10. It has again been noted in this evaluation exercise that diversity across all the committees is limited largely because membership is drawn from people occupying particular roles which are required by the terms of reference and memberships. However, there may be more that Conveners can do collectively with Schools and with HR to evaluate how committee positions, especially those requiring *ex officio* members, might be diversified. In addition, Conveners have discussed that using task/working groups is a way to draw expertise from a wider and thus more diverse pool of staff across a variety of roles depending on the project.

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

11. The findings of the review have been reported to the relevant Senate Standing Committees and they will discuss and take forward actions in response.

### **Consultation**

12. Consultation for the production of this paper has been designed to invite and draw upon the views of the entire committee memberships and administrations.

### **Author(s)**

Sue MacGregor (Director of Academic Services)

Philippa Ward, Brian Connolly, Ailsa Taylor,  
Kathryn Nicol (Academic Policy Officers)

### **Freedom of information**

Open

## APPENDIX 1

### Senate Committee Effectiveness Review 2020/1

#### Analysis of feedback by Committee

##### 1. Report of Senate Education Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2020/21

Senate Education Committee currently has 23 members. 7 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire.

- **Committee Remit**

Respondents broadly agreed that the remit of the Committee is clear and the scope appropriate. However, it was suggested that:

- there would be benefit in separating out discussion relating to the student experience and wellbeing by establishing a separate committee for this.
- SEC's responsibility for Curriculum Transformation (CT) should be clarified.
- the extent to which SEC has ownership of learning and teaching strategy and governance in COVID and post-COVID planning should be clarified.

Respondents broadly agreed that the Committee has responded effectively to the challenges of changes in priority. However it was noted that:

- in relation to managing the move to hybrid learning during the pandemic, there would have been benefit in the Committee meeting more regularly to pick up work. The view was expressed that SEC or task / working groups of SEC could have taken on some of the work undertaken by Adaptation and Renewal (ART).

One respondent disagreed that the Committee makes effective use of task groups.

- **Proposed Response by the SEC:**

Student Experience Committee will remain a sub-committee of University Executive for the time being. However, Student Experience will be a standing item on SEC agendas in 2021/22. SEC feel strongly that thought is still required on the appropriate governance of student experience. Looking into the possibility of sharing the Student Experience reports that go to University Executive with SEC for information. Planning to share at the September meeting of SEC the Terms of Reference for the CT work and Deputy Secretary (Student Experience) paper on governance links / schedule of reporting for the CT work.

- **Governance and Impact**

All respondents understood how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University, and considered there to be an effective flow of business between College Committees, the Senate Committees and Senate.

One respondent disagreed that there is a clear link between Committee business and the University's strategic priorities, and one respondent did not agree that the Committee makes the desired impact. In relation to impact it was noted that:

- this is lacking because there are not clear lines of communication for key outcomes and decisions. The respondent noted that the Senate Committees' Newsletter should not be relied upon to convey all important information.
- this would be increased if the Committee were to meet more frequently (although the respondent noted the potential workload challenges associated with this). For

example, it was noted that the shift to hybrid learning had broadly been managed by groups outside of the Senate Committees' structure (ART). This left colleagues feeling that Senate and its Committees did not have sufficient oversight or opportunities to influence decision-making around hybrid learning.

➤ **Proposed Response by the SEC:**

Where SEC takes a decision, will aim to have a more explicit discussion during the meeting about how that decision will be implemented / communicated / evaluated. The paper template requires authors to discuss the 'communication, implementation and evaluation of impact of any action agreed'. Importance of this section will be highlighted to members. (Note that these actions also address some of comments made later in the survey.) Meeting more frequently is not desirable because of workload challenges for members; but will look to make more use of short-life task groups to address specific issues.

• **Composition**

Respondents were satisfied that the composition and size of the Committee broadly enables it to operate effectively. However, it was suggested that:

- there may be benefit in reviewing the Committee's use of co-opted members. Co-option of members of Senate itself was suggested, particularly for task group or shorter-term work.
- the Committee is probably too large to be as agile as it would like, although it was recognised that it is important to have representation from across the institution, and that the University is large.

➤ **Proposed Response by the SEC:**

Discussion of Standing Committee memberships took place at the June 2021 Senate meeting when "*It was agreed Senate would welcome a discussion paper on this topic at a later date*". Academic Services will take this forward with Senate. Composition and EDI are broader than just a SEC issue and feed into combined actions shown in the table at the end of the paper.

• **EDI**

The majority of respondents did not agree that the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population. It was suggested that:

- there would be benefit in having more student voices on the Committee.
- the lack of diversity is a difficult issue to tackle given that the majority of members are on the Committee because of their roles within Colleges / Schools / Support Services. The University needs to consider how lack of diversity can be addressed across the institution. Asking representatives of minority groups to sit on every University committee is not the answer to addressing EDI concerns.

One respondent disagreed that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business:

- EDI issues are too often addressed as 'tick box exercises' and not given proper consideration.

• **Role**

Respondents felt they had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, and that members engage fully in Committee business.

Two respondents did not feel that they had received an effective induction when they joined the Committee.

➤ **Proposed Response by the SEC:**

In response to this, an induction meeting with the Convener and Secretary has been scheduled in early September for new members joining for academic year 2021/22. Induction for new members will take place annually before the first SEC meeting of the year.

• **Communications**

While the majority of respondents felt that the Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders and that they had a clear understanding of their role as a representative of their College or Group, around half of respondents did not have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee. It was noted that:

- the Committee does not tend to discuss how and when information should be disseminated by members.
- while every effort is taken to communicate with stakeholders, not all parts of the University feel that they are adequately informed and as involved as they would wish to be. It is, however, difficult to know how to tackle this problem, and may be an inevitability in an institution of this size.

• **Support**

All respondents felt that the Committee was effectively supported by Academic Services; that the information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making; and that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail. It was however noted that:

- even though papers are detailed, members do not always have a full understanding of the way in which decisions will be implemented. It is not possible to anticipate all potential aspects / problems.

## **2. Report of Senate Quality Assurance Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2020/21**

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) currently has 13 members. 2 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire.

• **Committee Remit**

Respondents agreed that the remit of the Committee is clear, that it has adapted well to changes to priorities and uses its task groups effectively. However, it was suggested that:

- *The extent to which the Committee can escalate concerns discovered through the quality processes or act if responses received are inadequate, is unclear (eg. concerns about responses to thematic reviews). Furthermore, some key policy decisions relating to quality seem to lie outside the Committee's remit (eg. amendments to assessment regulations).*

• **Governance and Impact**

All respondents understood how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University, and considered there to be an effective flow of business between College Committees, the Senate Committees and Senate.

One respondent disagreed that there is a clear link between Committee business and the University's strategic priorities, and one respondent did not agree that the Committee makes the desired impact. In relation to impact it was noted that:

- *Information flows smoothly between different governance levels vertically. But it is not clear that information flows horizontally to adjacent committees (eg Senate Education Committee) or that SQAC insights are taken into account when determining strategic priorities.*

- **Composition**

Respondents were satisfied that the composition and size of the Committee enables it to operate effectively.

- **EDI**

The respondents were split on whether the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population. The dissenting response suggested that:

- *We do not seem to be representative of the University population in terms of gender, ethnicity, nationality, or disability. We do consider E&D regularly, but this may be driven by the interests of current committee members. It's not clear that this would be sustained or that it is integral to the business of the committee.*

- **Role**

Respondents felt they had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, and that members engage fully in Committee business.

- **Communications**

The respondents felt that they had a clear understanding of their role as a representative of their College or Group and had a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee. However, one respondent disagreed that the Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders, noting that:

- *Email communications to key stakeholders are always clear and well directed, but more widely SQAC still seems to be mysterious outside of a small group who are involved in quality work. Communications through Teaching Matters and newsletters have improved the Committee's reach, but I doubt that many read the PDFs of committee minutes. There is much to be done to make it easier for stakeholders to learn about the Committee's work. Hopefully the digital maturity project will assist with this issue.*

- **Support**

All respondents felt that the Committee was effectively supported by Academic Services; that the information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making; and that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail.

One response noted that:

- *Academic Services support for this committee has been outstanding, consistently.*

### **3. Report of Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) Internal Effectiveness Review 2020/21**



Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee currently has 16 members. 5 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire.

- **Committee Remit, Governance and Impact**

All respondents strongly agree that the remit of the Committee is clear and appropriate.

All respondents strongly agree that the Committee has adapted effectively to challenges of changes in priority.

Two respondents disagree that the Committee uses task groups effectively. However it was noted:

- Whilst APRC has not had many task groups recently, this has been appropriate to needs.

All respondents understand how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University, and consider there to be an effective flow of business between College Committees, the Senate Committees and Senate.

All respondents agree there is a clear link between Committee business and the University's strategic priorities, and that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities.

- **Composition**

All respondents are satisfied that the composition and size of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit and to operate effectively. It was noted:

- APRC covers some highly complex regulatory areas of practice. There are some highly experienced and knowledgeable colleagues on the committee as well as less experienced colleagues. Many of the issues dealt with on APRC require good knowledge of regulations and we rely on the diversity of the membership to cover the expertise necessary.
- APRC noted that Senate Standing Committee membership is likely to be discussed at Senate in the coming year, and noted that it would be important to reflect on student representation in any such discussion.

- **EDI**

All respondents agree that the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population, and that they are satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business. However it was noted:

- Representation for EDI can always be improved and should be reviewed regularly. The current committee is pretty good but there is always room for improvement.
- As with many University committees, APRC could welcome more colleagues from BME backgrounds, and with other protected characteristics.

- **Role**

All respondents feel they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, and that members engage fully in Committee business.

One respondent does not feel that they received an effective induction when they joined the Committee. It was noted:

- Some issues brought to APRC are highly specialist and it might be helpful for there to be some checks that all terminology or current practice is understood by committee members before debate. However, often colleagues are invited to present their papers and this can add clarity, or the chair (or another committee member) explains terms.

• **Communications**

All respondents are satisfied that the Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders, and they have a clear understanding of their role on the Committee as a representative of their area.

All respondents feel they have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee. It was noted:

- It was unclear how widely colleagues at the University understand the remit of APRC and other senate committees. The newsletters summarising business covered by the committees is a very helpful contribution to sharing more about the work of the committees and thereby making it easier for colleagues to understand what we do.

• **Support**

All respondents feel that the Committee is effectively supported by Academic Services; that the information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making; and that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail. It was however noted that:

- Sometimes implementation plans are a little thin.
- The volume of papers is usually quite big for this committee, but it is understood why.

➤ **Proposed Response by APRC:**

Where Committee decisions are taken, we will aim to have a more explicit discussion during the meeting about how these will be implemented/communicated and evaluated.

**4. Suggested Actions in light of responses (combined)**

A combined analysis of the answers to the review questions suggests the following recommended actions:

<b>Area Under Review</b>	<b>Recommended Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Remit</b>	1. Student Experience to be included as standing item for SEC	Secretary  Conveners' Forum	New academic year  Next meeting

	2. SQAC and SEC to consider triggers for escalation and relationship with University Executive		
<b>Composition</b>	3. Senate to receive discussion paper on this topic at a later date.	Academic Services will take this forward with Senate Convener.	Tbc
<b>Governance &amp; Impact</b>	4. Each committee to consider more effective use of short-life working groups	Convener/Secretary	ongoing
<b>EDI</b>	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.	Every meeting  tbc
<b>Role</b>	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
<b>Communications</b>	8. Each committee to be more explicit at each meeting regarding how decisions will be communicated or implemented	Convener/Secretary	Every meeting

**Senate**

**12 November 2021**

**Senate Standing Committees – upcoming business**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper informs Senate of activity planned by the Senate Standing Committees between October 2021 and January 2022.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. Senate is invited to note the paper, and to make comments.

**Background and context**

3. In response to the internal review of Senate Effectiveness conducted in Summer 2020, a note of upcoming business from the Senate Standing Committees (Senate Education Committee, Quality Assurance Committee, and Academic Policy and Regulations Committee) has been added to the Senate agenda as a standing item. This is intended to facilitate Senate awareness and oversight of Standing Committee activity.

**Discussion**

4. See Appendix 1 for the information from each Committee.

**Resource implications**

5. None - any resource implications related to Standing Committee business will be raised at the relevant Committee.

**Risk management**

6. This activity supports the university's obligations under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance.

**Equality & diversity**

7. None - any Equality and Diversity issues related to Standing Committee business will be raised at the relevant Committee.

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

8. Any comments from Senate will be fed back to the Conveners of the Senate Standing Committees by Senate Support.

**Author**

Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer  
Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer  
Philippa Ward, Academic Policy Officer

**Freedom of Information**

Open

## Appendix 1

### Senate Standing Committees: upcoming business October 2021 – January 2021

<b><u>Senate Education Committee (SEC)</u></b>	
<b>Upcoming business:</b>	<b>Brief description and context:</b>
1. Findings of a Learning Analytics Student Wellbeing Pilot (November 2021 meeting)	The findings of a pilot being run within Student Systems and Administration in conjunction with an external software provider, Solutionpath, will be presented. The pilot is considering whether analysis of educationally relevant data can allow colleagues throughout the University to identify and better support students through their studies. Further information is available at: <a href="#">Learning Analytics - Student Wellbeing Pilot (sharepoint.com)</a>
2. Summer 2022 Exam Diet – Practical Implementation (November 2021 meeting)	The Committee will be asked to approve a paper detailing the practical arrangements for the Summer 2022 exam diet. The paper is being produced by a short-life task group of Senate Education Committee.
3. Curriculum Transformation	This will be a standing item on Senate Education Committee agendas in academic year 2021/22.
4. Student Experience	This will be a standing item on Senate Education Committee agendas in academic year 2021/22.
5. Doctoral College	This will be a standing item on Senate Education Committee agendas in academic year 2021/22.

<b><u>Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)</u></b>	
<b>Upcoming business:</b>	<b>Brief description and context:</b>
1. Annual Review of College Quality Reports	The Committee will consider the annual College Quality Reports for 2020-21 focusing on College plans in the light this year's round of School Annual Quality Reports (considered by SQAC at the September meeting). The College reports reflect on themes of good practice and areas for further development at College level (drawn from their School reports) and identify actions that will be taken forward during the coming year by the College.

<p>2. Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)</p>	<p>The Committee will consider updates from the ELIR Oversight Group (comprising VP Students, Deputy Secretary Student Experience, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, Director of the Institute for Academic Development, Director of Strategic Change, Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Services) which has been tasked with overseeing the institution’s ELIR Action Plan in response to the recommendations of the review.</p> <p>ELIR is the method used by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAAS) to review and assess the effectiveness of higher education institutions’ approaches to securing academic standards and the quality of the student experience. The University review was conducted in a series of online meetings with students and staff in February and March 2021 and the QAA Scotland published the outcome online in July 2021: <a href="http://gaa.ac.uk">University of Edinburgh (gaa.ac.uk)</a>. Overall, the University was judged to have “effective arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience.” This is a positive judgement and the best possible outcome for an ELIR, the other two outcomes: “limited effectiveness” or “not effective”.</p>
<p>3. Annual Reports</p>	<p>The Committee will consider the following annual reports (and identify actions in response):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>External Examiner Reports – Thematic Analysis</b> (an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System).</li> <li>• <b>Academic Appeals</b> (an analysis of the appeals submitted, identifying areas for action and further consideration).</li> <li>• <b>Student Discipline</b> (an analysis of breaches of the Code of Student Conduct over the course of the previous year).</li> <li>• <b>Complaint Handling</b> (an analysis of the handling of complaints to the University for the previous year, line with the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and the University’s Complaint Handling Procedure).</li> <li>• <b>Annual Review of Student Support Services</b> (an analysis of the annual reports from each of the Student Support Services, highlighting good practice and areas for further development).</li> </ul>

4. Thematic Review	<p>The Committee will consider progress updates on the implementation of the recommendations of the Thematic Reviews <a href="#">2017-18 mature students and student parents and carers</a> and <a href="#">2018-19 black and minority ethnic students' experience of support</a>.</p> <p>Thematic Review is the process by which the Committee reviews the quality of the student in relation to a particular theme or aspect of student support, rather than an individual service or academic area.</p>
5. Task Groups	<p>The Committee will consider updates on the activities of the following task groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Personal Tutor System Oversight Group</b> - providing an institutional oversight forum during the transition to the new evolved model of Student Support.</li> <li>• <b>Data Task Group</b> - examining data set and methodological options for a systematic approach to monitoring student retention, progression, and attainment across the institution (the Group was established by the Committee in response to recommendations from the Thematic Reviews noted above).</li> </ul>

<b><u>Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)</u></b>	
<b>Upcoming business:</b>	<b>Brief description and context:</b>
1. Postgraduate taught programmes	Consideration of proposals relating to the provision of Master's degree programmes which do not include a dissertation/research project component.
2. Curriculum Transformation	Consideration of regulatory issues arising from Curriculum Transformation discussions regarding assessment and feedback, e.g. feedback deadlines.
3. Regulations review	Consideration of early proposals for essential changes to regulations in advance of the annual review of the degree and assessment regulations in March/May 2022.
4. Individual student concessions	Some actions to address student circumstances require APRC approval. These requests are dealt with as they arise, usually by Convener's action, and the decision is reported back to the relevant College by the Committee Secretary.

5. Student support

Consideration of amendments required to regulations and policies to respond to the changes to student support arrangements arising from the Student Support and Personal Tutoring review, which are due to come into effect in some Schools in 2022/23.